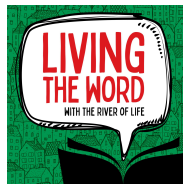# All Things For Good

By Katie Cooper

Romans 8:28 *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*
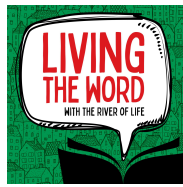
This is one of those verses we see on t-shirts, mugs, stickers, note pads. It's an incredibly comforting truth that God can indeed work all our messes, failures, sufferings, and undesirable circumstances for an ultimate good. The miscommunication on this verse can come with the question, *"for whose good is God working for?"* Most times our ideas of what

would be good for our lives is different to how God works things out. The context of this verse gives us an indication of the deeper comfort of what Paul is saying. Paul has been describing the life of Christians this side of heaven as one of groaning as we long to escape the suffering of this life and to be with our Father God is person (Romans 8:18-23). We wait in the sure hope of the day our bodies will be resurrected and we will share in God's glory (Romans 8:24-25).

What about all the hard things that come along while we are waiting? Paul seems to offer the promise of this verse as a comfort for us. This verse always makes me think of Joseph in Genesis 37-50. The events of Josephs early live seem like one hardship after another. His brothers are so jealous of him they sell him into slavery. He is given a position in Potiphar's house where he works hard and flourishes. Then Potiphar's wife wants to sleep with him, he obeys God and turns down Potiphar's wife, in-fact runs from her so he wouldn't fall into sin. Only to be accused by her and thrown into prison. Soon after it says he is put in charge of the prison. There he meets the cupbearer and baker of Pharaoh. They have troubling dreams; the Lord gives him wisdom and he tells them what will happen. It all comes to pass as he said and the cup bearer forgets about Joseph for another 2 years. After all this Joseph is remembered, Pharoah makes him second in command. He saves Egypt and surrounding areas from famine. During this time he comes face to face with his brothers. There is an internal struggle, and lots of hurt but in short Joseph summarizes his past with his brothers in 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.*"

The events of Joseph's life seem so unfair at the beginning, the one that catches me the most off guard is the fact that he is forgotten about for 2 more years in prison. Just simply

slipped the cupbearer's mind to mention him. God is all sovereign, all powerful and yet chose not to cause the cupbearer to remember. We have to conclude that even though Joseph had been through so much he still thought it would be "good" for Joseph to remain in prison for those 2 more years. What we do see is that Joseph ends up being gracious to his brothers, forgiving them and is ultimately able to proclaim that "God meant it for good." He could see that God's sovereign hand was in all the trials.

Lastly we need to note this is not a verse for all people. This is actually a special comfort for *those who love God...those who are called according to his purpose.* In other words this is a promise and comfort for believers in Jesus Christ. What is the promise? That, for those who are saved, all things will indeed work together for good. "All things" should be taken to mean each and every circumstance one might experience, even pain or suffering. God is working that all together for His ultimate good.

We are so limited in our perspective and our ability to see past our own lives. God looks at the world and history at once. He knows the past, present, and future. He is all wise and all powerful, when you think about it, who would you rather have deciding what is best? You? Or God? How do you react in life's unexpected and strange seasons? Take heart Christians God is working it all together and His good is always what we would have chosen had we known all that he knows. Trust Him.

Make your move Christian!