

Does Everything Turn Out Good?(Romans 8:28) **When God is Misunderstood sermon series** **by Charlie Lehardy, 07.16.17**

BIG IDEA: God is good. God is in control. He is moving all of creation and history to a point where His goodness will wipe away evil, sorrow, and suffering. However, though we live in a world touched by God's goodness, it has not yet been transformed by it.

•Are Christians covered with a spiritual cloak of immunity from bad things? No!

- Creation is suffering under the curse God has placed on sin;
- Creation is eagerly waiting for God to free it from death & decay;
- We are part of creation, so we are suffering and waiting, too;
- God promises us relief from our suffering, someday;
- This gives us hope, but we haven't experienced this relief yet; it's off in the future;
- Yet, right now, God is working our sufferings into something good.

•Does God sometimes let bad things happen to us as a punishment or to make us stronger? No!

- God does not tempt us, or send bad things our way – that's not how He works.
- Some of our suffering is self-inflicted.
- God is not vindictive; He doesn't lay suffering on us. Nor does God withhold good from us. His goodness compels Him to pour good things into our lives. His goodness compels Him to love us.

•Perhaps we have misunderstood Romans 8:28?

- Perhaps we fail to remember that God is the Creator – as the Creator of the entire universe, He is repainting the stories of all of our hurts into His eternal masterpiece, which is the story of a loving God who has prepared a better home for His children.

MY NEXT STEP: *In the midst of hardship, it's easy, even normal, to be angry at God for not stepping in and doing something. Have you ever felt that way? Have you tried telling God how you feel? Have you tried telling a friend? How might you help a friend who feels let down by God?*

QUESTIONS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD:

1. Read Romans 8:18-30. How does verse 28 relate to the idea of suffering in verse 18? What frustrates you most about living in a fallen world, and how can the hope in verses 22-25 help you in times of trial?
2. Take a look at verse 28 again, specifically. What does it mean to love God? Is it primarily a feeling? If it includes feelings, how can we keep our feelings passionate? Clearly, it does not mean comfort or ease or health or prosperity; so what does it mean here? When Paul says "all things," what kinds of things does he have in mind?
3. Read Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, 1 Peter 5:10 and Romans 5:3-5. Do those verses change or shape the way you read Romans 8:28? If so, in what ways? How do you see that God wants to be understood in terms of suffering and its role in our lives?
4. Next week we will be continuing this series by looking at a passage that sometimes can be misunderstood, Matthew 25:14-30. We will answer the question, "How Does God Want to Use Us?" How would you answer that question?

PRAYERS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD: Those Struggling with Addictions

Pray for those at Grace, and in our community, who are struggling with addiction. May God break every form of bondage, provide healing to minds and bodies and turn those who live a limited life of addiction to a full life of serving others in Christ