

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Romans 8:28-30

28And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

All Things Together for Glory

Main idea: God works all things according to the counsel of His will, which is determined to adopt us.

Introduction: What we don't know vs what we do know.

1. We know what God has done

- a. It must be He Who has made us love Him, because it couldn't be we who did it.
- b. He must have effectually called us in order to do this, because we couldn't call ourselves.
- c. And it must have been His purpose to do this, because we wouldn't have purposed it.
- d. Therefore, we know already the purpose according to which the Spirit intercedes

2. We know what God is doing

- a. God is working all things together for good. But what good? Not good as we define it, but good as God defines it. The good that has already begun in our being called and coming to know and love God.
- b. We have only just now come to know and love Him, but He has always known and loved us. He didn't just foreknow about us. He foreknew us ourselves. Indeed, we have only partially come to know and to love Him.

3. We know what God will do

- a. God will fulfill His purpose
- b. The purpose that included forgiving us, making us alive (calling/regeneration), justifying us, and making us love Him (sanctification) is not yet completed.
- c. The future part of that purpose (glorification) is just as sure the past and present parts. Thus, "glorified" is in the past tense.
- d. What is glorification? To be conformed to the image of His Son. To know and love God like the Son does. What does that look like for us? It looks like the glorified humanity of the Lord Jesus.

Conclusion: Ultimately, what God is doing is not about us. It is about His Son

being the firstborn among many brethren. But abounding generosity purposed to bring us into this plan. All things work together for Christ's glory. And all things therefore work together for our glory.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 8, verse 28, through 30. These are god's words.

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. For whom he for knew he also predestined. To be conformed to the image of his son. That he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he predestined these, he also called Whom he called. These, he also justified. And whom he justified. These, he also glorified So, for the reading of god's inspired, and And errant worked. So, we've been hearing for several months now. Uh, we who believe in the lord jesus christ and yet are still in this world.

Still in the body of this death still living. And And working. In the midst of a creation that is bound to corruption and decay. We groan and we grown not only for the redemption. Of our bodies for the resurrection that will come at the last day that day for which the creation grows, because, in it, it will finally be released and it will participate in and enjoy the glorious, freedom of the children of god.

But we grown, especially over our remaining sin. Uh, we cry out because the good that we want to do, we don't do the evil that we hate that we do. God has given us a new nature. He has given us a spiritual resurrection from the lord jesus christ, but the consequence of having come to To delight in the law of god, in our inner being, is that we grieve over the breaking of that law.

By. Our own breaking of that law in our remaining sin, which is always with us. The spirit of god dwells in us and we are in christ and we are in the spirit. We are no longer in the flesh. We are no longer dead in our sin, but our sin continues to remain to dwell.

In us. And so, the christian life does include a A significant amount of grief, a significant amount of groaning. And one of the things. Then that are often bothers the question as we don't know. What to pray for or how to pray for what we ought? What we heard last week that there are two problems.

We don't know. Exactly. What we should be praying for and even when we do know something of what we should pray for, we do not know how to pray for it correctly. And so this, Uh, we do not know in verse 26 is now matched by the holy spirit, in his mercy, and his kindness with a wonderful.

And we know In verse 28. There is that which we do not know and that, which we do know, And bless God, what we know is a derivative of, as a Comes from that which god himself knows. And of course he knows all things, we marveled. Last week in preaching and in prayer that he knows himself.

We are. Mysteries to ourselves our hearts, our deceitful of all things as part of God's great glory, that he knows us inside out. But it is infinitely more amazing quite literally Uh, that he knows himself. Than even that he knows. Uh, even that he knows. Us. And so we have this wonderful and we And we know, Um, and it's a it's a knowing That.

That we can layhold of because of something that exists in ourselves. Now, Uh, we know how what god has done. By a reality that presently exists in ourselves that That could not have come. Any other way. Perhaps, you have had. A moment or even a season in your christian life and which you weren't sure that you were a christian.

Uh, you were sure that centers deserve hell. You were sure that jesus has died for sinners. You are sure that no one for whom he has died. Could ever be lost but as As troubled, john Newton's friend william cooper. Who knew all these things? And yet he did know about himself.

That he was one of these. For whom jesus had died, he knew all about what a christian is and what a christian receives. He just Didn't know. That he was a christian. And perhaps you have at times, When you had these doubts and had these concerns and it is all, it is a horrible thing.

Uh, not to know that you are a christian. It is a very difficult and grievous thing. Perhaps you have been, like, i used to be Um, when i was Uh, less. Well, instructed or perhaps. I was better instructed than Then i had responded to. But i would think back to times in my christian life, where i thought, i had really believed.

In the lord jesus christ, but that was not. That was not nearly as helpful a place to begin. Uh, as Verse 28 does. We know that all things work together? To for good to those who love. God. And so we know what god has done not by looking back at a, at a time, or a moment, if we did really believe the it was god, who graciously worked in us to give us that faith.

But we can even now if god has made us love him, if god has made us long, that we would be with him and hate our sin because it grieves him and desire that his Hope the the hope in, which he bound the creation in corruption and decay the hope in which he saved us that it would be realized that that which he has desired his glory in the lord jesus christ.

His glory in saving us by the lord jesus christ, that that which he desires should come true if we love him. And therefore, We desire his glory and we desire his purpose. There's only one place That that could have come from. We could not give ourselves love for him.

We know that there is nothing good in us. That is in our flesh that we came into this world as those who are sold under slavery to send. Those who are entirely corrupt. If there is any love in us for god, it must have come out from outside of us.

It must have come from god. And so if you are here this evening, And you love god. And you hate your sin. And your sin grieves you And you wish you could love him more, you wish you could know him more. You wish you could obey him more. That didn't come from you.

It came from him. And if he came from him, Than it means that he is the one who has called us according to his purpose. We know that all things work together for good to those who love god. Because if you love god, then, you know, some things that God has done.

God is the one who has called, you not just in the way that the word calls everybody, whenever it is faithfully preached. But god himself has called you from your heart. God, the spirit has used his word To not just wake your heart up as if it was sleeping.

But give your heart resurrection because it was dead. And he has drawn you to himself, dragged you To himself. And if he called you, then it was according to his purpose, not according to your purpose. You didn't desire? You didn't desire to be given spiritual life or to love.

God. Those desires come from spiritual life. So, if you are a lover of god, Than it is because he has called you. According to his purpose. Now, that is very exciting in verse 28, Because we know something else that is being done, according to his purpose, according to his mind, according to his will from verse 27.

Remember verse 27 from last week, he who searches the hearts. He knows our heart. Our hearts are deceitful above all things, but he knows our hearts inside and out. But not only does, he know our hearts, he knows his own heart, he knows his own mind, Now, he who searches the heart knows what the mind of the spirit is.

Because he that is the spirit makes intercession for the saints. According to God, And so we can see i have a little bit of love for God. And i'm grieved over how little bit. Of a love for god, i But the fact that i have, it means that i can know something.

About how the spirit prays for me. I do not know what how to pray for what i ought. So, the spirit helps me. But he also makes intercession for me, and although i do not know for how to pray for what i ought. I do know something. About how the spirit is praying for me.

He's praying, according to the purpose. That resulted in my being called, He's praying, according to the purpose. That resulted in my loving god. And so, not only then, can i know something about what God has done. I know something about what god in the second place is doing. Because not only is god the spirit making intercession for me, according to the same purpose that brought me to love God in the first place.

But god, who knows the mind of his spirit is working. Exactly. According to how the spirit is interceding for me. In fact, it is god, the holy spirit, who is at work in all creation, and all providence, even from the first moment of creation, When? The scripture describes him as hovering over brooding over the water.

So that we may know that as god creates and particularly got the sun creates the word creates and genesis chapter 1. He is always doing that work by his spirit, the whole rest of genesis chapter 1 and it is god, the spirit who continues to be the one by whom god.

The word, who, upholds, all things by the word of his power. The one by whom he works. And so god is interceding for us. And god is working according to that intercession And since he has already begun, To be good to us. We know that he will complete being good to us, we know that all things work together.

For good. To those who love god. Now. There are many people who take encouragement from that verse. But they're forgetting who gets to define. What is good? And so, They? They take it to mean. Uh, we know that. Uh, god is Always making sure that i avoid lots of car accidents.

And god is always guarding me from a lots of microbes and cancer. And enemies. And yes, god does protect us from. And unimaginable number of all those things all the time. It is a continuous and marvelous miracle the way the god preserves us even physically. And yet when he says, we know that all things work together for good, he means the good that the spirit prays for the good that god knows from the mind of the spirit, what he is groaning for for us, the good that was behind the purpose.

That resulted in our being called that resulted in our loving him.

And so, the good is not good as we define it. But good as god defines it. And that good is found in the very beginning of verse 29. For whom. For new. Whom. He? For new. This is not just that god knew all about us in advance, that's true.

Which by the way, is not a happy thing, you can't use this. To get out of election and get out of free destination and say, well god knew those who would choose him. Well. That's true. But he knew that even in their choosing him, they wouldn't do so with a whole heart and they would do something with all sorts.

Of sinful motivations right alongside there there Right, and true and good motivations that had come from him to begin with. And are choosing him being one of the one of the best goods, the first good that he ever carried us to do. And one of the best goods that he ever carries us to do and every other obedience and every other service, and every other moment, And affection and act of love unto God.

There is a choosing him that he continues to give to us. But what God knew about us from? All eternity. Includes all of our remaining sin to this day. But this isn't even about. God knowing all about us. Praise god. Even though he did does and did no all about us.

He? For new. Us. This is the knowing of a person. This is annoying. That is the reciprocal or rather of our loving him in verse 28, or rather. Our loving him is the reciprocal of this knowing We have come to know and to love him. But it's because from all eternity.

He knew us. And he loved us. This is a personal knowing whom he for knew. Because he decided to know us. And he decided to love us. This is why. He predestined.

As the lord says to israel. He loved them. Because he loved them Deuteronomy. Well, he loves us. Because he locked us. Now, we have only just now come to know and to love him but he has always known from all eternity. He for new. His saints. He forned you.

Those who have come to love him. And not just, Uh, not only does his knowledge superior and that it's from all eternity. It's his knowledge of us is superior and that It is complete. He has known and loved us complete, we know him. So, partially We love him. So, partially

But we know then what he is doing. The good towards which All things are working together towards which he is working all things together. That we might know him more. That we might love him more. You don't have to. At after something happens. And, and It's difficult at first and then later on you discover some good or some blessing that the lord brought out of it.

You don't have to at that point say oh now i know why God did this. No. The the good towards, which all things work together, for those who love him, is that we might know him more. And that we might love him more. And there isn't anything else in our life.

That is good unless it is producing that You wouldn't say? That a financial windfall is good or a healing is good, or an escape is good. If as a result of it, you didn't come to know God more. You didn't come to love God more. And so this is the very definition.

Of that good towards, which he works all things together for your life. And you can take that confidence, that certainty that is. In philippians one, six, being confident of this very thing that he who has begun the good work in, you will bring it to completion in the day of christ jesus.

You could take that past and you could take that future, he who began and he will complete. And you can apply it to the present because it's the same good in this passage. We know that. All things work together. For the progression of that good work that has been begun in us as begun in us.

We know that all things work together. For the progression of that work, that will be completed in the day of christ, jesus. That's the good, that's what he's doing. So we know what God has done and we know what god is doing. Because we know what god will do or Better future.

Perfect. We know what god will have done. He will have fulfilled. All of his purpose. Perhaps, you have wondered at times like, Like, i had. Why the golden chain in verse? 30 seems to be missing some links. Particularly the link of sanctification. Whom he predestined, he also called whom he called DC.

Also justified him. He justified these, he also glorified You know, election regeneration. Justification and dot and adoption. Come together. Sanctification right then. By way of sanctification glorification, where is it? Well, we're in the midst of it. That's the difficulty to begin with. We love but not like we should It was already there in verse 28, wasn't it?

We are imperfectly sanctified but we are being sanctified. And it's because that's the link that we're on. That we can use it to to reach back to. How did i come to love him? How did you come to love him? Because he Knew you and loved you from before the world began.

And therefore he was determined for this entire rest of the chain to happen, which began with that calling that produced the law.

Those whom he called also justified those. When we justified He also glorified. The purpose that included, forgiving us and making us alive, and making us righteous before god through faith in jesus christ and making us love him. Then. It's not yet completed. And yet the future part. Glorification. Being made like jesus knowing god, like jesus knows him in his human nature.

Loving god, like jesus loves him in his human nature. Such an excites you. That jesus still has a human nature. Otherwise, you can say one day, i'll know God, like jesus does. If you only has a divine mind, If he doesn't also have a human mind. Then you and i can't actually get anything out of one day.

I'll love god. Like jesus does. Because you and I are never going to be divine. But jesus in his glory. Is both god and still also men.

And that is, So sure to be completed for us. For you who love God. Now, That you will know him, like jesus knows. And you will love him. Like jesus loves him. And it is so certain. That this passage actually puts it in the past tense. Whom he justified.

These, he also glorified, you see? You're calling didn't become certain. Because it happened. It was absolutely certain because it was decreed within God. It is decreed within god from all eternity. And, You're being justified didn't become certain because it happened. It's not certain because you can look back on it.

It's certain because god looked forward to it and determined it within himself. And you're coming to love him. You're wherever you are and you're sanctification. Isn't sure. Because you see it and you perceive it and you experience it. It's not based on empiricism or rationalism. That you can figure it out and understand it or that you have evidence for it?

Your loving him is certain because he decided that he would make you someone who loves him. Well, your glorification. You don't experience it yet. We don't yet see it for who hoops for what he sees. But if we hope for what we do, not see we wait for it.

Eagerly with perseverance you remember? From a couple weeks ago. But it already has, it's certainty. Because it gets at certainty from god, having determined it? God having purposed it. And this is, His ultimate purpose for us. This is the destiny of predestination. You know, being forgiven is not what you're predestined to because being forgiven is not your destination.

In fact, it's kind of a starting point at least in our experience.

Our destination. Is in verse 20. 29. Whom he formed you, those whom, he knew and loved from all eternity, these he predestined, To be conformed to the image of his son. That's what glorification is that's what glorious. To know god like jesus does to love god, like jesus does.

Because ultimately, God's plan is not about us. That would actually be sinful. Because god is the one to whom. The kingdom and the power and the glory. Belong forever and ever. God's plan is about god's glory. About god's glory in god's son. And yet in a pounding generosity. In an ocean of love and goodness, and generosity.

That we will plumb forever. And never reach the bottom off. God's plan for his glory. In his son was that we Would be glorified together with him.

He predestined us to be conformed. To the image of his son. See all things are working together for christ's glory. And because god loved us so much that he decided, That he would glorify himself in christ. By making him the firstborn among many brethren. All things therefore work together.

For your Glory. So perhaps it will help you to think of it this way. It's probably a favorite verse for everyone in here.

But when he says, we know that all things work together for good. He's saying isn't he all things work together? For glory.