

5 Things To Remember In A Crisis

Romans 8:28 **SLIDE #1**

It a plain and simple fact of life... if you're breathing you will experience a crisis. Maybe your crisis is a divorce, or a job loss, or foreclosure, or the death of a dear member of your family, or a rebellious child, or the betrayal of a close friend, or abuse, or being sent into battle overseas, or you are told personally those dreaded words "It's cancer." What are we supposed to do? Where are we supposed to turn when crisis comes? God's word is full of great promises and perhaps one of the most comforting is: **SLIDE #2**

"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)

There are five things present in this promise that we need to remember as we go through the crises times of life:

#1 God hasn't left us in the dark. – SLIDE #3

Paul begins this powerful verse with the proclamation that the promises of this passage are something "we know" to be true. It's not just a "sure would be nice" or "I sure hope so" kind of expression here. It's not a fanciful wish or something we have to guess at. There's confidence! There's trust. There's a deep abiding faith present in the words "we know." We are not left to speculate about the exact course of our crisis moments. We should know from the outset that God is working it all for good.

He is intervening in your crisis to use every part to work His

plan and work out a result that will promote His goodness. Does that mean that we will know all the inner works of every situation? Of course not, but in this passage God is saying, "I want you to know right now, your life, your crisis is under My control. No matter how things might appear at the moment, trust Me, everything's gonna be alright."

#2 It's God's job to work it out for good. SLIDE #4

Do you want relief from devastating stress, or debilitating anxiety, or demoralizing worry? Do you want all the paralyzing fears of life to end today? Here's the solution... let God do His job.

It's God's job to make everything work for good, not ours. It doesn't matter how hard we try, we can't make all things work together for good. It doesn't matter how much we worry about the outcome of situations, it ain't going to change a thing. That's Jesus' point in Matthew 6:27 where He said, **SLIDE#5**

"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

So in a crisis let's remember that's it's God's job to work together all things for good, not ours.

Perhaps so much of our anxiety and worry comes from not understanding what the good is that God works out for those who love Him. The good doesn't necessarily mean a life of ease, or a new job, or healing, or restoring something that was lost, or a check for a substantial amount of money appearing in your mailbox, or any material thing.

The good that God brings out is found in 8:29-30. It's spiritual good that God wants to bring out. Notice the

spiritual good that God works out: **SLIDE #6**

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. **30** And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Did you notice the good that God is working to bring about in our lives? Ok, I understand this is one of those Bible verses that is pretty deep and we can easily miss the point, so here is the **good** God wants to do in His children based on this verse:

- Conformity to the image of His son - Above everything else in this life, God wants us to be like His son. Paul constantly urged his listeners to be like Christ, to conform to the image of the Son. **SLIDE #7**

1 Cor 11:1 - *Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.*; Eph 5:1-2 - **1** Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children **2** and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Phil 2:5 - *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.*

- Our glorification - In the context of this verse it seems that the good is our glorification in heaven. So we would say that God is working all things for good so we can go to heaven.

SLIDE #8

Col 3:4 - *When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

I've always taught that God's ultimate answer to every question is Heaven. When we finally experience heaven

we'll be struck with awe so much that we will have no more questions. God is always working to make us more Christlike and bring us closer to heaven. In other words, what God is doing is bringing about His plan and His ultimate purpose of uniting his family with Him in heaven, a perfect world, where there are no more crises!

#3 Our Job is to Love God. SLIDE #9

If it's God's job to make all things work together for good, then our job is simply to love Him. That's it. Plain and simple is it not? Love God and He'll work to see that all things in your lives will work together for the good of making you more like Jesus and ultimately preparing you for your home in heaven.

We shouldn't be surprised that God simply wants us to love Him. When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus replied,

SLIDE #10 *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." (Matthew 22:37-38)*

The test is, can we love God enough, that we trust Him completely with our lives in the most terrible of moments? The God who created and sustained the universe, who has proven Himself to be a trustworthy friend stands by you ready and willing to work all things for good in your life. All you have to do is trust Him. Our job is just to love Him.

#4 All Things Really Means All Things. SLIDE #11

Not just some things, but all things. Not just the hard things, but the easy things. All things really means all things.

There's an assurance in those words that there is no limit to what God can work with and work out. Let's face it... bad things happen to us. But God remains God and He is Lord over all the bad things that happen in this life. He is fully capable of using them in ways that will shine forth His glory and lift us to the heights of being conformed to the image of His son. What about the crisis that you're going through right now? God can use it for good. It may be a difficult valley you're in, and the pain you feel is very real. But, God is Lord over all and He will use this for good.

#5 We are a part of God's plan. SLIDE #12

God has a plan and we are a part of that plan. Since we are a part of God's plan, then the crisis that is enveloping your life will be used by God as part of His purposeful plan for all of His creation. Are you wondering how that can be? Then consider the story of Joseph.

SLIDE #13

Joseph's older brothers hated him so much that they sold him into slavery in Egypt. He is later imprisoned falsely. It appears that all hope is lost and Joseph is a forgotten man, but God elevated him to a position of such importance in Egypt that he was second only to Pharaoh in his power over all government affairs. But Joseph didn't grow bitter and hateful; instead he looked for how God was working in his circumstances. Over and over again, the Bible says that "God was with Joseph."

SLIDE #14

"Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of

Egypt. So Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace." - Acts 7:9,10

When a famine hit the entire ancient world, it was Joseph's foresight and management that enabled Egypt to have enough food to sustain their nation. Since the famine was widespread, Joseph's brothers eventually came to Egypt to buy food, and though Joseph recognized them, they didn't recognize him.

Eventually he revealed himself to his brothers, and his entire family came to live with Joseph in Egypt. When Joseph's brothers admitted their fear of what Joseph might do to them to get revenge, Joseph said,

SLIDE #15

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Gen 50:20).

Through every crises situation that Joseph faced, God was with him and working all things - the good, bad and ugly - to bring about his ultimate purpose.

But I want everyone here to understand something...Heaven will always be God's ultimate purpose for all of His children. That's the glorification part. Sometimes God's good purpose is heaven. And sometimes God's plan is not completed while we are on this earth, but after we go to heaven to be with Him.

Look at the life of Stephen for instance. Stephen, one of the early Christians, was stoned to death because of his faith. And yet, that terrible incident actually brought about something good for the early church. Look at Acts 11:19-21

SLIDE #16

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

The persecution of Stephen and other early Christians caused the church to scatter...to run for safety...and in doing so the Christians began to spread the good news of Jesus...even to the Gentile world.

And the church grew like never before. Stephen didn't get to see the good work that God performed through his death...at least not on this earth...but I'm sure he rejoiced in heaven.

We may not live to experience the fulfillment of God's good plan through our crisis situations. But we must know that the worst that can happen to us, or any believer on this earth, is death...and that simply becomes a gateway to God's greatest reward...heaven itself...**SLIDE #17**
the most wonderful goodness that God has to offer!

Perhaps we ought to thank God more often. That's right. Thank God for everything He has done for us. When we thank God for all that He has done for us in times past we begin to see that God has always worked all things for good. So heed the advice of the old song, *"When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost, Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.*

Adapted from Clay Gentry with additions by David Simpson

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2. It's God's job to work it out for good.
3. Our Job is to Love God.
4. All Things Really Means All Things.
5. We are a part of God's plan.

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