**Romans 8:28-30**

Introduction

I. Consider the story of Joseph and his brothers:

A. God used the evil choices and actions of Joseph’s brothers to bring about redemption and salvation for many

B. “God sent me ahead of you to preserve your lives. What you intended for evil, God intended for good.”

The Passage

I. There are some qualifiers to this promise of all things working together for good

A. This promise is not for everyone.

1. It is only “for those who love God”

2. It is only “for those whom God has called according to his purpose”

3. Those are the same group, looking at it from different sides of the coin (our side and God’s side)

B. We must define what Paul means by good

1. By Good, Paul does NOT necessarily mean our comfort, pleasure, entertainment, safety in the here and now

2. By Good, Paul means what is ultimately good for us from eternal perspective

a. = that we would be conformed to the image of his Son

= that we would become more and more like Jesus

=more loving, more joyful, more at peace, more patient, kind

b. = that we might belong to God’s family for all eternity

= “that Jesus might be the firstborn among many brothers”

C. We must define what Paul means by things “Working together”

1. He does NOT mean that things simply work themselves out on their own. In fact, on their own, things tend to not work themselves out.

2. He means God is working things out. Paul is not asking us to believe in a general optimism but rather to put our trust in a specific person: our all loving and all powerful God.

a. Paul then goes on to describe how God has been working and is working for our good for all eternity

\ 1) He foreknew = chose us in advance to be objects of his love

2) He pre-destined = He had a “destination” in mind for us from the start and that destination was to experience eternal life with him and be conformed to the image of his son

3) He called = at some point in our lives, we heard the gospel, and His Spirit moved in us and drew us to faith

4) He justified = he gave us right standing with himself based on our faith in his Son

5) he glorified = one day he will give us resurrection bodies and completely transform our character so that we are totally free from sin. Paul puts this verb in the past tense to say that it is as good as guaranteed.

b. Paul has two main points in this list of 5 verbs

1) Salvation is God’s work from beginning to end.

2) God never gives up on his work, he never drops the ball halfway down the line. Philippians 1:5: He who began a good work (in eternity past) will be faithful to complete it (in eternity future)

II. There is one thing that needs no qualification: “All Things”

A. Paul truly means “all things”

-Including a painful past, health issues, loss of loved ones, financial hardship, relational issues, psychological issues, political realities

B. God is the “great recycler” who can take all the junk in our lives and work in it so that it leads to our ultimate good

C. He can work all things for our good because nothing is beyond the scope of his power and providence, nothing falls outside of his hands

Conclusion

I. What would it look like to really believe this? To wake up every day realizing that every single thing that happens today will work out for my good, that nothing ultimately harmful will happen to me because the God of the universe will work everything for my good?

II. Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”