

THE 'ALL THINGS' THAT WORK FOR OUR GOOD

Romans 8:28-28 -

By Conrad Mbewe

Sunday, 18 January 2009 00:00

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(Expositions in Paul's Epistle to the Romans: No 145)

TEXT: Romans 8:28

INTRODUCTION

After a break of about one month, we return to our series of expositions in Paul's epistle to the Romans. We are still in this very rich verse that has spoken comfort to millions of Christians around the world and right across history—Romans 8:28. Having had a bird's-eye-view of its contents, last time (14th December 2008) we looked at its second clause, i.e. the first description of its beneficiaries—those who love God. We saw that “love” describes the Christian because of God's love for us, and our love for God is one that is tested by adverse providences. Today, we ask the question, “What are the ‘all things’ that work for our good?”

FROWNING PROVIDENCE

We need to assert from the very beginning that ALL THINGS means ALL THINGS. You do not need a PhD to see that! The apostle Paul is seeking to counter the mindset that excludes some events in a Christian's life from being a blessing to him. Because of what the apostle is aiming to achieve, it is clear that although he is talking about ALL THINGS, he primarily has frowning providences in mind (see 5:3, 8:18, 35-37). It is when adverse circumstances come into our lives that we ask the question, “How can this be for my good?” It is even worse when the suffering we are going through is something we brought on ourselves. Include even that!

THERE IS NO TOTAL EVIL

What this comprehensive assertion means is that there is no absolute evil in a Christian's life. God is able to glorify himself even through things that are sinful. So, from the Fall in the Garden of Eden, God has been able to manifest his grace. Joseph is sold as a slave because of his brothers' jealousy and lands in jail because of refusing sexual sin, but in the end—precisely because of that—he saves many people from starvation and death. What we need is to realize that history has a purpose. God never allows things to happen in the world, and especially in the

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lives of Christians, without a purpose—a good purpose. This is comforting!

GOD USES CONTRARIES

Another biblical fact that we need to realize is that God loves to work by contraries. It seems that this is what makes his glory to shine out. There are many examples of this in the Bible. In creating, God brought something out of nothing, and light out of darkness. On the cross of Christ, he brought glory out of shame, and life out of death. God uses valleys to make mountains really stand tall. Anyone who fails to realize this will fail to find the will of God for his life. In the same way, God uses frowning providences in your life to bless you. He humbles you in order to exalt you, as was the case with Joseph and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

Are you going through a period of suffering? Have you spent many nights weeping your heart out, wondering what good can come out of such a sore trial? Have you been kicking at yourself for the indiscretion that brought you to the point of messing up your life? Believe God's rich promise that for those who love him, ALL THINGS will work for your good. ALL THINGS! Put your hand in his and close your eyes, and let him lead you as he sees fit. Trust him that in his wisdom he allowed you to follow your foolish heart for a season because he wanted something good to come out of even that experience. God is leading you. Amen!

Romans 8:28-28 (ESV)

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, [\[1\]](#) for those who are called according to his purpose. (

[ESV](#)

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Footnotes

[\[1\]](#) 8:28 Some manuscripts *God works all things together for good*, or *God works in all things for the good*