God Finishes What He Starts February 28, 2021

*Romans 8:28-30 Series: How God Helps Us Change*

Everything is necessary that he sends. Nothing can be necessary that he withholds. – John Newton

Intro: Living in a house that is under renovation

1. God’s plan is to use all of life’s circumstances for our good
2. God makes a promise to His people

v. 28 *for those who love God*

v. 28 *those who are called according to his purpose*

1. Everything in our lives is used for our good

v. 28 *all things work together for good*

Genesis 50:20 *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

1. Good is defined by God’s purposes not ours

v. 28 *those who are called according to his purpose*

Chadwick Boseman: *Sometimes you need to feel the pain and sting of defeat to activate the real passion and purpose that God predestined inside of you.*

* If you just read “all things work together for good” without the rest of the paragraph, how might you misunderstand it?
* In Joseph’s life, at what point could he see that God had a good plan for him? When will we fully see God’s good plan for us?
* Are there terrible circumstances in your life that you can now see how God used them for His good purposes?

1. God’s plan is to make us like Jesus
2. God makes a promise to those whom He foreknew

v. 29 *those whom he foreknew*

D. J. Moo: Paul does not say that God knew anything about us but that he knew us.

Jeremiah 1:5 *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.*

Genesis 18:19 *For I have chosen [lit. known] him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.*

Romans 11:2 *God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.*

1. God is restoring His image in us

v. 29 *he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son*

1. God is shaping our family resemblance

v. 29 *in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers*

* Why is it unlikely that Paul is saying that God predestined those whom He knew would believe in Him?
* If God works in all of our circumstances to make us more like Jesus, how should that change how we approach suffering?
* How does it change the way you think about your growth in righteousness if you understand that God has predestined to conform you to the image of Jesus? Is that encouraging or discouraging? Why?

1. God’s plan is to perfect those whom He’s chosen
2. All who are predestined by God are called by Him

v. 30 *those whom he predestined he also called*

Ephesians 1:4-5 … *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will …*

1. All who are called by God are justified by Him

v. 30 *those whom he called he also justified*

Galatians 2:16 … *yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.*

1. All who are justified by God are glorified by Him

v. 30 *those whom he justified he also glorified*

Philippians 1:6 *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

* If God justifies all whom He calls, what does it mean to be called in v. 30?
* When we say of someone, “he’s always justifying himself,” it usually means that he’s proud or defensive. What does it mean to be justified by God? How is that different?
* What does it mean to be “glorified”?
* According to v. 30, why is it impossible for someone to be genuinely converted and then ‘lose their faith’?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Romans 8:31-39.

Notes