



Romans 8:26-30

# OUR PURPOSE IN GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

*I asked for strength that I might achieve; I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.  
 I asked for health that I might do greater things; I was given infirmity that I might do better things.  
 I asked for riches that I might be happy; I was given poverty that I might be wise.  
 I asked for power that I might have the praise of men; I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.  
 I asked for all things that I might enjoy life; I was given life that I might enjoy all things.  
 I got nothing that I asked for but everything that I had hoped for.  
 Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered, I am, among all men, most richly blessed.*  
 —Prayer of an Unknown Civil War Soldier

In Romans 6-8, Paul focuses on our **sanctification** in Christ—our progressive transformation into the image of Christ, being set apart from the world and reflecting more of His character.

This transformation is empowered by the **Spirit of God** who regenerates us, indwells us, changes our mindset and desires, leads us toward holiness, identifies us as God's children, and guarantees our future resurrection and glory.

This transformation also takes us through times of **suffering** when our faith and our strength are challenged the most. There are four great truths that carry us through these times.

## 1. THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF FUTURE GLORY (8:18-25)

We are groaning, along with all creation, longing for our future glory. It is the sure hope of our resurrection and of creation's restoration that encourages us to persevere in difficult times.

## 2. THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD (8:26-27)

Our Weakness



Spirit's Intercession

*Even the most sincere, most heroic, most powerful prayers do not but serve to make clear how little the man of prayer is able to escape from himself.*

—Karl Barth (1886-1968)

*The weakness of believers in prayer is that they do not have an adequate grasp of what God's will is when they pray.*

—Thomas R. Schreiner

*Believers have two intercessors: Christ, who intercedes in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and the Holy Spirit, who intercedes while resident within believers. Christ prays that the merits of His redemptive work may be fully applied to His own, while the Holy Spirit prays that their unrealized needs may be met.*

—Curtis Mitchell

**Unuttered.** Greek, *alaletos*, (negative prefix with "to speak"), "unspoken, wordless, silent."

*By the Holy Spirit in silence, the shouting of the saints is heard in the presence of God.*

—Caesarius of Arles (470-542)

### 3. THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF GOD (8:28)

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (NKJV)*

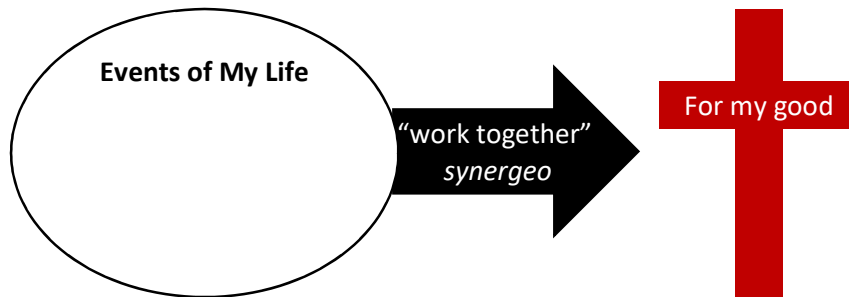
We know:

All things:

Work together:

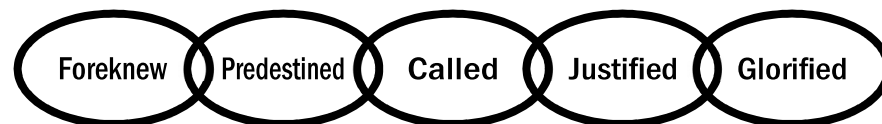
For good:

To those who love God and are the ones called according to His purpose:



### 4. THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF GOD'S PLAN (8:29-30).

- Our purpose is to be \_\_\_\_\_ to the image of His Son.
- The Son's pre-eminence will be \_\_\_\_\_ through us.
- God's plan will most certainly be \_\_\_\_\_ in us.



*Romans 8:28 is a soft pillow for a tired heart. —R. A. Torrey*

*What is expressed [in Romans 8:28] is a truly biblical confidence in the sovereignty of God.*

—C. E. B. Cranfield

*Everything we do and say, everything people do to us or say about us, every experience we will ever have—all are sovereignly used by God for our good.*

—Douglas Moo

*"All things"—good and bad; bright and dark; sweet and bitter; easy and hard; happy and sad; prosperity and poverty; health and sickness; calm and storm; comfort and suffering; life and death. —J. Vernon McGee*

*In the simplest possible terms, God's eternal purpose for His people is that we should become like Jesus. —John R. W. Stott*

*"Firstborn" signifies both Christ's preeminence over and solidarity with other human beings.*

—Thomas R. Schreiner

*Foreknowledge is sovereign, distinguishing love. —John Murray*

*The foreordination of God in no way interferes with the responsibility of man. I have often been asked to reconcile these two truths. My only reply is... "Why should I try to reconcile two friends?" —Charles H. Spurgeon*

*Sanctification is glory begun; glory is sanctification consummated. —F. F. Bruce*

*The elect are the whosoever wills and the non-elect are the whosoever won'ts. —Henry W. Beecher*