“The Seeds You Plant”

October 21, 2018

I Thessalonians 5:12-24

Please find with me the eighth chapter of the Book of Romans.

When was the last time you had a tough day? This is said to have been reported on a company accident as an account of what had happened that day.

“When I got to the building I found that the hurricane had knocked off some bricks around the top. So I rigged up a beam with a pulley at the top of the building and hoisted up a couple barrels full of bricks. When I had fixed the damaged area, there were a lot of bricks left over. Then I went to the bottom and began releasing the line.

Unfortunately, as I released the line, I realized the barrel of bricks was much heavier than I was—and before I knew what was happening the barrel started coming down, jerking me up.

I decided to hang on since I was too far off the ground by then to jump, and halfway up I met the barrel of bricks com-ing down fast. I received a hard blow on my shoulder. I then continued to the top, banging my head against the beam and getting my fingers pinched and jammed in the pulley. When the barrel hit the ground hard, it burst its bottom, allowing the bricks to spill out.

I was now heavier than the barrel. So I started down again at high speed. Halfway down I met the barrel coming up fast and received severe injuries to my shins. When I hit the ground, I landed on the pile of spilled bricks, getting several painful cuts and deep bruises. At this point I must have lost my presence of mind, because I let go of my grip on the line. The barrel came down fast—giving me another blow on my head and putting me in the hospital. I respectfully request sick leave.” [Found on [www.insight.org](http://www.insight.org) “Tough Days – Part One” by Pastor Charles Swindoll, September 6, 2017].

That’s one way of looking at a tough day.

How many of you have children? Do you think your children will ever understand why you, Dad or Mom said what you said or did what you did? Do you really think your children understand your decisions? What’s wrong with children when they don’t understand the decisions their parents make?

Let’s suppose you take the time to explain it. Do they then understand your reasoning? Is there something wrong with that son or daughter for *not* understanding? No. Your son or your daughter is simply being a child while you, the adult, are simply being a parent. So, can you agree with me that children, generally speaking, don’t understand the workings of their parent’s mind, especially when those decisions directly affect them? GTFR

Now, parents, I’m going to read a Bible verse to you. Please do your best to apply what you just agreed with me about to this passage. Romans 8:28 *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

Now, go one step further. *You’re* the child. Your parent is God. You’re His son or His daughter. You know Him and you love Him. And He has *His* purpose in mind for your day. And He’s working all the things in *your* life together for good. So, here’s the question. Do you understand the workings of your Heavenly Father’s mind when *He* makes decisions that affect you or when He allows things to come into your life that don’t seem to make sense?

By the way, I did that to trick you. Just like a child doesn’t’ understand why his parents said or did what they did; we, the LORD’s children, won’t fully understand why He allows what allows into our lives.

I’ve titled today’s message “The Seeds That You Plant.” Shall we pray?

Some of you have read Robert Lewis Stevenson’s greatest work, “Treasure Island”. Did you know that he joined another writer and wrote a sequel to “Treasure Island”? They titled it “Admiral Guinea: Don’t Judge Each Day by The Harvest You Reap, But by the Seeds That You Plant.” Interesting title, isn’t it? It’s a play about a retired slave trader who wouldn’t allow his daughter to marry an ungodly young man; that is, until the young man manages to help Admiral Guinea save his huge treasure chest full of gold medallions and jewels and chains.

I want you to see the truth of the seeds that you plant from this eighth chapter today. Please follow with me at verse twenty-eight. Romans 8:28 *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

*(29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”*

You don’t have to be a farmer to know that the harvest always comes at the end. And what is it that comes at the end of your life? What is it that God intends for the end of your life? Verse twenty-nine; *“Them He also glorified.”*

That’s the end. Now what’s happening today? What are those seeds that you are planting? Each day you either know that God is working all things together for good for you or each day you don’t know that He is working all things together for good for you.

What are the seeds? They are the things you have surrendered to the LORD each day of your life. So, your seeds are your daily responses to what God allows to come into your path; things that He’s working together for your good.

Please learn with me what the Holy Spirit is teaching here in this passage.

First, the links in the Divine Chain of God’s that He’s working out upon your life.

That chain begins in the LORD’s heart. And here are the links; verse twenty-nine. *His* foreknowledge, your predestination and your conformity to the likeness of Christ; *His* personal calling upon you, *His* purpose, and *your* justification and *your* glorification.

Foreknowledge, predestination, calling and purpose. These are all on God’s side of the things God has already prescribed for your life, which includes those things that come into your daily experience. But your life, your Christian life, began with your justification and will end with your glorification. Can you see the chain? Can you see that this Divine Chain extends from God’s heart directly into your life?

In the past, God had both a purpose and a plan. And that plan included His foreknowing you and His predestining you to be conformed to Christ’s likeness. And the future, which is just as definite as the past; your glorification.

Most of us, most of the time, have so little awareness of the big picture of our lives that we oftentimes become completely baffled by things we have to go through. And the reason is simple. We, not only can’t see the beginning, we can’t see the end either. Only He can.

So, let’s be honest. When things go the way they are going in your life right now, are you judging your day by the harvest to come or by the seeds *you* are planting today? The harvest will come. And the harvest always comes at the end. And the end is your glorification.

So, what about today? Here’s the snapshot as given in the Bible of what your life looks like today. Romans 8:28 *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

First, the links in the Divine Chain of God’s that He’s working out upon your life. Folks, if you have little or no concept of this Divine Chain, don’t be surprised if you are often confused or baffled by the things He allows to come your way. A while back a man who is facing a very difficult medical issue, said this to me. *“Why is God doing this to me?”* Well, part of the answer is right here in the Bible.

First, the links in the Divine Chain of God’s that He’s working out upon your life.

Second, God’s sovereign hand upon you is accomplishing His purpose for you; verse twenty-eight. If you think that God controls His entire universe, what makes you think He can’t oversee the things that are part of *your* daily life? Here’s what the Bible teaches. Romans 8:28 *“****And we know that all things work together for good*** *to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

Have you ever noticed how often you need God’s Word to smooth out your thoughts about what is happening to you? I’m learning this just like you. Your Holy, Perfect, Heavenly Father, the Creator of the Universe is a Sovereign God. That means He has both Absolute Power and Perfect Love, both of which enable Him to operate in your life. You see, He’s not just your Creator and Sustainer. He’s also your Heavenly Father. *“Your Heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of these things.”*

He’s full of you; meaning, He has full knowledge of you. He knows your beginning. He knew you when you were in your mother’s womb. And He also knows your exact end. And He has a specific purpose for you and for me.

So, why are you so upset about what He allows in your everyday walk with Him? I know exactly why. You think you know better than God.

His ultimate purpose is to conform you to the likeness of Someone Else. Every day He’s molding, He’s shaping, and He’s re-making you into the image of Jesus. And why? Because He intends that you make it all the way from justification to glorification, from salvation to perfect Christlikeness.

And the present program is this: to work everything together in your life for good takes all of God’s time and effort. He spends all day on you while He spends all day on me. He’s God. So, He can do it that way. And, folks, only a Sovereign God can do this.

You ask, *“Why is God constantly allowing problems in my life? Why is He forever allowing difficult people to be part of my life? Why is He insistent that I have to deal with troubles that, honestly speaking, I don’t want in my life?”*

The answer is right here. His sovereign hand is upon you, working *all* of these things together for good.

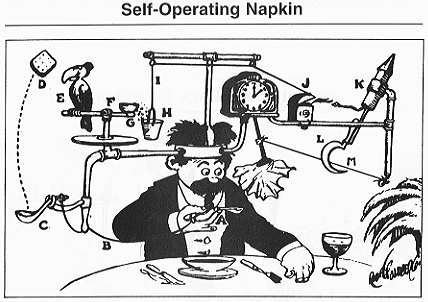
Look with me at two words. Romans 8:28 *“And we know that all things* ***work together*** *[“συνεργέω”] for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

In the original language these two words are one word “συνεργέω.” It is a compound word; two words put together to form one word; “work” and “together.” It’s the concept of two people working in concert. It’s what two people do when they are working together for one purpose, to achieve one goal.

Turn with me to I Corinthians 16:16 “That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to everyone that **helpeth with us** [“συνεργέω”], and laboureth. This is the exact same word.

You see, you think God is working generically or even capriciously all these things together in your life. But, He’s not. He’s intentional. He working specific things into your life. He’s “helping” you with all these things. This is what the Bible teaches. “All things are helped together by God for good.”

Can you imagine with me a machine with fourteen working parts? Do they all have to work together for good? Here’s a self-operating napkin?



A soup spoon (A) is raised to mouth, pulling a [string](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pullstring) (B) and thereby jerking a [ladle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ladle_(spoon)) (C), which throws a [cracker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cracker_(food)) (D) past a [parrot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parrot) (E). The parrot jumps after the cracker; and his [perch](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/perch#Etymology_2) (F) tilts, upsetting some [seeds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seeds) (G) into a [pail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bucket) (H). Extra weight in the pail now pulls a [cord](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rope) (I), which opens and ignites a [lighter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lighter) (J), setting off a rocket (K), which causes a [sickle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sickle) (L) to cut a [string](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pullstring) (M), allowing a [pendulum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pendulum) with an attached napkin to swing back and forth wiping the man’s chin. And all that works together for good.

Now, do you want to know why you’ve got all sorts of trouble in your life? It’s because He’s such a Trouble-maker. I mean it. God is, right now, working all things together, both trouble and all the comforts and delights and blessings in your life together for good.

He’s the Divine Conductor. He’s the Sovereign, Perfect, Heavenly Father Who is coordinating all of these things into one grand purpose, *His* purpose for you. You see, He’s not afraid to bring things and people into your life that you think you don’t need. But, you do; because those people and those things are part of a larger picture that He and He alone see.

And, just like your being a parent, and making choices on behalf of your children, choices they often don’t like and choices they think they can make better than you; He chooses the path, the people, the problems, and the pleasures. Why? Because He’s sovereign. He’s a Perfect Father. And He knows better.

And what are you doing? You’re judging your day by the harvest you reap and not by the seeds you are planning right now. You want God to make your life easier and make it fit your idea of what your life should be.

Can you see what’s happening? Its’ wrapped up in this word “good.” There’s a huge difference between what *you* see as good and what *He* sees as good. *“Your Heavenly Father knows what you have need of before you ask Him.”*

Folks, the harvest is based upon the seeds you plant. So, take your attitude by the nape of the neck and shake it until you finally realize that life revolves around *Him*, not you. Life is what *He* makes it. And your place? A full and complete surrender to Him and His will for you. Jesus said *“I delight to do Thy will.”* And who here thinks He had it easy for those few years He was here on earth?

It’s *[“συνεργέω”],* it’s Him working for your help and your benefit.

So, first, the links in the Divine Chain of God’s that He’s working out upon your life.

Second, God’s sovereign hand upon you is accomplishing His purpose for you.

Third, your response; verse twenty-eight. Romans 8:28 *“And* ***we know*** *that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

Your initial response is this, what do I know? The answer? *“I know that everything is working together in my life for good. And nothing that comes into my life is for my detriment.”*

You say, can God do that? You ask, does He allow suffering and pain and people who mistreat and misuse you? Romans 8:18 *“For I reckon [I count true what is true] that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”*

II Corinthians 4:16 *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. (17) For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

Folks, while you are looking at the things which are seen, the temporal things, He’s look at the things which are not seen, the eternal.

This is what you “know.” This is what a Christian must “know”. And maybe part of the reason you react so much against God’s working these things together in your life is because you have chosen to put your Bible on a shelf each day so that you don’t *know* what He says about you.

First response; what do I know?

Second response; stop resisting.

Stop resisting because resistance removes grace. I Peter 5:5 *“ … God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. (6) Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: …”*

Third, show the LORD your love by a full and complete surrender of your life. And, folks, as you begin each day, and you begin your day, each hour, each thought, each person, each need, each problem to your Heavenly Father, you can expect God to accomplish the exact good He intends for this day.

Now, who here thinks God doesn’t know what He’s doing? Who here thinks He doesn’t understand you? Who here thinks He doesn’t understand what you’re going through? Who here thinks He doesn’t understand what you’re feeling?

You see, your Father is much wiser than your parents. And He’s coordinating everything in such a way that it generates good. Those of you who think otherwise are believing a lie. Only by full surrender will you be able to see that your Divine Parent never makes a mistake.

This is a true story. It’s about a young man named Joseph.

As I re-read Joseph’s story this week, I looked for the “all things” in his life.

Joseph was the youngest of eleven boys.

Joseph was the favorite son of his father.

At a young age, he was also a dreamer.

And one day Joseph made the quote “mistake” of telling his dream to his brothers.

The result? They took it personally and thought he was saying that he was better than them and that someday they would bow down to him.

So, they nicknamed him the “dreamer” and they came to hate him.

And, since he was special in the eyes of his father, he received a beautiful tunic, which he proudly wore.

And on one occasion Joseph’s dad sent him out to the hillsides to check up on his brothers and report back to him, the youngest brother sent out by the father to check up on his older ten brothers. And when his brothers saw him coming, they conspired against him to kill him.

They sold him into slavery.

And then his brothers lied about him to their father.

His brothers then forgot about him.

Then, he was re-sold again to another slave-owner.

And one day he was solicited to join his master’s wife in an immoral relationship, which he refused.

Then his master’s wife lied about him.

Then he was unjustly put in prison.

Then he was forgotten in prison.

Then, after half of his life was over, he was given his freedom and became the second in command of the nation of Egypt.

Now, how many people here think that *“all things worked together for good”* for this man Joseph?

Would you like to know what Joseph said about all these things? Here are his words. Genesis 50:20 *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant [intended] it unto good …”*

Folks, this is the reality. He’s working all these things together as one thing, as one machine, for one purpose; your good. God intends things for good.

Romans 8:28 *“And we know that all things work together [“συνεργέω”] for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*

Now, what’s the seed you can plant today? Let’s take just one thing in your life; one big thing; one thing you don’t want or like. Here’s a prayer for you to pray regarding this one big thing this week.

*“LORD, help me see this one thing as part of the all things you are working together for good and for the benefit of my life. Thank you for working in my life today. Thank you for being my Father. I love You.”*

That’s your best response based upon Romans 8:28-29. You can know what is true. You can stop resisting Him. And with a fully surrendered heart, you can, with Jesus, say “I delight to do Thy will of my God.”

The harvest is the glory that God will one day reveal in you. So, it’s a guarantee that one day you will be fully conformed to the likeness of the character of Jesus. And the seeds of today are not just the things that come your way, but your *response* to God when they do come. So, what kind of seeds did you plant this week? What kinds of seeds will you plant today or this week?

Folks, if you don’t plant these seeds of having the right knowledge and holding the right attitude in the midst of the things in your life today, I am sure you will do the one thing that you will never do successfully. You will judge God. And you will think that God shouldn’t be allowing this person or this problem or this particular thing to come upon you.

The truth is that the Judge of this world will always do right by you. He’s working all these things together for your help, your benefit.

Shall we pray?

Hymn # 562 “Be Thou My Vision”