

God's Perfect Care

Romans 8:28

This is the tippy top of this peak chapter of the Bible. This is something of the best of the best. “All things work together for good” rolls off of our tongues more easily perhaps than any other verse in the Bible. It is short, succinct, deep truth, which for whatever reason, fits so well. It is more accessible than saying “well, how providential”. And it is certainly more warm and comforting, since when we stub our toe, we don't say, “now wasn't that providential!”

This verse touches on the care God has uniquely for you and for me. It is not to be thought of as a lucky charm, but something to be believed, held close and to grip us.

The care of God is an astounding matter! It is something we can never fully think of perfectly. That the infinite God who made all things out of nothing, would take dust of the earth and not only make us into his own image, but show such goodness and love to such tiny creatures! To care for us, not for a little while, like koi in a new pond – but to think and purpose from past eternity and work all things for our good so as to bring us into eternal dwellings with Him!

O, how different is the God of heaven from those made by men's hands on earth!

How beautifully has this been captured by our Confessions!

The Heidelberg Catechism says:

Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand. (Question 27)

Begin with the three, mighty and unfailing hands beneath this text – that God’s care today is based on his past care; God’s care is oriented toward the future and eternity; and God’s care is a present-tense care – a nest upon a mountain unlike any other.

First, His care is an eternally **purposed** care – God has been working all things together for good before there were all things! (Repeat) This text is running to verses 29-30, that your call to this care was not thought up yesterday or an hour ago. God has been doing you good before you were you, before you were born, before your parents were alive, or their parents. This is a predestined care. God was doing you good from all eternity, because he fore-loved you, fore-distinguished you – unworthy though you be.

*Unnumbered comforts to my soul Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived from whom those comforts
flowed.*

Second, His care is eternally **unending** care. It should be no surprise that this verse rides to us on the waves of hope in 24-27. The will of God accomplished by the Spirit in you brings you from where you are now in your weakness to where you must be in glorification in Christ. As good as God’s doing you good here, it is not worthy to be compared to God’s future working of good hereafter. All the good we

see working together today, as great as it is – and it is great – is joined with God’s unfolding purpose in the future. These good streams in this life pour into the ocean of eternal love in his immediate presence,

Then third, His is a **present** care – everything **IS** co-working your good. Now think of it: what a tremendous blessing if this verse said, God works all things for good in the past, and now you must travel through a rough time on your own, but He will see you on the other side! The future good is worth the wait, isn’t it? But He is with you to care for you now. He has never failed you. He can never fail you! He has bought you with his own blood! And if He appears to say no, or withhold something you desire, can you not trust his wisdom, goodness and richness toward you in a 1000 other ways!? Here is where the greatness of God’s arm, the scope of all his doings, help us know him as our keeper, our caregiver, now and forever.

Now we move on from past, present and future to His **peculiar** or special care, not for all but for his own. Now God does much good to the wicked every day. Yet God is *against* the wicked every day, and withholds from them greatest good. All of this verse, ‘All Things for Good,’ is all treasured up in Christ, in that God spared nothing for you! If God did not spare his Son, how shall he not with him freely give you everything else besides? This is part of his being your God, and giving himself to you. He cannot not be God, and if He is your God, He cannot not be your God! (repeat) Watson says, He must be your good Physician, to heal you and make you whole; your Father, who provides, protects and leads you; your Husband who has engraved you on his hand, on his heart as his bride; He is your Friend – your best Friend, your faithful Friend who sticks closer than a

brother, your unchangeable Friend who will never leave or forsake you! Even in all your afflictions, He cannot not be touched with the feeling of your infirmities.

Next His care then is **personal**. It would be one thing, a great thing, were God to commit to walk with you always, to be with you, to go along for the ride; but that is not what He does. We are going along on His ride. All things of this life combine to become a god to us. But God's working all things for good has to include setting the first commandment of life before you – that he is God, your God, and not these toys of the earth. His care for you is personal, treating you as though you were the only one, and yet not the only one as though you were the center of the universe. How wonderfully this gives us a right perspective on the world, keeping all things under our feet and not in our hearts, for God lives and reigns there!

Now three more very briefly: His care is **all-inclusive**. What we speak of here is not only for some of his people but for every Christian – including the weakest, worst, and most tested. We tend to limit God and say He can only work all things together in a specific environment. But at the bottom there is a trusting the creature rather than the Creator. This verse is for you if you are a believer! “Little is much when God is in it!” And this also says something to how we treat brothers and sisters in Christ. How often have you thought upon the fact that God is working all things together for good for someone else?!

Then His care is a **complete** care. Nothing of his ‘things’ fall outside this verse – God rules over everything... read Eph. 1.11. Understand that all things for good includes the best things and the worst things. It

is inclusive of the good, the bad and the ugly. Unless God blesses the good, it is not good; unless the Lord builds the house, we labor in vain. The best things of life – how empty are they without the Lord! Then, the worst things work together for good. We have seen that God the Holy Spirit does not take away all weakness from us when we are saved in verse 26. Warfield sees how the heights of Romans 8 are very much a response to the depths of Romans 7. 8.28 is the answer to “O wretched man that I am – who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” The horror of indwelling sin is followed by the glory of the indwelling Spirit; the law of the flesh is met by the law of the spirit of life. Rather than the Christian fighting, God enters the battle. So God didn’t promise here a rose garden without thorns. But he promised the thorns will no longer curse you as the wrath of a justly angry God. The evil of afflictions, of temptations, and even of sin, are not ultimate, and cannot undo the good He works in and for you. Without calling evil good, God knows how to bring good out of evil. These are inscrutable things, things we cannot fully grasp and yet believe, and adore and worship! “O the depths!”

Lastly, His care is **continual**, constant, unbroken. There are no lapses. He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps! This is so not for most of the time but for all time – not only almost good at all times for all of his people, but sovereignly and truly good for them every moment of every day, covering all things. This is not for the young only, or the seasoned only. Not for Sunday’s only. How wonderfully self-committed God is to doing you good! He who established his throne in the heavens, who has established the earth that it cannot be moved, has taken up residence in your heart, you who are a little worm in his sight, to do you good always and at all times! And he will

do you good to the end, he will do you good no matter what is ahead of you. How this should calm our fears, our worries, the waves of anger, our discouragements that overwhelm us. Indeed this God will be our guide, even unto death; and even through those cold, dark and daunting gates – Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil!

Conclusion: This peak of the best chapter is not about you working all good together, not about you, but God gaining glory. As great as all you have hopefully taken to heart today for your edification, this is to be directed in all thanks and praise to Him; all glory and worship to our Father; all trust and obedience to Jesus our Savior; all hunger and hope in the Spirit.

Why we need to turn to our second message – based on the “We Know” which begins this verse.

Amen.