

“All Things Work Together For Good”

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May 20, 2007

Read Romans 8:28-30

All of the suffering attached to living as fallen beings in a fallen world are but pieces of God's master plan. Nothing is accidental and nothing is arbitrary. All of it is a part of His master plan. Verses 28-30 are assuring His people that what they are presently encountering has eternal significance. God will bring all of His people to the state of glorification. He will complete that which He began.

Everything we do is a necessary part of a larger whole. Nothing we do is accidental. Everything we have in our lives is noteworthy in the purpose of God. Our failure is in our inability to see each of the parts in light of the whole. Because we are small in our view of things, we fail to see how each of the details fit into the larger outworking of God's purpose. In our context, what is the purpose of God to which we have been called? Verse 27 speaks of God's will or purpose. The purpose of God's redemptive activity is for His people to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. In the fulfilling of this purpose, Jesus Christ becomes the firstborn among many brothers.

In our understanding of what God is doing in the world, we have a strong tendency to remove Him from our suffering regardless as to how or why we got there. Yet this passage assures us that even in our suffering, God is working. How tragic it would be if suffering was meaningless, if somehow it simply did not “fit” into the eternal purpose of God.

Although I do not embrace such ideology, what if God's control in the world was only backward-looking or reactionary? What if God simply permitted you to do what you want even if such action on your part was completely contrary to what He desired? What if He allowed you to make certain choices that would completely destroy your life for days, weeks, months, years, and decades with no real purpose other than personal suffering? What if what you endure in this life has no necessary connection to the next? God does win, and He will bring His children to glory, but what if nothing you do in this life has any genuine relationship to the larger program of God?

If such thinking were true, then would you not seek to change what was currently causing you heartache or pain? What if the problem was disappointment in a spouse or child? What if it was an unplanned pregnancy? What if an accident caused by a drunken driver took your only child? What if your employment opportunity was complete drudgery with no prospect of future release? What if you simply desired to run away from all of your responsibilities and abandon all those who look to you for support?

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But what if there is a God who loves you unconditionally and what if His forgiveness is without limit? What if this God were so wise that He always uses the best means to accomplish the highest good? What if He was so gracious and loving that He always did what was best for those He loves? What if He was so working in each of the details so that nothing in this life was without purpose? What if you could live a life without regret? This would not mean hurt did not happen or every choice had pleasant consequences, but that somehow even when we rebelled against His loving hand, He was still working even that moment for good.

God is working every event in our lives for the outworking of His eternal purpose. The mystery behind this is “how?” How does He work His will through me without me “feeling” like I am a robot? For me this is a great unknown. In the midst of hundreds of daily personal choices as well as living from the impact of others daily choices, God is working out His purpose.

This is a truth that can give rest to all of us who live inside of a fallen world. God has not abandoned us to ourselves or to the capricious will of others. It is His will that is being worked out in every detail of life. It is my prayerful desire that each of us in our struggles would find Him to be enough in this life and in the life to come. May you continue to find Him enough.