

WHY ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD SAM FIFE

In this study I would like to share with you one of the greatest truths in all of the New Testament, one that has meant more to my life and given me more strength, more faith and enabled me to stand without being moved, sometimes when all around me was being moved, more than any other truth in the New Testament. This truth is found in the 8th Chapter of the book of Romans verses 28 thru 30.

Here we hear the Apostle Paul say by the Spirit: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Now I would like to remind you, as we begin this study, that here in the book of Romans we have a view of God, and his purpose, and his plan for us that is given to us, not by some young novice preacher who thinks he knows God, who thinks he knows the truth of God and who thinks he knows the plan and purpose of God for His people, but by the great Apostle Paul.

Here we have a view of God given to us not by someone who is just starting out in the ministry of Christ, but by the great apostle who has spent his life in communion with Christ. A view of God given to us not by some theologian who is seeking to build a place for himself in the world, and in the denominational worlds of our day, but by the old man of God who was called out by Jesus Himself, personally, and taken out in the Arabian desert for three years, after Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus road, and given the revelation of God which Peter could not receive. The revelation which James or John, or none of the rest of the apostles could receive, but he who must be called out to be the 13th Apostle.

Because he alone was able to see above and beyond the workings of Judaism and the religious systems of that day, and see the great revelation which Jesus Christ wanted to give to this world.

I cannot impress to your minds enough that here in Romans 8 we have a view of God given to us by one who has seen God and Christ as no other man has seen them. We have a view of God by one who was chosen to be the instrument through whom God would give the world the revelation which no other man has received. A view of God by the one who was chosen to write 13 books of the New Testament Bible that is given to us, and to unveil for us, and to point out to us, how the workings of God in New Testament history are the fulfilling of the types and the prophecies of the Old Testament revelation.

So when you come to Romans 8:28 and 29, you should expect to be given a picture of God, and of God's plan and of God's purpose, for your life that you cannot receive from Your minister, that you cannot receive from any of the organizations of our day. A higher view of God, which the old man of God gives to us, when he is an old man, after he has crossed the world on his mighty missionary journeys, after he has walked with Jesus all his life.

We should then expect to receive a view and a picture of God and His purpose, and His plan for our lives which we have not hitherto received and which we have not hitherto seen. And that's just what we will receive if we come to understand what is taught here, when we hear the Apostle Paul say: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified: them he also glorified."

I would like to make the first point that Paul makes here. As we hear him say, 'and we know that all things work together for good for them that love God,' when you hear the Apostle Paul say it, you hear him say it with a ringing certainty, with no doubt in his mind, with a perfect assurance rolling forth from him. Paul knew this thing, he who was thrown upon a garbage heap after being beaten half to death, knew that all things work together for good to them that love God. He who was cast down in the Philippian prison after his back had been beaten raw and bloody with 39 stripes knew that all things work together for them that love God.

No matter what happened to him, Paul knew that it was working together for his good. He did not just think it, he did not just hope that it might, he did not wander in a fog of confusion and discouragement, like so many Christians do today. They want to cling to the idea that that which was happening to them was for their good, but not being absolutely certain of it, because they could not possibly understand how that which was happening to them in their trial and test they were going through Could possibly be for their good. Paul knew it, Paul was certain of it.

He was certain of it not simply because he had found a verse of scripture in the Bible that someone else had written beforehand which said: "All things work together for good for them that love God." Paul was not certain of it for that reason, he was certain of it because he knew the great truth that he announces to us after he says all things work together for good. Paul was certain of it because he knew why all things work together for his good because he knew whom God foreknew, He had predestinated to be conformed to the image of His son, and whom He had predestinated, them He had called and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

Most Christians today, when they are going through tribulation and trouble and they need comfort, they come to this verse of scripture in the Bible and they read, "All things work together . . ." They read it and they cling to it, and they draw a measure of comfort from it, but even so they cannot say with the Apostle Paul, I know that this thing is working for my good. They want to believe that it is, and they believe that it is to the best of their ability, because the Bible says so, but they do not have the understanding of just why and how this thing they are going through is working for their good. Therefore they cannot say with the Apostle Paul, I know that it works for my good.

They can say, "I believe it," because the Bible says so but Paul says, "I know it," and he knew it with an absolute certainty. And of course you know when one is going through a trial or a test, when we are going through a tribulation which sometimes seems so serious that we cannot hardly bear it, there will be always some good brother, who will come around and open the Bible to the scripture and will say to us: "Now you know brother, all things work together for good to them who love God." Half the time that thing has become so serious, and we have become so pressed down, we are so burdened under it, that we think deep down in ourselves, "that's fine for you brother to say that to us but you are not the one who has the trouble."

Oh, beloved, when we come to the understanding of the precious truth that Paul taught here, when we come to understand why all things work together for good and just how everything that happens to us is working together for our good, I think you will see after this study. Then with the Apostle Paul we will be able to say: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." But you see, the problem is, most Christians when they get into trouble, they come to this verse of scripture and they read only verse 28 - we know all things work together for good for them that love God, and they don't go on to verses 29 and 30 and let the Holy Spirit show them how and why all things work together for good to them that love God.

In verse 29 we read, "for," and this little word "for" thrown in here means "because," so when we read the two together, we read "all things work together for good for them that love God, because whom He did

foreknow, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." That's why all things work together for good to them that love God, because those whom God foreknew, he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Now let us say in the beginning of this study: most people, when you mention the doctrine of predestination, they immediately get frightened of the doctrine, because the only predestination they have heard of in the past is Calvinistic predestination. Many years ago, in fact hundreds of years ago, John Calvin, who is the founder of the Presbyterian faith, came up with a theory of predestination, because he saw the Bible teaches predestination. He came up with a theory of predestination which is called Calvinistic predestination, in which he taught that before the world was, God in essence, the Spirit of God chose this one and this one over here and predestined them to eternal salvation, and then he stopped there. Since that time the other half of Christianity who followed the Armenian theology rejected predestination entirely. Turned away because they know that Calvin's theory as far as it went presents the idea that if God arbitrarily chose this one or that one over there to be saved, it implies that He at the same time predestined that all others be doomed and lost. And this implies an unjust God, and this seems to take away our own free will responsibility to believe on Jesus as our Saviour and follow God.

Therefore so many cannot accept the Calvinistic theory of predestination. But the problem is they do not understand that Calvinistic predestination is not Biblical predestination. There is a distinct difference between Biblical predestination and Calvinistic predestination. Let me say this first beloved what we want to do is, not to simply run away from the doctrine simply because Calvin did not go far enough. But what we want to do is come to the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to show us the truth that we might understand Biblical predestination.

Here the simple truth is, if we don't accept the doctrine of predestination, then we have to throw away about one third of the New Testament. We have to do what like so many others do, when they do not want to accept other truths that are presented in the Bible, bury our heads in the sand and turn away and sweep a great portion of the New Testament under our theological rug and hide it there.

Because in just about every one of the Apostle Paul's epistles he brings forth the truth that we are chosen and predestinated of God before the foundation of the world. But when we come here to Romans 8 and we simply open our minds and hearts to the Holy Spirit, very quickly he can show us the truth, the glorious truth, the truth when it is clearly seen can give us an anchor to hold on to which will be a solid rock from which no tempest or winds can ever cause us to fall.

Because you see, what the scripture says is, "whom God did foreknow, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." And so we see that God's predestination is based upon His foreknowledge of what man would do of his own free will.

The simple truth is, God does not dwell in time as we do. Time is a part of our earthly experience. God dwells in eternity, there is no time with Him. Therefore, at any given moment, with His foreknowledge, He can see a million years into the future. And in any given moment He can foresee every event of the future. The simple truth is, before the world was, God could look down in an instant through the telescope of time and He could foresee, in fact He did foresee everyone, who would of their own' free will accept Jesus as their Saviour, and because He foresaw they would of their own free will accept Jesus as their Saviour, He predestinated them to become conformed to the image of His Son.

Therefore we read, "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." And so we see that there is no schism between man's free will and God's predestination. God

predestinated man to be conformed to the image of Christ on the basis of His foreknowledge that we would of our own free will accept Jesus as Our Saviour. Thus we see that there is no schism between the two, but the two work in perfect conjunction with one another to produce our eternal salvation.

Those whom God looked upon down through the telescope of time and foresaw would of their own free will accept Jesus as their Saviour, because he foreknew they would of their own free will accept Jesus as their Saviour, lest the enemy somehow would get in and keep them from hearing and believing, He predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son. But then the question arises: what about those who would be lost? Did God at the same time through predestinating certain ones to be saved predestine the others to be doomed throughout eternity?

No! At the same time God foreknew and foresaw all those who would accept Jesus as their Saviour, He also foreknew and foresaw all those who would never want to follow Jesus, but who would walk of their own will to follow the devil, and the world, and the pleasures of this world. Because He foresaw that they would of their own free will want to follow the devil and never turn to Jesus, He simply left them alone to do what He foreknew they would want to do of their own will. He did nothing for or against them, but left them to do what they would want to do of their own free will which was follow Satan to eternal doom and destruction, and the world to eternal doom and destruction, and therefore He did not do them any injustice whatsoever.

Since He foreknew they would never desire of their own free will to turn to Christ, the only possible way He could have done anything for them was to make provision to force them against their will to turn to Christ. And this is the one thing God can never do, overrule our free will. And if that is the only way that He could do anything for them at all, He must needs do nothing but leave them to follow the way of their own will, and that is exactly what He did.

Some years back, God gave us an illustration to illustrate this. Suppose you plan to give a party, let us say a wedding feast, because the scriptures tell us of God's wedding feast for the Lamb, And suppose you had 100 persons that you planned to invite to this party. Suppose you foreknew beforehand that 10 of these people would answer your invitation, perhaps some of them would have to be sent 2 or 3 invitations, but at last they would answer and come.

You foreknew they would at last come, you would make absolutely certain that they received enough invitations to at last persuade them to come. You would make all plans and make all provisions beforehand to be absolutely certain that they received enough invitations to at last persuade them to come. But if you foreknew that 90 of these persons would never accept your invitations, even if you would send them 1000 invitations, then you would be very foolish to make all kinds of plans to send them invitation. If you were wise, foreknowing they would not accept, you would not waste your time at all, but you would just leave them alone to go the way they wanted to go. And that is the way that our precious God has done. Because He foreknew a certain number of the persons who would receive the invitation to His wedding feast would answer the invitations and would come even though some might need to receive many invitations. He made plans and He provided, and He predestinated that they should receive as many invitations as are necessary in order to at last persuade them to come.

But those whom He foreknew would never come to His wedding feast, no matter how many invitations they received, He simply must leave them alone, because God is not a purposeless God. He cannot make all kinds of plans to bring them that He foreknew would never come; He must leave them alone to go their own way. And so we understand what the scriptures mean when they say, whom He did foreknow He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Hallelujah!

Now I want to point out something to you, dear friend. The scripture does not say: whom He did foreknow, He did predestinate to be converted. It does not say: whom He did foreknow He did predestinate to get saved and join the church and be baptized, to make the profession of faith. No, no. May God make it real to your hearts that the scripture says: those whom God foreknew would accept Jesus of their own free will, and would follow Jesus of their own free will, He predestinated to become conformed to the image of His Son. That is to become exactly like Jesus! To become conformed to the image of something is not to be just like something. When we say of Johnny is like Jimmie, we might mean there are some similarities there. But when we say: Johnny is the image of Jimmie, then we mean that they are exactly alike.

The scripture says: "Whom He foreknew, He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son" this means that we were not predestined just to get saved. If that were so, then it would imply that something possibly might happen to us, between the time we accepted Christ and the time that we are conformed to His image, to prevent us from reaching that point and keep us from reaching that place. But when the scripture says: "Whom He did foreknow, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son," then it means to tell us that those that God foreknew would of their own free will accept Christ as their Saviour have been predestinated to go all the way to conformation to the image of Christ.

Nothing can prevent you from coming to that point! The enemy may lead you down many side trails, and he may trick you out of the way for a while, and he may cause you to fall for a while, but God in His sovereign wisdom and in His sovereign grace has made provision for the very fall itself to work together for your good, to drive you back into the way and to take you on to conformation to the image of Christ, to bring you to that glorious place that he has purposed and predestined for you.

Though the enemy may lead you down many side trails, God in His sovereign wisdom and grace has made even the side trail, pathways to the point that He has purposed for you to come to and you must ultimately come to that point. Because the thing has been done before the foundation of the world, and not only you, but every one of the foreknown elect members of the Body of Christ, whom God foreknew before the world was would turn to Jesus, have been predestined to become conformed to His image.

Therefore, no matter what side trails the enemy may lead them down, Oh Hallelujah, God had made even the side trails themselves to be instruments, which will take us to that place, that point of glorious conformation to His image that He has provided for us.

No wonder the great apostle could say: "All things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose." No wonder he could say: "And we know that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose." They work together for good because those that God foreknew, who are the elect of God have been predestined to come to the point, and nothing can keep them from it.

Then the great apostle goes on to point out to us, that not only our calling and acceptance of Christ is predestinated, but our justification is predestinated, and also our glorification is predestinated. Not only our salvation experience is predestinated, but every step of the way unto our glorification has already been accomplished before the foundation of the world. For he goes on to say in verse 30, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called," past tense. It was done before the foundation of the world. Your calling was accomplished and completed and provided for in the mind and heart of God, and proclaimed and done by God before the foundation of the world.

Some years ago when I was called into Christ, I thought it just happened that way. It did not just happen that way. And so someday along the line, when someone came to you and witnessed to you, the Spirit spoke through them and called you to Christ, or the Spirit spoke to you Himself and called you to Christ.

You thought it was just happenstance that those circumstances just happened that led you to Christ as your Saviour. Dear friend, it did not just happen that way. It was done before the foundation of the world. What happened was just the working out in your experience of that which was already done and provided for by God, before the foundation of the world. Hallelujah!

The Spirit goes on to say through Paul, "also whom he called, them he also justified." Do you know what the word justified means? Ask any theologian, consult any theological dictionary, and they will tell you that to be justified means, to be declared by God to be completely just, or completely without sin, or completely sinless in the eyes of God. Someone put it this way; justification means, just-as-if-I-had-not-sinned. And that is what it means. The scripture says, whom he called them he also justified, past tense. He did it before the foundation of the world, because He foreknew you would believe on Jesus as your Saviour of your own free will before the world was. God declared you to be perfectly just, He declared you to be perfectly without sin, to be completely sinless before the foundation of the world, because He foreknew you would believe on Jesus as your Saviour. Hallelujah!

Therefore you were justified and saved before the foundation of the world. All the time you were wandering through the world, you were thinking you were a horrible sinner. In the eyes of your heavenly Father, you were His justified child of God. Back yonder, when I accepted Christ as my Saviour, I thought that was when I was saved. I had been saved all along before I was born. Hallelujah! When I accepted Christ as my Saviour back there, what happened was not that I got saved, but only that that which was already true, became true in my experience as I accepted Christ as my Saviour and became conscious that I was saved. It was done before the foundation of the world.

Now you begin to understand why God could say to Ezekiel or one of the other prophets, 'before you came forth from the womb, I chose you.' Of course He did. Because of His foreknowledge of what they would be and what they would do of their own free will, He had chosen them before they came forth from the womb.

And we go on to see the next, and the last step in our journey toward our salvation, that our heavenly Father had provided for us, We see that this is predestinated too, for Paul goes on to say: "Moreover whom he justified, them he also glorified." You know what your glorification is, beloved? In order to understand what your glorification is, you first need to understand what Jesus' glorification is.

In Ephesians 1:20 we read that Jesus has been raised up to sit down at the right hand of God in the heavenly places. Now we have already learned in our previous studies, since God does not exist in a physical form, that God is omnipresent Spirit which fills the whole universe and cannot be bottled up in some physical form somewhere, neither does He sit on a physical throne. Therefore we have learned that this expression, that Jesus was raised to sit at the right hand of God, is not given to present the idea that Jesus was raised up to sit down and has been sitting there the last 1900 years. This doesn't denote His physical position, but His spiritual position. The idea of God sitting on a throne and Jesus sitting on a throne beside Him, ruling with Him denotes to us the truth of Jesus going through His passion, having been raised up to co-rulership and co-equality with God over the universe; that's Jesus' glorification.

Romans 6:5 tells us: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Ephesians 2:6 states that God has raised us up together with him, past tense, has raised us up together with him and made us to sit together with him in the heavenly places .

This tells us that God has raised us up in Him and with Him to the same place of co-rulership and co-equality with God, or to become exactly like Him and that is our glorification, and the scripture says, it is

done, it is finished, it was accomplished before the foundation of the world, and all that is needed is for us to let it unfold in our experience day by day, and grow up into that which God has already provided and predestined for us.

You see, God is not like man. Man decides he is going to build a building and he makes his plans and draws up his blueprints, but then he must take his hammer and saw and go out and begin to build the building. Because man is imperfect he might get halfway through with building and something happens to prevent him from finishing the building, and he never finishes it.

This is not so with our God. In His omnipotence, His omniscience and His omnipresence, when He purposes to do a thing with His people, He makes His plans and He provides for every point to be carried out. He then speaks the almighty Word of God and says: "Let it be done," and it is done from that moment forth. Then He sits back and waits for the power that emanates from His nature to bring it into being.

That is exactly the mighty view of God that the Apostle Paul saw. He saw Him as He is and as He does. He saw that this is exactly what God did. He purposed to do a thing with His people, and He made His plans and he made provisions for every point and then He said it is finished and it is done, and beloved, it is done. Nothing can keep it from coming into being. God will not get the building half way built and then something happens to prevent Him from finishing it. No, every brick shall go into its place, every bit of mortar shall go into its place, and the building shall be completed.

Therefore, all things truly do work together for good for them that love God, because whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to become conformed to the image of his Son, moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, past tense, and whom he called, them he also justified, past tense, and whom he called, them he also glorified, past tense!

Dear friend, the thing is done right up to your glorification, right up to your conformation to the image of Christ, the thing is done, it is completed. Nothing can prevent you from arriving at that point. Let Satan rage, let him pull all of his tricks, let him drag you off on to this side road, or that side road. He does not know that the foreknowledge and the mighty power of our God, who in His sovereign grace and wisdom and power, has made even the side roads pathways to that point of perfection which He has purposed and predestined for us. Let the enemy come against us with all kind of trials and all kinds of testing, and all kinds of tribulations. Our God in His wisdom has made the tribulations and testings themselves instruments of purifying fire, which will drive us closer and closer to Him. This will purge all the dross out of us and refine us as silver that we might come forth as gold, that we might at last arrive at the point which God has provided for us.

This is why the Apostle Paul could say: "Therefore I glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, more hope or more faith, and hope or faith maketh not ashamed." Romans 5:3, 4, 5.

What Paul meant was when trouble comes his way and tribulation comes his way he says: I rejoice in it, I get happy about it. Because it teaches me to pray my prayer of deliverance and then patiently wait for God to deliver, and when I patiently wait for God to deliver, then God does deliver, and this deliverance gives me the experience of knowing that my God gives the victory. The tribulation works the patience, the patience works the experience, and then when I have had the experience of seeing my God give the victory, this works more hope, more faith for the next testing that the devil is going to put upon me. And then Paul says, that faith will never make me ashamed, for I will never be embarrassed by believing in my God, because He will always come through.

One of the men in my church used to put it this way: God will never let you be embarrassed when you believe Him, He will always come through. Beloved, when you let that cycle work, tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience more hope, knowing that all things work together for good for those that love God, to take you to the place that God has for you, it becomes a beautiful cycle. Which when you let the wheel roll will become an instrument whereby your God will use everything the devil throws at you, as a stepping stone to greater and higher faith. This will enable you to overcome him and be completely victorious in the end.

The Lord uses everything the enemy throws against us simply as an instrument in us to defeat him in the end. No wonder Paul could say, I glory in tribulation, because he knew this great truth that all of it, God has provided us instruments to take us on to conformation to the image of Christ.

I am teaching the people in my church, and some of them have come to that point, where I am looking forward to the day when they call me on the phone not to say: Oh brother Fife, I am sick, or my child is sick, pray for me, but they call me on the phone and they say: "Praise the Lord, brother Fife. Here is another wonderful opportunity to glory in tribulation until the tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience and experience more faith, to defeat the devil and move onward towards another step, and towards the glorious goal that God has set for me. And I have some who call me on the phone when they get sick, and instead of groaning and moaning they say: "Praise the Lord, brother Fife, here is another chance to grow in faith. You believe God with me and let's go up another step in faith.' Why, because they have come to understand this great truth, and now they can say with the Apostle Paul, I know that all things work together for good for them that love God. I know that whatever testing comes to me, whatever tribulation comes to me, whatever battle I am in, no matter how bad it gets, or how bad it seems, I know that it is an instrument of testing, of purifying fire, which will take me on that place, which my father has provided for me. Hallelujah!

When we see Christians falling all around us and we see the Church struggling in the throes of weakness, confusion and discouragement and we see the fire coming upon Christians all around us, we don't get excited, we don't get upset, we don't begin to wonder if the Kingdom is going to fall apart or not. We don't get the least bit discouraged. We know that God is simply taking His people through the purifying fires and that everything that is happening, is happening for the good of those to whom it is happening. For their Father is taking them to that point that He has predestined them for, conformation into the image of Christ. Our faith does not waver when we see this one fall, or that one fall, or this one deceived, or that one deceived. We know that God is on the throne and Jesus is yet victorious and that all things have been done and have been accomplished in God's foreknown elect. We understand that those who are outside of that elect Body must go to their place they have chosen of their own free will, and nothing can prevent it.

As we let the Spirit of God lead us on day by day, praying: "Lord, keep me in the fire," and when tribulation and testing come upon us, we understand its purpose fully, we rejoice in it, we glory in it, because we know and now we understand how and why, all things work together for good for those who love God.

I was teaching this truth in a Bible College Seminar not so long ago, just a few weeks ago, and just last night one of the young women in the seminar said to me: "Bro. Fife, you don't know what this truth has done for me. As a Christian I have never been able to glory in tribulation before. I have always wept over it and been confused over it, and felt that perhaps God was not treating me fairly and rightly. Now I have seen the glorious truth." She said, "I have just gone through a test that a year ago, I wouldn't possibly have been able to stand up under it; but now, all through it I could glory in tribulation knowing that my God was refining me as silver and bringing me forth as gold. With no fear in my heart any longer that I will at last reach that goal,

for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, whom He did predestinate them He also called, whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified."

The thing is done, it's complete, it is finished before the foundation of the world. Our God shall bring it to pass in us. No wonder the Apostle Paul in verse 3 1, after teaching this great truth, could then say: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who call be against us?"

The conclusion Paul drew after he had taught this great truth is since God has done all that for us, who can hinder us, who can prevent us from coming to that place that God has prepared for us. "He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Verse 32), even unto our glorification. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, let people say what they may. God has justified us and will take us through. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Verse 34)

Then notice this; these are conclusions that Paul is drawing after he had seen this great truth: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ. Not our love for Christ, but Christ's love for us. Who shall break us loose from it? Shall tribulation or distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword? Look at verse 27. He said, "nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Not we will be more than conquerors, but we are more than conquerors. And not that we are just conquerors over tribulation, distress, sickness and sufferings, and the deceit of the devil. Nay, he says, because of this great truth we are more than conquerors. Then Paul takes every life experience that is possible to know, good and bad, and he lumps them all together. And he says to you dear Christian friend, that because this great truth he enunciated is true, not one of them can keep you from coming to the place God has prepared for you.

For Paul states: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers (the devil and his kingdom of demons) nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Verses 3 8-39) Since the days some years ago, that God showed me this precious truth, there has been no wavering in my faith. There has been no fear, and no concern that, or anybody that I minister to, will not ultimately come to that place God has prepared for them. And when I see them going through testings, I can teach them, I can believe with them, and I can help to lead them through that purifying fire. But at the same time I can do it without getting upset.

I can know that the hand of their Father is upon them, that He is working something in them. For all things work together for their good. I can simply help them on the way, yet I can glory in even the test itself.

I can say, not what I used to say in my heart; "Well, I hope this great trial that I've got is working for my good, but I sure can't see how it does," but I can say with the Apostle Paul, "I know that it is working for my good, and I can see perfectly how it does," and go on to the place God has prepared for me. Oh, the riches of the glory of the wisdom and the power of our glorious God. May God make it real and bless it in your life. In Jesus name. Amen.