



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Romans 84

For whom everything works good?

Romans 8:28

Romans 8:28-30, *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. ²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, is discussing the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.

He talks about man's condition in sin in the first three chapters. Towards the end of chapter 3 and all the way through chapter 7 he talks about justification and its fruits.

In chapter 8 he gives to us the great reality that justification is eternal, that whoever the Lord justifies He glorifies.

We are eternally secure and will persevere in faith to the end. That great truth of chapter 8 is summarized in those three verses.

They sum up the whole doctrine of eternal security.

- Whoever the Lord foreknew He predestined,
- Whoever He predestined He called,
- Whoever He called He justified, and
- Whoever He justified He glorified.

Nobody is lost in the process and that is because "God causes all things to work together for their good."

Justification is eternal.

V 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.

"All things" there that is so comforting.

The security of the believer.

- The extent,
- The recipients,
- The source.

The certainty of security comes in verses 29 and 30.

The extent of security; it covers all things.

The recipients of this security: Those who love God.

The source of their security: They are called.

The certainty of their security: Whoever He foreknew and whoever He predestined and whoever He called and whoever He justified, and He glorified.

The extent of our security.

That is the extent of our security.

- No matter what pain,
- no matter what problems,
- no matter what failures,
- no matter what difficulties,
- no matter what disasters,
- no matter what sins,
- no matter what suffering,
- no matter what temptation,

All things work together for good.

The extent has no limits.

There is nothing that qualifies the "*all things*."

Absolutely, all things work together for good.

God takes anything and everything that occurs in a believer's life. God makes it work together for the believer's ultimate good.

God overrules everything.

No sin is held against us because He works everything for our eternal good.

When that person belongs to God, has been justified by God, when that person belongs to Jesus Christ, who is the High Priest on behalf of that person interceding.

When that person is indwelt by the Spirit who continues to intercede, God causes everything in that person's life to produce eternal good and eternal glory.

The extent of this security is that it is basically limitless.

Who really possesses this kind of security?

Two important statements with tremendous implications.

- One view our relationship with God from our side, and
 - Other view our relationship with God from His side.
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- ✓ On the one hand, we love God.
 - ✓ On the other hand, He called us.

This promise of eternal security belongs to those who love God and who are the called of God.

These two wonderful truths sum up our identity.
We are the called, who love God.

God's people are described in many ways.

As His children.

As His sheep.

As His sons.

As His bride.

As His beloved.

As His church.

As His believers.

As His true worshippers.

But no designation of believers is more indicative of their character than this one those who love God.

They are the people who love God.

For those who love God, God is causing all things to work together.

This is not a new way to describe God's people.

Exodus 20, the place where God gave the law.

Exodus 20:2-6, *I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* ³ *“You shall have no other gods before Me.* ⁴ *“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵you shall not bow down to them nor serve*

them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

When God gave His Law, He starts out by dividing the entire human race into two kinds of people, those who hate Him and those who love Him. The simplest and purest definition of a believer.

Deuteronomy 7:9-10, *“Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;¹⁰ and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.*

The same two-fold designation of the human race.

They are divided into two categories, those who love God and those who hate Him.

Nehemiah, long after the law was given, long after Israel had forfeited the right to the land and Judah had forfeited the right to the land, and they had been carried off into captivity, they were still defining God as the God who blesses those who love Him, keeps His promise to those who love Him and demonstrates His loving-kindness to them.

Nehemiah 1:5, *And I said: "I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments,*

Psalm 69:36, *Also, the descendants of His servants shall inherit it, And those who love His name shall dwell in it.*

Again, believers being identified as those who love His name.

Psalm 97:10, *You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.*

Psalm 116:1-5, *I love the Lord, because He has heard My voice and my supplications. ² Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live. ³ The pains of death surrounded me, And the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow. ⁴ Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I implore You, deliver my soul!" ⁵ Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; Yes, our God is merciful.*

The psalmist loves the Lord because the Lord saved him. The Lord gave him salvation in the midst of his sinful distress.

Psalm 145:20, *The Lord preserves all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy.*

Now I think you get the picture. This is a very common designation for people to be identified as true believers. In

Isaiah 56:6-7, *“Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— ⁷Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”*

God again pledges Himself to those who love the name of the Lord.

Christian, someone who loves the Lord. The simplest definition of an Old Testament believer, someone who loves God.

1 Corinthians 2:9, *But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

Christians are people who love God.

Believers are people who love God.

That is the distinguishing characteristic of their lives.

1 Corinthians 8:3, *But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.*

James 1:12, *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

Who love Him.

We don't love Him as we ought to, and that's why the Bible enjoins upon us that God's law is fulfilled if we love the Lord thy God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

We fall short of that. But we love the Lord. That's who we are. We are the people who love the Lord. True salvation produces lovers of God.

Romans 5:5, *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

We love God because God poured love into us.

When you became a believer, the Spirit of God came and when the Spirit came, He brought love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, the fruit of the Spirit.

When the Spirit took up residence in the life of a believer, the Spirit brought with Him love for God and it was the transforming work of the Spirit that enabled one who hated God to be a lover of God.

1 Corinthians 16:22, *If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!*

We are lovers of God.

2 Timothy 3:2-4, *For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,*

Man, either a lover of God or a lover of self.

Man, either a lover of God, or a hater of God.

Everybody falls into those categories.

The love we have for God doesn't suddenly disappear because it comes to us by the Holy Spirit through the work of God in the conversion miracle.

Because it is part of regeneration, it is part of transforming our natures and giving us the Spirit to produce that love first given to us at salvation, that love will be sustained through all our lives.

Ephesians 6:24, *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love that is incorruptible."*

Grace is continually extended to all of those who love God with this incorruptible love.

We don't love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We don't love God as fully as we ought to love God.

Philippians 1:9, *I pray that your love may abound still more and more.*

But we do love Him, and we find ourselves.

We can identify with Peter,

John 21:15-18, *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.*

We don't love Him as we ought to love and a lot of the time we are like Peter, but sin causes us to respond the way it caused Peter to respond.

When Peter came face to face with his betrayal of Christ, his denial of Christ, he went out and wept bitterly. It was his love that produced the tears. We love the Lord for what He's done for us. We love Him for who He is. We love Him and it is that love that marks us as true believers.

If somebody doesn't have that compelling, driving, dominating love for Christ, he's none of His.

1 John 4:19, *We love Him because He first loved us.*

1 John 5:1-2, *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.*

God blesses and shows loving-kindness and is faithful to keep His covenant with those who love Him and observe His commandments. They demonstrate His love to Him in very normal ways at the very centre, obedience.

So, Christians are those who love God. When you find someone who claims to be a Christian and who does openly confess, they don't love God.

When you find someone who confesses to be a Christian but has demonstrated indifference to Christ and to God and to the things of God and Christ, there's clear evidence there that there's no affection, passion, longing and desire for fellowship and obedience, no matter what the claim is, if the love is not manifest, you have a right to question the validity of that person's salvation.

How do we mark out this love?

Are you looking for some sentiment?

Are you looking for some emotion?

What are you looking for when you looking for evidence of love for God?

1. Love meditates on God's glory.

To love God is to be caught up with God's glory, to be caught up with the honour of God.

Psalm 18:1-3, *I will love You, O Lord, my strength. ²The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my*

salvation, my stronghold. ³I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

It is love that is consumed with worship.

To say you love God and be indifferent to worship is to betray your claim.

The psalmist expressed his love for God by reciting all the attributes of God which were so wondrous to him. He found his single greatest joy in worship, praise, adoration. It is a love that meditates on God's glory.

It is a love that is consumed with God being honoured.

2. Trusts in God's power.

Psalm 31:23-24, *Oh, love the Lord, all you His saints! For the Lord preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person. ²⁴Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the Lord.*

Psalmist assuming that life's going to have its trials and there's going to be areas of suffering, pain, and disappointment. But in it all, he says, "Love the Lord."

He realizes that God is going to preserve the faithful.
God is going to recompense the wicked.

Be strong, take courage, you can trust in the Lord.

It is a love that trusts in His power.

It is a love that has complete confidence in God's great power.

It is a love that meditates on His great glory.

3. Love seeks communion with God.

If you love God, you will have great interest in His fellowship.

If you said you loved somebody, you could certainly prove it easily enough if you sought their companionship.

Psalm 63:1-2, *O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. ² So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.*

He went to the place of worship all the time.

He couldn't be kept away. He wanted to be in the place of worship because he wanted to be near to the presence of his God. He wanted to commune with God.

Psalm 63:3-6, *Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You. ⁴ Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. ⁵ My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. ⁶ When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.*

A man who longs for fellowship, who loves worship, who seeks communion, who finds himself drawn to the place of prayer, drawn to the intimacy of the presence of God.

I am never satisfied.

I always want to know more of my God.

I always want to know Him better.

I want to discover some other richness, some other truth about Him.

I want to know the fullness of communion with Him.

Psalm 84:1-4, *How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! ²My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. ³Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young— Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. ⁴Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You. Selah*

Psalm 143:7, *Answer me speedily, O Lord; My spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, Lest I be like those who go down into the pit.*

I will die, Lord, if I don't have fellowship with You.

4. Love secures the peace.

Love secures the peace of the soul.

When you have a love relationship with someone, there's a certain peace in that love. When you know that love is real and you know that love is genuine, and you know that love is faithful, there is a tremendous tranquillity that comes over your soul.

From the human standpoint few can look back and remember when you thought you loved someone, or perhaps you did love someone, and you couldn't convince that someone to love you. You knew the agitation, anxiety overwhelming depression, and stress of this unrequited love.

Psalm 119:165, *Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.*

It doesn't matter what goes wrong, you know you are loved.

It doesn't matter what changes you are loved and secured in that love.

5. Love that is sensitive to God's feelings.

Psalm 69:9, *Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.*

is a familiar verse, I've commented on it many times through the years, but it's a very important one. Listen to what it says, David says this, "Zeal for Your house has consumed me." In other words,

David says I am so passionately concerned about Your name, Your honour, Your glory, Your majesty, Your temple.

I am so concerned that worship be true, pure, and holy that it's eating me up.

Why?

"The reproaches of those who reproach Thee have fallen on me."

When people speak evil of You, I feel the pain.

Jesus Himself fulfilled that passage in John 2 when He makes a whip and cleans the temple out.

When God is dishonoured, He felt the pain.

You know you really love God when what dishonours God causes you pain.

You should feel some holy wrath.

You should feel some holy indignation.

You shouldn't be upset or angry or hostile about what happens to you but you certainly should be concerned with what happens to dishonour the name of God.

If you love Him, you will be sensitive to those things that dishonour Him, and you'll feel the pain.

If you really love someone, when they are hurt, you feel the pain, is that not true?

Does a mother feel that pain for her child?

Does a partner in a marriage feel that pain for their spouse?

Does a child feel that pain for a parent?

Of course.

6. Love that loves what God loves.

It is a love that loves what God loves.

Don't tell me you love God if you are filled with the love of the world.

1 John 2:15, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

James 4:4, *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Psalm 119:97, *Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.*

He loves God's law because God loves His law.

Psalm 119:103, *How sweet are Your words to my taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

Job 23:12, *I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.*

John 4:34, *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.*

If you love God, you love what God loves and what God loves predominantly is truth.

If you really love God, then you love God's people.

Don't say that I am a Christian, but I don't go to church, I don't really have any interest in church.

You have a problem because apparently you don't have any driving, compelling affection for God's people.

1 John 5:1, *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.*

If you love the Father, you'll love His children.

When you set your love on someone you love those that belong to that someone. So, this is a love that loves what God loves in

terms of truth and virtue, and it is a love that loves whom God loves in terms of people.

1 John 2:9-11, *He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.* ¹⁰*He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.* ¹¹*But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

It's not some kind of duty for me to be with Christian people, they are whom I love and I love them because I love Christ in them and they belong to Him.

7. Love is also that hates what God hates.

It's a love that hates what God hates.

If you say you are one of those who loves God, then you are going to hate the things that He hates because your devotion and affection for Him is going to colour all of life.

Psalm 97:10, *You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.*

If you really love Him, you will hate what He hates.

If you love God, you will grieve over sin.
You will feel the pain when He is dishonoured.

8. Love that long for Christ's return.

Someone who truly loves the Lord longs for His return.

2 Timothy 4:8, *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

If you love Him, you will love the thought of His coming.

9. Loving the Lord means obeying His commands.

The sum of everything:

Loving the Lord means obeying His commands.

That's how you know whether you love Him, if you have a desire to obey His Word.

John 14:21, *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

Plain and simple.

How do you know you love Him?

You have His commands, you obey them.

- ✓ He has commanded you to honour Him and worship Him.
- ✓ He has commanded you to be virtuous and pursue righteousness and avoid sin.
- ✓ He has commanded you to study His Word and learn it and live it.
- ✓ He has commanded you to witness.
- ✓ He has commanded you to pray.
- ✓ He has commanded you to care for one another, to use your gifts to serve.

When you obey His commands, you give evidence of being the one who loves Him.

True Christians are lovers of God, whose heart desire is toward God.

- ✓ They seek His glory.
- ✓ They trust His power.
- ✓ They long for sweet and intimate communion with Him.
- ✓ They enjoy peace.
- ✓ They are not agitated and troubled.
- ✓ They feel the pain when He is dishonoured.
- ✓ They love the things He loves.
- ✓ They love the people He loves.

- ✓ They hate what He hates.
- ✓ They reject the world.
- ✓ They long for His coming.
- ✓ They obey His Word.

You have been hating God all your life.

You don't have that capacity.

You belong in the category of Exodus 25 verse 5. One of those generations of those who hate God, desperately wicked, and unable to do anything at all about that.

How then can you come to the place where you love God?

V 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.*

The only reason they love God is because they are called.

This is the divine love which initiates our love.

1 John 4:19, *We love Him because He first loved us.*

The word "called" is never used in the New Testament epistles to some external invitation. It always means what the theologians have called an effectual, or an effective, or a saving call. It literally means to be brought to salvation.

V 30, *Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

So, we are talking here about the divine act that initiates salvation and brings it to fulfilment.

We have been called, not according to our own purpose, not according to our own plan, not according to our own wisdom, or our own choice or decision, we have been called to be saved because of God's eternal, everlasting, redemptive purpose.

It is because of the call of God that we are transformed and made capable of loving Him.

1 Corinthians 1:2, *To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

1 Corinthians 1:24, *but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

We are the called.

This is not just a general invitation to be accepted or refused, this is an effectual call.

We are the called and we have been called because we have been predestined.

Ephesians 1:11, *In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,*

God had a purpose to redeem us. He predestined us before time began, wrote our names in the Lamb's Book of Life, and calls us to the salvation for which we were predestined.

We have been called to God's purpose.

2 Timothy 1:9, *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,*

Before time began, God set His purpose in place and His purpose involved our calling to salvation.

Jude 1:1, *Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:*

Beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ. We are the called. We are the called.

1 Peter 5:10, *But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*

First came the conviction of sin, then a subsequent humbling and brokenness, followed by a hunger for salvation, followed by the preaching of the gospel, followed by the gift of faith mixed with the hearing of the gospel and by the Word and by the Spirit you were called to justification.

We love God because He first loved us.

We love Him because He called us.

He called us when we hated Him.

He called us when we were enemies.

He called us out of darkness.

Do you know why you love God?

Because He planned for you to do it.

You love Him because He planned for you to love Him.

You love Him because He determined to set His love on you.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8, “For you *are* a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other

people, for you were the least of all peoples;⁸ but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

How odd of God to choose the Jews.

The reason that Israel had a special relationship with God is because God ordained it. It wasn't anything about you that caused Him to make the choice.

The Lord just chose to love you and He is therefore the Lord your God, God the faithful God who keeps His covenant, His loving-kindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him. He loved you first so you could love Him back.

I love God because He planned for me to love Him.
Herein lies the supreme guarantee of my security.
It's all wrapped up in God's purpose.

I didn't come along at some point in my life and say, "I am going to love God." If that were the case, I could come to another point in my life and say, "I am not loving Him anymore."

But we were born because of God. **John 1:13**, *"Not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God."*

Amen!