

All Things for Good – Romans 8:28

By
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Romans 8:28 is one of the great verses in the Bible because of the comfort it brings, the sustenance it provides and the hope it gives. John Stott likened it to pillow on which we can rest our weary heads.

Notice first of all that Paul begins this great verse by affirming what we *know*. There are, of course, many things that we do not know (see vs. 26). We do not know, for example, how long the country will be effectively shut down due to the pandemic. But we do know that God is working in all things, including this pandemic, for our good. We do not hope that God is doing this or think that he probably is doing this. We know for sure. Like Joseph languishing in prison, we do not know how our situation will work for our good; we simply know that it will. We trust God and walk by faith.

Second, notice that *God* is the one doing the working. Paul doesn't mention God by name in this verse, but it is clear that he implies that God is the one working in all things. Stuff does not just happen to work out. God is actively working, controlling, and governing all things. Our good is not left to chance or to our government or to us. It is left to God who is currently weaving the strands of our lives into a beautiful and glorious masterpiece.

Third, notice that God works in *all things*. In context, Paul is talking about suffering, but "all things" should not be limited to our trials and tribulations. God is at work in the good and the bad, the big and the small. He even uses our own sins for our good. Joseph's brothers are a case in point.

Fourth, notice that God works in all things for *good*. To say that everything will work together for good does not mean that everything that happens is good or that everything will turn out well for us in this life. Christians are not immune to misery and death. The good that Paul has in mind is primarily our spiritual good (being conformed to the image of Christ, vs. 29), and our eternal good (the redemption of our bodies and glorification, vv. 23, 30). Thus, when Paul was in prison awaiting trial before Caesar, he wrote that his imprisonment would turn out for his salvation whether he lives or dies (Phil. 1:19).

Finally, notice that God works in all things for *our* good: "those who love God," that is, all true Christians. Note well the plural. God is not merely working for my good, but our good. This means that everything that happens to me is not all about me. Consider Joseph. His life was not all about him. God used him and his troubles in order to save others, including his brothers who had sold him into slavery. God is working in your life for your good and the good of others.