

**Title: The Purpose Filled Life**

**Text: Romans 8:28-30**

**Major Depressive Disorder**

The leading cause of disability in the U.S. for ages 15 to 44.3.

MDD affects more than 16.1 million American adults, or about 6.7% of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year.

While major depressive disorder can develop at any age, the median age at onset is 32.5 years old.

More prevalent in women than in men. (Source: National Institute of Mental Health)

Expound...

**Main Idea - Life is Full of Purpose When You Truly Love God**

**1. The God You Love Called You to Purpose (vs. 28)**

**Romans 8:28 ESV**

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

You, Christian, have a glorious, wonderful, amazing purpose. What is this purpose? Well, that's what this passage and sermon will help you and I discover.

I believe when you understand your purpose, your levels of determination and joy increase.

Paul, in this text makes an assumption in the first half of this verse.

*"And we know"*

They knew!

Wait, who are they?

**Romans 16:21-23 ESV**

*<sup>21</sup> Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. <sup>22</sup> I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.*

These fellow workers of God, along with the Apostle knew something that all of us here this morning need to understand as well. What did they know?

GOD'S AMAZING PROMISE CONTAINED IN THESE VERSES ARE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THOSE WHO ARE GOD'S THROUGH CHRIST.

*"And we KNOW that for those who LOVE GOD..."*

Who are those that love God? I mean the real God revealed in the bible.

Christians are the only ones who truly love the one and true God.

All other love for lesser deities, including self is damnable idolatry.

So, this promise is for those who love God.

By the way, do you? Do you truly love God?

There is one way to discover your level of love for the true God...

**1 John 4:20 ESV**

*<sup>20</sup> If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.*

Anyway, that is another sermon. :)

The point is the promise contained in this verse is exclusively for born-again followers of God through Jesus Christ.

What is the promise that Paul articulates?

For the lovers of God, *"all things work together for good."*

Notice what Paul does not say, that *"all things ARE good" ... but all things work together for good...All things...The good, the bad and the ugly!*

Not all things are good! Sin is not good! The effects of sin are not good! Death, pain, sickness, all the atrocities and tragedies that this world produces are NOT good!

But our God, our heavenly Papa is able to take all the pain, sickness, seemingly random tragedies and with His powerful providential hand, weave something beautiful, something hopeful, something GOOD!

**Genesis 50:15–21 ESV**

*<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." <sup>16</sup> So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: <sup>17</sup> 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you." ' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup> His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." <sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*

This is a picture of how our God works. He is providentially at work, taking that which is evil and USING evil for His good purposes.

Notice three things about Joseph's perspective...

1. Joseph is not God – He is not the captain of his fate...

2. Joseph's God is at work behind the scenes taking evil and bringing about good...
3. Joseph's God is not only focused on Joseph! In fact, the good that God is producing in this story has implications for you...The line of Judah was preserved...the line from which Jesus came!

God is always at work - always working and maneuvering situations to bring about **good**.

Dear friends, you are facing some sort of difficulty in your life. Some hardship, some pain. It may be self-inflicted or caused by someone else or seemingly without cause.

God is IN THE MIDST OF YOUR pain and sorrow and promises to bring about **good**.

What is good? That's a great question.

**ἀγαθός agathós** - *Virtuous, upright, integrity, beneficial, profitable, useful. Rectitude (morally correct behavior or thinking; righteousness).*

By the way, God is GOOD and the ONLY one that gets to define that which is GOOD and that which is not. ([Genesis 1:4](#), [10](#), [12](#), [18](#), [21](#), [25](#), [31](#)) *"Good and very good."*

It was in the creation event that God made the moral proclamation of that which is GOOD. We do not have the privilege of such a declaration, only recognition and replication of that which is good.

### **2 Timothy 3:1-5 ESV**

*<sup>1</sup> But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. <sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*

But for believers, God is working good in all evil circumstances and situations. He is good and He is working good.

### **James 1:17 ESV**

*<sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

So, in the midst of horrific circumstances, the believer must see that God is sovereignly behind the scenes working good! Remember, He is the Grand Weaver...

Believer, we have no other option but to trust the almighty God of the Bible!

But when trials come, and they will, those that Love God should learn to praise Him in the midst of that trial know God is working good regardless if we ever see the results!

### **Job 13:15 ESV**

*<sup>15</sup> Though he slay me, I will hope in him...*

Trials are hard, exhausting and at times, horrible. Beyond explanation from our limited, finite perspective...But we must never forget that they are purposeful, productive and carefully measured from a God who is GOOD and loves us with an everlasting love!

A God who has pursued us from before the very foundations of the earth! Imagine that!

Believer, there is nothing haphazard or random about the circumstances you are in...God is and has been at work

What does verse 28 have to do with the thought that “**The God You Love Called You to Purpose**”? What is our purpose?

Well, you are called! You are called to follow Christ regardless of the challenges of this life.

### **Luke 9:23 ESV**

*<sup>23</sup> And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

He calls you and you follow him and that act of following him will lead to ultimate goodness, eternal life with Him!

There is no greater PURPOSE than to follow Christ’s leading in your life!

*Pastor Tim and family*

*Elliot and Lori and family*

*Bethany Berenson*

*The Lemmon Clan*

*My dear friend Luke Bylsma*

These are drastic examples of following Christ. This following causes suffering and pain but it will ultimately bear the peaceable fruit of righteousness in the presence of the Lord.

You may NEVER see the GOOD fully in this life. BUT THIS AIN’T HEAVEN!

### **So what do I do with this?**

1. LOVE GOD! Do you?
2. TRUST GOD! Everything will end up good! That’s the promise here.
3. SERVE GOD! This life is not your own you have been bought with a price. Stop living your life as a practical atheist and start recognizing that your purpose will only become evident in your life when you give your life over to the one who gave His life for you!

**Review** - Life is Full of Purpose When You Truly Love God

- The God You Love Called You to Purpose

Transition -

## 2. The God You Love Will Conform You to Christlikeness (vs. 29)

### **Romans 8:29 ESV**

*<sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

**Vs. 29** – The purpose of the trial is conformity to the image of Christ. It is interesting that in verses 29 and 30, Paul shows salvation from God’s perspective. From our perspective Salvation is by faith. However, faith is not mentioned in these two verses.

**God was at work a long time before you ever had faith...**How do we know this? Look at the terms Paul uses...and as you notice these terms, please see the progressive timeline, how they are inextricably linked to each other and how God is the active agent behind them all!

**He Foreknew** – “foreknew” The Greek word used here, *proginōskō*, means “to know in advance” or “to choose beforehand.” FSB

**Predestined** - The Greek verb used here, *proorizō*, refers to choosing or deciding beforehand. “marked out beforehand”

Predestination is not about salvation but God’s predetermination of certain goals for His people

**Election** – Choosing: God’s choice of individuals to salvation. *Eklegomai*, “pick out,” “select,” or “choose something/someone”

### **προορίζω proorizō**

The objects of predestination are those whom He foreknew. Predestination does not involve a predetermined plan only but also includes the individuals for whom the plan is devised. The goal of predestination is expressed in the phrase, “to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

**The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament 4309.**

Salvation and His purpose for you is initiated by God, not you!

There is nothing in us that pursues God. There is nothing within us that chases after God. Not even a little bit.

### **Romans 3:10–12 ESV**

*<sup>10</sup> as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”*

In actuality, without a work of God through His Spirit and through His Word, we do not accept the things of God at all.

### **1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV**

*<sup>14</sup> The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

God must be the one to awaken us to our need for him...

### 2 Corinthians 4:4 ESV

*<sup>4</sup> In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Peter tells us how this works...

### 1 Peter 1:1–2 ESV

*<sup>1</sup> Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

*John MacArthur - Believers were foreknown in the same way Christ was foreknown. That cannot mean foreseen, but must refer to a predetermined choice by God.*

I will tell you; we are starting to wade into the meat of the Word.

Chapters 9 and 10 are going to contain some awesome and challenging concepts.

This might help as we think about these next two chapters in particular...

Chapter 9 - God's responsibility in salvation.

Chapter 10 - Our responsibility in salvation.

*Salvation is from our side a choice, from the divine side it is a seizing upon, an apprehending, a conquest by the Most High God. Our "accepting" and "willing" are reactions rather than actions. The right of determination must always remain with God. - A. W. Tozer*

But let's not get lost in the weeds here...

We don't want to miss the pastoral point that Paul is making.

Never read or interpret verse 28 without verse 29!

Verse 28 says God works all things together for Good.

Verse 29 says the **GOOD** that he is working is you becoming more and more like **JESUS**.

He predestined us to be conformed to the image of God (to take on the character of Christ).

A few thoughts...

1. Humanity was created in the IMAGE of God. But then the fall happened...
2. Through salvation you are recreated and received the Image of Christ.
3. While we have His image, He is the preeminent One! - *"in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."*

What is Paul's pastoral point here?

God runs you through the trials and tribulations of this life to make you grow in the character of Christ.

*“praying for patience for Angie”*

These verses are about your sanctification - Your growth in holiness.

*Prince Corporation...*

Start to view your difficulties in life as God orchestrating your growth in Christlikeness.

It's not that God delights in His children suffering - that would be weird and actually wicked. He does delight in the results of your suffering!

Remember, God's greatest desire for His children is that they would be the spitting' image of Jesus.

Suffering is one of God's greatest tools to create you into the best thing possible - A person LIKE Jesus.

**Review** - Life is Full of Purpose When You Truly Love God

- The God You Love Called You to Purpose
- The God You Love Will Conform You to Christlikeness

Transition -

### **3. The God You Love Has a Glorious Plan for You (vs. 30)**

#### **Romans 8:30 ESV**

*<sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

Theologians refer to this verse as the golden chain. Each term linked inextricably to the next that results in the beautiful process of redemption.

**He Predestined** – (*predestined*) means literally to mark out, appoint, or determine beforehand.

#### **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 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,*

*CHOSEN IN HIM – Tony Beckett*

*Very few issues cause more confusion and even arguments among Christians than the issues of election and predestination. It is very difficult to simultaneously embrace God's sovereignty and human responsibility. Election was not a theological concept dreamed up by Paul; it appears throughout Scripture. Even though we may not be able to completely comprehend how these two truths can coexist, we can say this:*

**Election ...**

- comes from the heart of God, not the mind of people;
- should be an incentive to please God, not to ignore him;
- should give birth to gratitude, not complacency.

**Human responsibility ...**

- requires that we actively confess Christ as Lord;
- focuses on living according to God's plan;
- requires that we share the gospel with everyone.

*Election energizes a Christian's life of obedient service. Responsibility challenges us to build a life "worthy of the calling" we have received (Ephesians 4:1). As you consider God's divine selection of you, how do you respond—with pride or apathy, or with a worshipful heart and obedience?*

What did he predestined you to? According to the end of vs. 29, conformity to the image of Christ. God's plan for those He foreknew and predestined was that they would act like Jesus. Jesus was the First born and we would bear his likeness because we are in the same family...

**1 Corinthians 15:49 (ESV)**

*Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

In other words, we would behave like Christ, exuding his love and grace to a world in desperate need of a savior...

**He Called** - The outward call is the proclamation of the gospel ([Rom 10](#)).

**Romans 10:14 (ESV)**

*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*

The inward call is the inner workings of the Holy Spirit.

*"I believe that I cannot, by my own reason or strength, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me by his gifts, sanctified and preserved me in the true faith." – Martin Luther*

**He Justified** – The instantaneous declaration of my innocence based solely on the righteousness of Christ. In other words, it is when a person is made right with God.

**Romans 3:24 (ESV)**

*and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

**He Glorified** – The ultimate result of God's salvation plan. Notice this is in the past tense as if it has already happened!!

**2 Thessalonians 2:14 (ESV)**

*To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Why does Paul arm the believer with this information? Information like...

God is sovereignly behind all aspects of your life, working good from evil...

God is in the process of conforming you to the likeness of His Son...

God Foreknew you

God Predestined you

God Called you

God Justified you

God Glorified you / or He will! It is as good as done!

Why does Paul tell us these things?

I think the answer is found at the end of verse 28...if you are a Christian, you are called according to HIS PURPOSE!

Do you know what HIS PURPOSE is for your life? Friend, you are not a waste of skin. You have meaning and you have purpose because GOD SET HIS ATTENTION ON YOU! You were a rebel to His will and yet He set His love on you and rescued you – not so you could live for yourself, but for him.

Why are so many followers of Christ depressed, discouraged, and frustrated? I'll tell you why!

Because they are wasting their Christian life on living for themselves and their own pleasure and satisfaction (fool's errand) instead of giving their whole life over in service to their Savior!

They are living for the temporary which can NEVER satisfy to the exclusion of the eternal which can only satisfy!

Your PURPOSE, Christian is to Glorify God (to make him famous).

This is hard for you because in your flesh you want to be famous (recognized).

But the more we grow in our TRUE PURPOSE...the more He can use us to do amazing things for him.

Daniel, Joseph, Paul were regular men who understood their PURPOSE. And their PURPOSE was to give their life in service to our extraordinary God.

And our extraordinary God used them in extraordinary ways.

And guess what, friends, God predestined you, called you, justified you and will ultimately glorify you. Why? For His PURPOSE - to use you to accomplish extraordinary things for His glory!

This truth ought to shake you to your core, increase the joy and delight in your soul, and give you a hope that makes you unstoppable for God.

**2 Corinthians 3:12 (ESV)**

*Since we have such a hope, we are very bold...*

The fact that God is investing in you for His eternal purposes should boost your confidence levels off the charts and renew a vigor in you to live for His fame above all else!

Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of living a purpose filled life. His life was marked by suffering and pain, especially at the end. Why? Because His PURPOSE was wrapped up in the will of the FATHER.

What is your PURPOSE wrapped up in?

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- The God You Love Will Conform You to Christlikeness
- The God You Love Has a Glorious Plan for You

Christian, you have purpose because God has given you purpose.

Why would God send His son into the world to die on the cross and then rise from the dead to rescue from sin? So you would have a life of purposelessness? Not a chance. God desires to accomplish great achievements with you. But in order for Him to do this you must.

- Fall deeper in love with HIM!
- Realize that all the things that have happened or are happening or will happen pass through the providential hand of God and are crafted to make you more like Jesus.
- God plans to accomplish amazing things both great and small through you – a sinner saved by His glorious grace!

So, you see Christian, your PURPOSE is found in no other place than the scarred hands of Jesus!

**Connection Group Reflection Questions**

1. How does verse 28 give you hope?
2. How does verse 29 show you purpose?
3. Why the doctrines contained in these verses so difficult for us to understand?
4. How does verse 30 give you hope?
5. What concepts from this passage should you share with others this week?