

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD



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‘All Things Work Together for Good’
by
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ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

Romans 8:28 says – *‘We know that all things work together for good’* This is such a well-known verse from the Bible, but let’s make sure we know what it means and what it doesn’t mean before we go any further.

I’ve heard people say it means that everything that happens is God’s will, that He makes the bad things happen so that He can bring good out of them. But it doesn’t say that at all. In Luke 11:2 Jesus says to pray – *‘May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.’* There is no point to that prayer if everything that happens on earth is already God’s will. John 10:10 says – *“The thief only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”* The thief is Satan and it is he who brings the bad things – anything that steals, kills, or destroys or tries to do those things, comes from Satan. This includes situations that try to steal your joy or peace, that try to kill your good relationships or that try to destroy your health. This verse is an excellent yardstick to judge who is behind things that happen. If it is trying to steal, kill or destroy, then it’s from Satan. If it is adding to your life in a positive godly way, then it’s from Jesus. James 4:7 says – *‘Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.’* We are to be subject to God and resist the bad things from the devil. If we think everything comes from God then this verse doesn’t make any sense.

So what does it mean? It is saying that God can bring good out of the bad things that Satan brings into our lives. He can turn them round to our advantage so we can receive more of Jesus’ abundant life. We’ll look at Romans 8:28-39 to discover the part we need to play to see this come about in our own lives.

Will It Work for Me?

Let's start by reading the whole of Romans 8:28 – *'We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose.'* All things working together for good doesn't happen in everyone's lives. We are all very aware of that. This statement only applies to 'those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose.'

In order for it work for us, first of all we need to be people who love God. We can only truly love Him when we are born-again and are in relationship with Him as our loving Father. (To read about being born-again, go to the end of this booklet.) It's as we grasp His boundless unconditional love for us, that we love Him in response. 1 John 4:19 says – *'We love him, because he first loved us.'* If you feel you don't love God or that you don't love Him enough, instead of focusing on your lack of love, focus on His love for you through Jesus. Get into God's Word and immerse yourself in the truth of all Jesus has done and won for you. 1 John 4:9-10 says – *'By this God's love was revealed in us, that God has sent his only born Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins.'*

Secondly, we need to be 'called according to his purpose.' His purpose is explained in the next two verses in Romans 8:29-30 – *'For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn amongst many brothers. ³⁰Whom he predestined, those he also called. Whom he called, those he also justified. Whom he justified, those he also glorified.'* God's ultimate purpose for us is to be 'conformed to the image of his Son' – to become like Jesus. God didn't choose who would be born-again, but He always knew

who would accept Jesus. He predestined those He foreknew to be like Jesus. He then called us and justified us through Jesus' suffering and glorified us. This is the spiritual outcome for those who have responded to God's love and chosen to accept Jesus. If you are born-again, you are called according to His purpose. In your brand-new spirit you are already just like Jesus. And as you renew your mind in God's Word, your soul (your mind, emotions and will) are in the process of being transformed. Romans 12:2 says – *'Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.'*

So to see all things working together for good in our lives, we need to be actively loving God by keeping our focus on Him and all He has won for us through Jesus, and be renewing our minds in the Word in order to become more like Jesus.

What Are 'These Things'?

Our next verse Romans 8:31 says – *'What then shall we say about these things?'* To find out what 'these things' are, we need to go back to Romans 8:18 which says – *'For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed towards us.'* Then looking ahead, Romans 8:35 lists some of 'the sufferings of this present time' – *'oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?'* 'These things' are anything and everything that is trying to steal, kill or destroy or that has actually done so. Whatever is happening or has happened, it's never too late to submit to God and resist the devil by speaking God's truth out and then see Him bring good out of the situation.

What Do We Need to Do?

Romans 8:31 says – *‘What then shall we say about these things?’* Before we answer this question, notice that it says we are to speak to the situations that come against us. God never wants us to be passive. If we have a ‘whatever will be, will be’ attitude, then we’re unlikely to see good come out of bad situations. Instead, He tells us to resist the devil. Resist means to actively fight against. Ephesians 6:12 says – *‘For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against ... the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.’* Our fight isn’t against people, but against the devil. And that fight takes place in our minds. How are we going to react to bad situations? What will we think about them? Will we listen to the devil’s lies or God’s truth?

What we think eventually comes out in what we say. Jesus says in Matthew 12:34 – *“out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.”* If we think things like, ‘Well, I’ll just wait and see how this turns out’ or ‘There’s nothing I can do about this’, then that attitude will show in what we say. Proverbs 18:21 says – *‘Death and life are in the power of the tongue.’* We will all have experienced this. We’ve all been encouraged by words people have spoken to us and we’ve all been hurt by people’s words too. Also we know that the more we talk about something, be it positive or negative, the more significant it becomes to us. So let’s choose to resist what the devil is trying to do to us by changing our thinking and using our voice to speak abundant life over ourselves, instead of being passive. God isn’t going to do it for us. Isaiah 54:17 says – *‘No weapon that is formed against you will prevail; and you will condemn every tongue that rises against you in judgement.’* We are to condemn things that come against us, actively fighting against everything that is trying to steal, kill or destroy in our lives.

What Do We Say to ‘These Things’?

We resist the devil by knowing and believing all that Jesus’ death and resurrection won for us and then speaking it out, Revelation 12:11 says – *‘They overcame him (the devil) because of the Lamb’s blood, and because of the word of their testimony.’* The next part of our Romans passage (verses 31-39) answers the question in Romans 8:31 – *‘What then shall we say about these things?’* It tells us of some of the powerful truths of God which we can take hold of and speak out with authority in the face of sufferings and difficulties, however big.

“God is on my side!”

To start, Romans 8:31 says – *‘If God is for us, who can be against us?’* When things go wrong, remember that God is on your side. This is a hugely significant and powerful truth.

“God sent Jesus to save me and He feely gives me all things!”

Romans 8:32 says – *‘He who didn’t spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how would he not also with him freely give us all things?’* God proved He is on your side by sending Jesus to save you. Take this on board. God wants to feely give you all things which are part of His abundant life for you.

“Who do you think you are trying to condemn me, Satan!? God has justified me!”

Romans 8:33-34 says – *‘Who could bring a charge against God’s chosen ones? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.’* Take the attitude of ‘how dare you’ to the devil. We have been justified by God. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sins, God now sees us just-as-if-I’d never sinned. Wow!

“Nothing can separate me from the love of Jesus!”

Romans 8:35-36 – *‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?’*³⁶ *Even as it is written, “For your sake we are killed all day long. We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”* This asks the question – can anything, however extreme, separate me from God’s love? At the time it was written, Christians were being killed for their faith, so it was and is a very significant question. But it is a rhetorical question demanding the answer – ‘NO!’ Make sure this isn’t up for debate in your mind. Know the absolute unchanging answer – ‘NO!’

“I am more than a conqueror over all suffering and problems!”

Romans 8:37 – *‘No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.’* This is so powerful but so few Christians live as if it true. Think about it. You are more than a conqueror over all the bad things. It’s not because you’ve conquered them in your own strength – it’s because Jesus has conquered them for you and you have put your faith in what He has done. Jesus is the conqueror, He fought and won and took the spoils of the battle. Then He gave them all to you – all the victory and the blessings that go with it. All you have to do is receive them and you become ‘more than a conqueror’. You have all the benefits without having had to fight the battle. How can the devil hope to stand against you when you have been handed the victory over all his schemes by the conqueror Jesus!

“I KNOW that absolutely nothing in my past, present or future is able to separate me from God’s love through Jesus my Lord!”

Romans 8:38-39 – *‘For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from God’s love which*

is in Christ Jesus our Lord! Now we have the answer to the question in verse 35. Absolutely nothing that happens to us can separate us from Jesus' love. Nothing! That is so powerful.

An example

Take an example of money problems. Declare out loud, "God is on my side and He freely gives me all things, so who are you to say I haven't enough and I can't manage. I belong to Jesus and He has justified me." Say it with an attitude of authority.

Now we know that situations arise for different reasons. In our example, you may well need to investigate what's gone wrong and take measures to sort it. Maybe it's come about because of your own carelessness or extravagance and you need to change your approach to spending to set things right. Maybe someone has swindled you. Maybe there's been a mistake somewhere. But whatever the cause, it is still a situation that the devil can try and use to knock you down. Thank God that He wants it sorted for you. Do what God directs you to do to get things back on an even keel. For instance, He might lead you to a new job that pays better. He might provide someone to help you set a budget so you can live within your means. If the problem's arisen because of someone else's carelessness or wrong-doing, He may lead you to the right people who can help you get it sorted. But keep speaking to the situation, telling it the truths we've looked at.

Seeing All Things Working Together for Good

Speak all these powerful truths out against suffering and anything that tries to kill, steal or destroy. They will establish a firm foundation in your mind and in your heart from which you can resist the devil and see him flee from you.

Don't be passive when difficulties come along. Don't just hope for the best or wait and see if 'God will come through'. God has come through – He did so 2000 years ago as Jesus won the victory for you on the cross, defeating all the devil's schemes. Don't pray 'If it's Your will.' God's will is that you have the abundant life Jesus died to win for you. Do what God directs you to do about the issue and continue to speak His truth to 'these things' which cause suffering and difficulties, until they are resolved.

As you focus on God's love for you personally and renew your mind in His truth, speaking it out in the face of the things that come against you, you will start to see all things working together for good. Thank You Lord.

Being Born-Again

When you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour you become born-again. God becomes your Father and you His child, and you can start to enjoy your personal relationship with Him.

Romans 10:9 says – *'If you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.'* Say this prayer out loud and believe it in your heart – "Jesus, I declare that You are Lord and that God raised You from the dead to live forevermore. Thank You for dying for me personally. I receive my forgiveness and my salvation now. Thank You Jesus, my Lord and Saviour."

You are now born-again and Jesus has come to live in you. All your sins are forgiven, past, present and future, and you have a new perfect spirit. And after this life is over, you'll live in love, peace and joy with your Father God for ever.

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This is such a well-known verse,
but what exactly does it mean
and does it work for everybody?
Jesus came to give you abundant life,
so discover how you can resist the devil
when things come against you
and be more than a conqueror
in even the worst situations that you face.



Katherine Hilditch has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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