

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #32

Romans 8:28-34

In **Romans 8:26** there is something that we do not know, but in **verse 28** there is something we do know. **What Paul did not know was what to pray for in moments of suffering (8:26). However, what Paul did know was God is sovereignly working out His will when His children are suffering, and He is working out His will for their good.**

The verb “we know” in **8:28** is one that means to “know by perception.” It is a perfect tense verb meaning this was something Paul knew and perceived in the past and he continued to know this in the present.

ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD IN A BELIEVER'S LIFE BECAUSE GOD IS SOVEREIGNLY WORKING IN ALL THINGS TO MAKE US LOOK LIKE HIS SON AND PREPARE US FOR HIS GLORY.

This is only true about suffering if one is a believer, one who “loves God” (v. 28). For the believer, times of poverty, persecution, mistreatment, verbal abuse, physical problems, emotional problems, and false assertions are actually being orchestrated by God for the good of the believer.

FACT #1 – God’s Sovereign work in all things guarantees our Christlikeness. **8:29**

Christlikeness for a believer is not optional; it is a God-ordained, predestined reality.

The word “foreknew,” when it is used pertaining to God, does not just mean that God knows all things before they happen; it means that God knows all things He will do before they happen and before He does them (i.e. Jeremiah 1:5).

When it comes to the subject of salvation, God’s foreknowledge means He knew precisely when and where He would save us before He saved us. He also knew how He would get us to look like the image of His Son through the God-ordained “all things” which come into our lives.

The word “image” is the Greek word eikonos (εικονος), from which we get our English word “icon.” This term was used of seeing a likeness of something derived from its source. There are two Greek words that may be translated “image” (ομοιωμα), which denotes a resemblance which may be accidental, and this word used here which refers to a parental likeness that is intentional (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 131). The word Paul uses here is an intentional, stamped, parental likeness.

Now Paul is saying that God has saved us for the purpose of making us look like His Son. The more we walk “according to the Spirit” in regard to God’s truth, the more a reflection of Christ will be seen in our lives. Since God used suffering in the life of Jesus Christ, He is going to use it in our lives to get us to be like and look like Christ.

God is sovereignly using “all things” to get us to look like His Son. He is sovereignly directing all events in our world to develop us into looking like His Son, Jesus.

FACT #2 – God’s sovereign work in our salvation guarantees our glorification . **8:30**

If we take the words of this verse literally and let them speak for themselves, we cannot help but draw the conclusion that **the entire process of salvation is the Sovereign work of God , from start to finish**, which is precisely what this verse says.

All of the verbs in this verse are aorist, meaning that a specific moment of time in past history was in Paul’s mind. That specific moment was the moment of our salvation , the moment we believed . **What Paul is saying is, the precise moment of our salvation was totally and completely God’s Sovereign work.**

1. God “ predestined ” believers (**8:30a**). This means God foreordained or predetermined those He saved.
2. God “ called ” believers (**8:30b**). God is the one who called believers out of the masses of humanity to salvation. He invited us. Paul believed this so fully that he said in Galatians 1:15 - he was called from his mother’s womb, even though it would specifically be 35 years later on the road to Damascus.
3. God “ justified ” believers (**8:30c**). God judicially declared the believer righteous at the same moment He called the believer to salvation. Just as we cannot declare ourselves righteous before God, neither can we call ourselves to justification.
4. God “ glorified ” believers (**8:30d**). The word “ glory ” is the word for honor or exaltation. When it is used in regard to eternity, it refers to the future destiny of a believer in which he will have eternal honor and exaltation.

By using the aorist verbs, he is referring to something that is past in time, a specific moment in the past. Paul specifically has in mind the moment God saved the believer. At the moment God saved the believer, in God’s mind we are glorified . We are already seated in the heavenlies.

FACT #3 – God’s sovereign work in all things guarantees God’s allegiance . **8:31-34**

We have already learned in this chapter that God the Spirit is on our side during moments of suffering (8:26). In this section, Paul wants believers to understand, so are the other two Persons of the Trinity:

Person #1 - God’s sovereign work guarantees the allegiance of God the Father . **8:31-33**

The “if” clause of **verse 31** is first class conditional, meaning it is a reality . The point is if we are predestined, called, justified and glorified, God is for us, no matter what we are going through, no matter who is against us.

(Reason #1) - Because of the cost of salvation. **8:32**

Obviously if God the Father would allow His own Son to die for us, who He calls to salvation, it guarantees He is on our side.

(Reason #2) - Because of the doctrine of justification. **8:33**

God's judicial charge that we are eternally righteous means that no one can lay any judicial charge of condemnation against us. The word "charge" is a word used of making a legal allegation against someone in a courtroom setting.

Person #2 - God's sovereign work guarantees the allegiance of God the Son. **8:34**

(Reason #1) - He died for us. **8:34a**

The King of Glory laid down His own life for us; He is not about to turn against us.

(Reason #2) - He arose for us. **8:34b**

His resurrection proves that all of His justifying work on our behalf was fully accepted by God the Father (Romans 4:25).

(Reason #3) - He reigns forever. **8:34c**

Our Savior is seated at the right hand of the Father, the highest place of authority in the universe. Here is the ultimate position of a King.

(Reason #4) - He intercedes for us. **8:34d**

The word "intercede" is one that is in a tense that indicates a continual intercession. The picture is of a continual conversation with God.

Here is the point - the entire Godhead is on our side causing all things to make us look more and more like Jesus Christ. They are not against us, in fact, They cannot possibly be against us because They have done so much for us.

If you know Jesus Christ as your Savior, everything in your world is under the Sovereign eye and control of God in order to make us look more and more like Jesus Christ. That is how all things work together for good to those who love God.