

It Will All Work Out

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

—Romans 8:28

This is one of those verses that you need more and more the older you get. It is the verse that, in fact, refers not to the future but to the past. If I may use a couple of big words here—it is not a priori; it is a posteriori. A priori is looking forward. A posteriori is looking backward. Romans 8:28 is the promise of a posteriori; it is after the fact. It is not a priori because if you could say, “Well, everything’s going to work out all right, it doesn’t matter what I do,” then you would abuse this promise. But Paul knows that as members of the family, we all have a sense of shame over something in our past. We all have skeletons in our closets, and he can say because you’re a family member and you’re a joint-heir with Christ, anything that happens to you has to turn out for good. All things work together for good—all things.

Having established your position in the family, Paul is saying that God knows the past; He knows what’s bothering you. All things work together for good. You could almost call it the family scandal! How do you know that? Well, because it says it works together for good—it shows it wasn’t good. If it had been good, he wouldn’t need to say it, but it works together for good because it was bad. It doesn’t mean that everything that happens is good. Things that can happen can be bad, but because you’re in the family you have a promise: it will work together for good.

How do we know? We’ve found it out, for one thing. Look back; look across the years and remember the closed door that broke your heart and you lived long enough to thank God a thousand times it was closed. Learn the joy of God’s providence,

knowing that with every disappointment—give it time—you'll be thankful for it. He will sanctify to you your deepest distress. This is something that God does.

Excerpted from *The God of the Bible* (Authentic Media, 2002).