

# Cornerstone Church

July 24, 2016

## Sermon Series: Advanced Training for Jesus' Soldiers – Prepping Ourselves for His Return

Today's Sermon: Practicing Our Skill in Trusting the  
Providence of God

Today's Passage: Romans 8:28

ESV **And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.**

NASV **And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**

NLT (New Living Translation) **And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.**

### Introduction

- Our trust in the providence of God enables us to face any hardship with joy (even singing).
  - How could Paul sing in the Philippian jail in Acts 16:19-25?  
Or,
  - How could Paul continue in ministry after the sufferings he listed in 2 Corinthians 6:4-10? Or 2 Corinthians 11:23-27?
  - Answer: because he was convinced that everything that was happening to him was divinely ordained for his spiritual good (well-being).
  - Are you convinced (we know above) God is in control (orchestrating) of all events in your life? Not yet? Consider then:
    - Proverbs 16:9; Psalm 115:3; Job 42:2; Isaiah 46:9-10; Proverbs 19:21; Lamentations 3:37; Daniel 4:35
    - Now practice believing these to be true. Go over yesterday's events. Can you see the hand of God in them? Tomorrow, approach every event and conversation in light of God's sovereignty.
    - Marie – our Warmshowers guest.

- The promise is unqualified, i.e. **all** things not some things are working together for our good.
  - Even Paul's whippings? Would a loving God cause (through the evil decisions of men) Paul to get 39 lashes? YES, and YES again.
  - Did your earthly father ever put you through hardships that were painful?
  
- This is not a universal promise to all people. It applies to believers only, meaning to those who,
  1. Love God, and
  
  2. Who are called according to God's purpose.
  
- The guided and orchestrated circumstances of your life may seem hard but they **will** produce good results.
  - We often cannot perceive the good until later because:
    - Our timing is not God's timing,  
Ex. Job, Joseph, Moses.  
**(Job 2:10 ESV) But he (Job) said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**  
And,
    - Our focus is material not spiritual.
      - ✓ Do we not equate comfort, respect, financial surplus, heated and A/C homes, promotions, and good health as signs of God's blessing?
  
- The good results Paul had in mind is to become Christ-like. **(Romans 8:29 ESV) 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.**

- Knowing that this is what God is working on in my life is an extreme encouragement.
  - I want to be loving like Jesus which requires making me be less selfish. Joy= replacing my idols. Peace=replacing my plans. Patience=replacing my schedule. Kindness=removing my prejudices. Goodness=replacing our priorities. Faithful=replacing my laziness with commitment. Gentleness=replacing our harshness. Self-control=removing our addictions any way he can.
  
- Knowing that God is the prime mover behind all my circumstances is faith building.
  - Does God “allow” unpleasant circumstances or does God “design” unpleasant circumstances using even the “free-will” of evil men?
    - The word Paul uses is sunergo (συνεργο) (3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, present active indicative) which means He continually, second by millisecond, works (orchestrates) all things together.
    - My argument for design: God willed Joseph to be Prime Minister of Egypt long before the incident of selling him into slavery by his brothers. Remember the dreams? So, did God plant evil thoughts into Joseph's brother's minds including murder?
    - No!! Never!! All the evil thoughts were already there including murder and many more evil deeds including torture. God only let the desires surface that fit into His plan without manipulating their wills. (By the way, we do that all the time with our children).
    - Saying that God “allows” things to happen to us puts God in the passive and reactive role/mode rather than the initiating role.
    - My faith rises in proportion to the degree I believe this to be true.

God. The shield of faith requires a thick layer of flame retardant trust in Romans 8:28.

### Application

What do we fear? Pain? Isolation? Rejection?  
 Children's welfare? Hunger? Cold?

Satan knows we fear all these things and he will aim these fears at our heart and get us to lose trust in