

## Romans Chapter 8: (28 - 39)

### **Facing Life With Confidence**

How does as Christian God talks to us about a Christian having a life of relentless joy? If we look at Jesus Christ, he said to his disciples.

John 16

**22** So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

**24** Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

So Jesus always talks to disciples about joy. Christianity is about joy.

John 17

**13** But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

How does have a Christian have a relentless joy that goes beyond circumstances? If we look at the disciples, every single one of them except John was martyred for their faith. It seems paradoxical He promises them joy and in the end they all get martyred except the one.

Romans 8 is about suffering. We have talked about salvation and then after salvation the suffering and then you get glorification, so therefore we need to face it with patience and hope and then the secret to relentless joy is this verse

**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.

**29** 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.

**30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

### **The Secret To Relentless Joy**

The context is that spirit helping us. So the whole chapter 8 is about the Holy Spirit helping us and here it talks about

Roman 8

**26** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

**27** And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

So therefore we have situation where even in suffering we don't know how to pray but the spirit would intercede on our behalf, but what is the spirit saying and here it is

**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.

The spirit in this last section preserves us through life and the word is all things. All things means the good, the bad and the ugly. Some people think it is just good things. If we get good things, it is written in Hebrews 11:

**32** And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—

**33** who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

These are the greats. When you go to Sunday School we tell them about Daniel and the lions, we tell them about David, we will tell them about Samson. We don't tell them about everybody else and so therefore this is the good and when good things happen to us we praise the lord. Our response when we receive good is to praise God that God allow this good to come into our lives and it is a blessing for us. The wrong response when we get good is to think that we are superior and if that is the case then our pride level goes up and then you will fall. So anything good that comes in our lives needs to create a change in your heart that produces gratitude. If it produces pride which it can then we start to fall. So actually good things can cause bad results. The really good things that we have will never be lost, we are made sons of God, we are heirs, we are welcomed, loved, adopted, forgiven, and blessed with every spiritual blessing in heaven. The good things will never ever be lost. For the bad and ugly a lot of people have this myth of good life. You become a Christian, life will be good, you inherit the Abrahamic Covenant. In Abrahamic Covenant God said to Abraham in Genesis 12

**2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

**3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So people try to claim the Abrahamic Covenant for themselves and they think that God owes them a good life and they think they have a bulletproof life going through life but if we look at the entire nation of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai almost every single person to a man never made it across to the Promised Land because of disobedience. They inherited the promises of God but they never made it. So it does not necessarily mean a good life.

Romans 8

**35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

**36** As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

These are the things that we are going to happen. It does not mean better circumstances.

### **The Ugly**

#### Hebrews 11

**35** Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life.

**36** Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.

**37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—

**38** of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

**39** And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

If we look at Abraham itself he never got the promise from the one son, but he never got all the rest. So we have to be very-very careful about the theology that we have nowadays that insist that we all are bulletproof, we all get good things. If you really are faithful to God nothing bad will happen to you, that is not true. These things will happen. Jesus at the healing of Lazarus cries. 10 minutes later he is going to raise Lazarus from the dead but why he was crying. He was crying because he was looking at death, the irony and the pain of death. He cries because of the pain that people go through, even though he will be able to heal them. The bad things will turn up for good because

#### Roman 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.

So the bad things will turn out for good. Garth Brooks wrote a very nice song called Unanswered Pray.

Just the other night at a hometown football game  
My wife and I ran into my old high school flame  
And as I introduced them the past came back to me  
And I couldn't help but think of the way things used to be

She was the one that I'd wanted for all times  
And each night I'd spend prayin' that God would make her mine

And if he'd only grant me this wish I wished back then  
I'd never ask for anything again

She wasn't quite the angel that I remembered in my dreams  
And I could tell that time had changed me  
In her eyes too it seemed  
We tried to talk about the old days  
There wasn't much we could recall  
I guess the Lord knows what he's doin' after all

And as she walked away and I looked at my wife  
And then and there I thanked the good Lord  
For the gifts in my life

Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers  
Remember when you're talkin' to the man upstairs  
That just because he may not answer doesn't mean he don't care  
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers

Some of God's greatest gifts are all too often unanswered...  
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers

Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin. He actually noted the common book of prayer, prays for all the royal family all over Europe. Millions of prayers repeated for the Royal Family and he found that the Royal Family all over Europe has shortest lifespan compared to other groups in society. They get the most prayers as God save the king and the Queen. Except Queen Elizabeth everybody else as a group of the royal family all over Europe have the shortest lifespan.

Roman 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.

**29** 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.

This means that all things work together for good and there is a purpose so that we may be conformed to the image of his son, which means God does not promise better circumstances but promises a better life that is not dependent on circumstances.

We may have a demotion of a stagnant job or promotion, you win the lottery, you never win a lottery, you lost the gamble, failed exam, repeat exam, pass exam, tax breaks, poor health, good health, it does not matter. Whatever comes away and that is the beautiful thing, because when we do not know how to pray the spirit intervenes for us. This is what the spirit does for you. It gives your prayer to God because it knows the mind of God and that prayer will bring and turn every single circumstance that you go through to good, so that you will be conformed to the image of his son.

In whatever circumstances we are we have to find ways to glorify God, God salvages that. God will give you the preserverence to overcome to become more like Jesus Christ and that is what matters. So all things are actually redeemed by the cross.

Man falls away from God, he sins, the world works against him, the whole creation and groaning were all suffering but God then therefore uses the suffering to create good. So actually we are bulletproof from that point of view. Jesus didn't suffer so that we will not have to suffer but so that when you suffer you will become like him. So these are all the circumstances, life and its prosperity, job, security, success or disability or a painful joint or injustice at work then you have got faith, endurance, integrity and kindness.

In all the letter of Paul he starts of thanking God and praying for all of those things like endurance of faith, integrity and kindness. Paul never writes about the political scenarios at that time, it is like the circumstances to Paul are not important but he prays for them when he writes letter, always about the endurance of faith, integrity, the gospel. Because he knows that these are things in life that are really-really important. So all the things that hurt us in the long run are the bad things like foolishness, pride, hardness of heart, denial of our flaws and weaknesses, believe that you do not need God, in the short run it may look good but these are the things that actually destroy our life. The bad things are usually used to burn off harmful things in your life. God uses circumstances to burn off foolishness, pride, hardness of heart and other things.

Jacob triumphs over Esau by cheating, looks great that day, he got the inheritance but God allows him to triumph for Laban to cheat him to marry two women and then he had to be a slave for 14-20 years. In either which case God uses it to mold his character. If you look at the cross, the most innocent loveliest person in the world is hanging on the cross, got the worse punishment, but from that punishment it turned out to be the single most important momentous event on this side of time. So bad things are not necessarily bad because God can turn that into good.

John Newton used to be a slave trader and he said, *"Everything is necessary that He sends, nothing can be necessary that he withholds"*.

So bad things will happen, we will not have to be shocked we need to be patient. The worse it gets, the more God is working in to mold us.

**29** 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.

The word foreknew, here know means intimate knowledge.

## **Matthew 7**

**22** On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never **knew** you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

The word “knew” means, I never had an intimate relationship with you. You only did this stuff but you never talked to me, you were very busy in the church counsel but you never spend time talking to me and getting to know me.

So it is knowing in advance, loving us and making it happen.

## **29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined**

It means we are now predestined, it is fixed, it cannot be changed. God decides to put his imprint our life. If you are a Christian today that is the most wonderful thing in the world because God has decided to predestine you and when He predestined you He cannot change.

We learn three lessons:

1. Our bad things will turn out for good.
2. Our good things will never be lost.
3. Best things are yet to come.

**30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.**

**Those whom he predestined** which means He before the world was created He chose them. After He predestined the next thing is **He called**. This calls means it is an effectual call, God uses people to call other people and change the eternal destiny of their life. **He justified** means he made them righteousness. **Also glorified** means it is so certain that in God's eyes it is already passed. God is eternal; He lives in the future, the past and the present. In God's eyes you are already glorified. So in God's eye that matter is already settled. The moment He predestined you, He is going to call you, He is going to justify you and He is also going to glorify you. So Paul is trying to tell us your security in God is so secure, you are already at this stage glorified.

No matter how painful life gets this is our comfort and the Holy Spirit will use this. If we look at the rest of the world when they suffer; Boethius is one of the most famous middle ages philosopher who was a senator in Rome who was thrown into prison. He used to be at the height of power and suddenly falsely accused, thrown into prison and he writes a book and he is trying to work out fortune, at one minute I am the Roman senator, second minute I am in a dungeon. He wrote this idea, the consolation of philosophy that show that in life the most important thing is actually equilibrium that means talk about integrity, justice, honor and love, rather than focusing on circumstances. Even a non-Christian philosopher, one of the most famous and influential philosophers of the middle ages he himself discovered that you cannot depend on circumstances, you actually in order to survive life the consolation of philosophy means to maintain equilibrium and focus on internal values.

Everybody wants to make some sense of their suffering. A Christian needs a crystal clear solid hope and that hope is the fact that we are predestined, we are called, we are justified and we are glorified. That is the only hope. C.S. Lewis wrote these words,

*“do not come to Christianity because it is encouraging, don’t come to Christianity because it is relevant, don’t come to Christianity because it is exciting, come to Christianity because it is true, because if it is not true how can it be relevant, comforting or exiting”*

So when you come to church don’t just chose to become a Christian because of all those things, you get to choose it because it is true. Once it is true it becomes relevant, exciting and powerful. That is what we should be focusing on.

The spirit gives us eternal security

**31** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**32** He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

**33** Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

**34** Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

**35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

We are suffering and when we suffer sin will erupt again. When we sin we are thinking how can God put up with me since I am so sinful, how could ever God love me like this and so Paul writes to us and says, what shall we say if God is for us, who can be against us.

God already gave us his most precious son. This is an A for theory argument which means if I give you everything, everything else is okay. Whatever God withholds is there for a purpose so that we will be conformed to the image of his son.

**33** Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

**34** Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

This is a legal term, not only nobody can bring a charge against, not only he gave us Jesus Christ. There is a legal situation where it is like a courtroom metaphor and you have got the best lawyer defending you. When you face the judge you do not need a lawyer when you are begging for mercy. Jesus stands at the right hand of the father and he is going to take your case and plead your case before God the father. Jesus goes to the father and he is then demanding justice. When you go to a courtroom and the law is on your side, it is a very-very different thing. Jesus is interceding for us every minute all the time.

Nothing can separate us because we are more than conquerors, neither death nor life or anything in death, anything in life, angels or rulers, things present, things past, no power, nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God because nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even some of your sins which you have committed in the past, sometimes they come back and haunt us.

### **Unforgiveable Sin**

Mar\_3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—

This is the context given in Mark, Jesus cast out demons and then the Pharisees came and say, that you are not powerful than demons but you are their head. So therefore unforgiveable sin which is the sin against the Holy Spirit is the sin of the Pharisees that means all the evidence that God gives you about his son that points to the fact that he is good because he cast out evil, you are very stubborn and hard of heart that is the sin of the Holy Spirit, you cannot be forgiven that means you continually reject the Holy Spirit, continuously until you will never find forgiveness and this applies to a non-Christian. It cannot apply to a Christian, you accidentally said something and it does not happen.

Corrie Tan Loon suffered for God because she hid Jewish people in Netherlands away from the Nazis and she looks at life and says

*My life is about a weaving between my God and me. I cannot chose the colors, he weaves steadily. Off times he weaves sorrow and I in foolish pride forget he sees the upper and eye the under side, not till the loom is silent and shuttles ceases to fly, will God enroll the canvas and reveal the reason why. The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hands as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned. He knows, he love, he care, nothing this truth can dim, he gives the very best to those who leave the choice to him.*

She is saying that God is the one weaving the tapestry and sometime the dark strands of your life is as important as the golden and the white strands and sometimes you don't know the reason, you stand back and one day you will see this image and this is the image of a son and we all are conformed to the image of the son.

So Romans chapter 8 tells us that our glorification is guaranteed.