

## Transformed, Part 13 Romans 8:28-29 “A Truth With A Target”

It is one of the most *well known, often quoted, memorized, printed Scriptures* in all of the Bible, second only to probably John 3:16.

A)The Passage I am referring to is Romans 8:28 – **Most of you don't even need your Bibles today** – because you memorized that verse a long time ago.

B)Let's say it together “**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**”

C)We can **quote it – we have it memorized** – we use in conversation – sometimes in ways that we shouldn't – but do we really understand what it is saying. – Really? **Many don't**

Many believers think that Romans 8:28 means that if your situation is bad – cheer up, it is going to get better.

A)So If you lose your job – cheer up *all things work together for good* – means – you are going to get a better Job.

B)If your Boyfriend breaks up with you – cheer up, all things work together .... **God has a better guy in store for you.**

C)**Your spouse dies** – I don't even want to repeat some of the crazy things I have heard pp say in regard to that one and how they think – Romans 8:28 fits into that.

D)Now sometimes situations do change- **Testimonies** – Job loss that resulted in a better Job

1)A Break up that resulted in a better guy.

**So Sometimes the situation does change for the Better – but many times it does not!**

A)**It didn't for Paul** – He went from being jailed, beaten and ship wrecked to beheaded.

B)It didn't for Jesus – He went from being loved, to ridiculed, to betrayed, to crucified.

C)The situation doesn't always get better – **But God's purpose is ALWAYS carried out.**

D)**Situations don't always get better** - It hasn't for many pp in this room who live with an illness, who have lost a loved one. Lost a job

1)But the question is – **Have they got better?**

**See, this is the problem that we face if we interpret Romans 8:28 to mean that our situation is always going to get better.**

A)When it doesn't for many pp – they are left to wonder and struggle and think – **I must not love God enough – it says ... to those who love God...**

B)**Which usually leads them to wonder – Or is the problem that God really doesn't Love me ?**

1)Maybe I am not called according to His purpose

C)So Romans 8:28 is not saying that our situation is always going to change for the better.

**1)But it is saying God's purpose is ALWAYS carried out.**

**Today I want us to consider this very familiar verse and see what it is really saying.**

A)There is a specific TARGET to THIS TRUTH.

B)So there are Several things we need to note about this verse. Keys to Romans 8:28

A) **#1 Context**

B)Even though you can quote the verse I have asked you to turn there – **because it is important that we see the context** of where this verse is placed in the Bible.

Bb)The primary context of Romans 8 is seen in V.1 – **It is a celebration of justification.**

1)No condemnation for those who are in Christ.

C)The rest of the Chapter deals with the fact that God loves us so much that He has given us the HS to

**help us walk** in and enjoy the blessings of Justification.

1)Which ultimately results in our sanctification

**D)Given us the Holy Spirit to.....** V.4 HS is helping us to walk toward Sanctification.

V.11 The Spirit of God is empowering us

V.14 Leading us,

v.15 In our hearts crying out Abba Father –

**But The immediate context of Romans 8:28 is suffering.**

A)V.18 The Lord introduces the concept of suffering and how God is using it

B)Because we are living in this fallen world – longing to be redeemed – restored – put back

1)**Creation groans** – creation is longing

2)**We are longing** – We know that we are not what we will be –

3)**Holy Spirit it groaning** – interceding for us –

C)The HS also has that end in sight.

**That is the context that sets up this phrase –The Suffering of living in a fallen world being fallen pp - and the longings we experience.**

A)That is the context that sets up where Paul declares – **And we know that all things**

B){**all things means – all things** – all the suffering all the changes – all the good stuff and the bad Stuff.

**#2 Target audience – those who love God** – In other words this is not a universal promise, it is reserved for those who are in love with God.

**#3 Target goal** – called according to His purpose – The Target Purpose is His Purpose.

A)He has specific purpose for each one of our lives. For all True for all believers

B) And that is revealed for us in V.29 **For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.**

C)That is His Specific purpose – the thing that is true of all believers – His desire to **Conform us into the image of Jesus.** Ultimate target – bulls eye

D)We will **Talk more about Predestination and foreknowledge** and all of that next week.

1)But for today I want us to see and realize that to Conform us into the image of Jesus - that is the ultimate plan of God.

E)That is the purpose that God the Father is seeking to work out in each one of our lives

1)Make us more like Jesus- all things are working together for good – to that end – part of His purpose.

**He has a specific plan that fits into that – how you are going to reflect Jesus to your culture and world –**

A)How your life fits into the greater plan of God – His mission to redeem lost humanity.

B)He is working in us a specific and unique plan that fits into that overall purpose of God.

**Joseph is a classic example of how God orchestrates a life for His Specific plan and purpose.**

A)**Joseph was this remarkable young man** who had this deep heart for God.

Aa) He had this heart for God – He had dreams and visions.

B)One of them was on the **sun and the moon** and the 11 stars bowing down before his star.

1)Well, his whole family took that to mean that hey one day – I think all of you are going to bow down before me.

C)**Arrogant – little bro** – plus he was the favorite son of their father because he was the first born of his favorite wife Rachel –

1) **the one he worked a long time for in order to marry her.** {Another story for another time

**Joseph's life takes a dramatic change at a place called Dothan.**

A)Genesis – Pop says go check on your bros – Joseph sets out to find them –

B)He discovers they are camping in this place called Dothan – little village – **they are just outside of it.**

Bb)Bros recognize –Joseph – **Coat of many colors** – here comes the promised one –

1)Debate ensues – **kill him or sell him?**

C)Get nothing for him if we kill him so let's sell him

1)Midianite traders — **Bros take coat** – sorry dad, found this, Joe is dead.

**All things work together for good, right?**

A)Joseph's situation is going to get better, right – because that is what that verse means, right?

B)Well, the Midianites take Joe and sell him to the Egyptians as a slave – **Better ? Not really**

C)Joseph ends up being sold to a High ranking official – guy name Potiphar

1)**Good gig** – important guy –

D)Joseph quickly proves Himself trustworthy and Potiphar promotes him and puts him in Charge of his whole house.

**All things are working together – situation is changing for the better – really?**

A)**Still a slave, still separated from his family**, still far far far away from home.

B)And then it happens – Potiphar's wife gets the hots for Joseph – pursuing him –

1)The boss's wife wants to have sex with him – **He is resisting her advances.**

C)One day she grabs him – lie with me Joseph – Joseph flees youthful lust – runs right out of his clothes – first streaker in the Bible

D)**Potiphar's wife humiliated and angered** by the rejection – accuses Joseph of attempted rape -she is holding his cloak. He did flee naked or close

E)**Joseph is thrown in prison** – where he stays for several years – but hey, all things work together for good –

1)Situation didn't change for the better.

**Years go by – Joseph becomes known as one who can interpret dreams –**

A)He gets an audience with Pharaoh ....– appointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> in command..... great blessing

**B) See, the situation changed** – yes – after years, 13 years of being a slave and being in Prison.

1) But yes the situation did finally change.

**But listen it was not to bless Joseph primarily – THE PURPOSE OF GOD was to save His family.**

A) See this is what we read about Joseph – four times in Genesis – each time his situation changed.

**B) God was with Joseph** – each time

**C) He is always with us in the storm.**

1) Same way Jesus was with the disciples in the boat – sleeping, storm –

2) Amazed – who is this, the wind and waves..

D) He is always working all things together for good – for His Purpose.

**God was with Joseph !**

A) Bros come – Finally revealed – they are going to be saved

**B) Joseph makes this statement - Genesis 50:20**

**But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.**

Genesis 50:20

**“You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done.” NCV**

**C) Suddenly the 27 year plan and purpose of God is unfolded that day when Joseph is used by God to preserve the family of Jacob –**

1) Genesis 46:27 tells us that 70 pp total from Jacob’s family are brought to Egypt.

D) The family grows and spends the next 400yrs in Egypt – becoming a large nation – slavery

1) Rescued – led to a new land – where the nation of Israel is birthed

E) Messiah would come – a Savior for the world –

**What took place that day at Dothan when Joseph was sold to the midianites was all a part of God’s ultimate plan of redemption.**

A) The story of Joseph reminds us that God does accomplish His purposes – His purposes are not forgotten. { **Delays are not Denials**

B) Life is like the weaving of a tapestry – yarn side – random colors – other side is a beautiful design or picture. – OH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**There is always a bigger story within the Story!**

A) Two modern day examples – Nick Vujicic  
No arms /no legs

B)God is using him all over the world to preach the Gospel. – Didn't heal Him – greatly used Him.

C)Bethany Hamilton – Arm bit off by a shark

1)movie Soul surfer – used all over the world to preach the gospel

D)God has a purpose for your life as well that ultimately it revolves around making us – **LIKE JESUS-**

F)We cannot lose sight of the big picture.

Another Dothan – 2 Kings 6 – the Syrians are surrounding – the city is looking for Elijah

A)His servant Gehazi is freaking out

B)Open his eyes Lord – sees the big picture – He sees what is happening behind the scenes.

C)There is a big picture for our lives as well – Not just something good that is going to come out of this – but there is a SPECIFIC GOOD -

V.29 Conform you into the image of Jesus

A)We want to interpret Romans 8:28 to mean that God wants me Happy = situation changes for better

**Happiness is based on Happenings**

B)But more than your Happiness, God is concerned with your Holiness – Holy = Set apart – **Whole**

1)What He is doing in us to make us like Jesus

C)So when our situation changes difficulty strikes – and we want to embrace Romans 8:28 –

1)the question we need to be asking – **is not** when is the situation going to change for the better.

D)But rather – Lord how are you going to use this situation to make me Better. –

**How are you wanting to use this situation in my life to make me more like Jesus.**

A)That is the Target of this truth.

B)If the situation changes for the better – great – but the thing that will keep me from getting bitter when God delays, is realizing He is using this to make me BETTER.

C)He is using this to make me Like Jesus!

**So let me give you some examples of what this can look like Practically**

A)Gal who has her boyfriend break up with her – well meaning friends say **“All things= Another guy.**

B)**15 years go by** – there isn't another guy – now she is looking at potential of being single forever.



C) Here is how God is working into her to make her like Jesus –

1) God is working into her this **incredible compassion** for those who are lonely.

D) He uses her to impact other singles to find their fulfillment in Jesus not in the hope of a spouse.

1) She is becoming this tremendous encourager

The gal who loses her spouse. – She is not even interested in another. {Not better situation

A) Here is how God is using this in her life.

Aa) God is working into her the same type of heart that was in Jesus – **she has this greater longing for eternity.**

B) She is losing her grip on the temporal and becoming much more **focused on the eternal.**

1) Through it she is more open than ever, more willing to go wherever the Lord would send her.

Take the guy who lost his job – now he has a job that doesn't pay as much as his old job.

A) Here is how God is working that into His life so he too is losing his grip on the material.

B) Jesus is working in him to be more free – and he is in a job that gives **him a greater opportunity** to share Jesus with others.

D) He is now in a place where he used to be on the top end of the economic scale/ now he is on the bottom. –

1) Like Jesus He has a Greater compassion for pp who **are struggling financially**

Take the woman whose life was turned upside down by adultery.

A) Her husband cheated on her and then ran off with his mistress – leaving their family in shambles.

B) She loved this man – loved their family life together.

C) All things work together doesn't necessarily mean – **new husband – she is not interested.**

1) That is not what she is waiting around for

D) But here is what God is doing – through this experience –

1) God has worked deeply into her a profound understanding of what Jesus went through to be **betrayed by someone He loved.**

She has a keen awareness of the Fellowship of Christ's suffering.

A) She has a greater understanding of that pain – and

B) Jesus is working in her a willingness – to trust again – to love others.

1) Like Jesus what it means to love others – and make her self vulnerable to others – even though she might get hurt

C) Jesus gave to those He knew would turn on Him

D) He is using all of it – Make her like Himself

Take an issue in my life – doesn't really even compare with those examples.

A) My Hip – I was so athletic – such a huge part of my life

B) 1995 I was playing B. Ball 3 times a week at lunch – walking probably – 10-15 miles a week.

C) 1996 I move here – within months – Hip problems

1) Long story short – Hip replacement –  
Low impact life – Running Basketball – no more

D) God didn't heal me – the operation didn't fix me –

1) My Situation didn't change for the better. – I can walk without pain now Yes.

E) But it affected my whole lifestyle.

But here is how it changed me.

A) I was not a very compassionate person toward those who suffered from Physical ailments

B) My mentality was always – Work it out – Train harder – do more –

C) Suddenly through this – God has used this – to make me more compassionate like Jesus is toward suffering.

1) Made me a better Pastor, better Dad, a better husband.

God even uses our failures to that end to make us more like Jesus.

A) Take Peter – so Prideful – spokesman – Boasted, though all these guys forsake you..... not me

B) Then He commits the ultimate sin – Denies 3 times that He even knows Jesus.

C) Peter ends His 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle by saying Grow

1) The last thing He wants to say to the believers is Grow – How?

D) Grow in Holiness/ Grow in serving/ Grow in your discipline in Bible reading ?

1) Grow in your evangelism

Nope – He says Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of who Jesus is.

A) Peter through His failure, became a recipient of Grace – God's undeserved favor.

B) It made Him more of a gracious man – Less self dependent, more God dependent –

1) Grow in Grace –



**So all things work {are working} together for good to those who love God and are called according to His Purpose**

Close today by going back to Joseph

**Joseph is a type of Christ – Joseph was betrayed and given up by his bros – purpose was to Save many.**

**Jesus – Came knowing – He would be betrayed and given over to those who would Kill him.**

**A)The Purpose of His death was to save many.**

**B)He went to the Cross – take our pain – pay the price for our Redemption.**

**C)Remember His death today – Communion**

**1)Two cups – Bread – body broken – absorbed the penalty**

**D)Juice – His blood – shed**

**You are here today – Don't know Jesus  
Not Saved – call out to Him**

**His Name saved**

**For those of us are saved – Communion is a unique opportunity – remember – also embrace His will – His purpose.**

**Take up your cross – follow me**

**Cross is not a burden – instrument of death that brought blessings – salvation to others**

**Say: I Embrace whatever it is – Jesus You are using it to make me more like You.**

**Willing to go through this if You are using it to make me better – more like Jesus**

**Willing to go through this if – You are going to use it so my life can impact others**

**Willing to go through this if  
Part of my Story that results in Your glory!**

**Embrace Your cross – Your Plan**