

Romans Session 118
The Ultimate Security Part 3
The Infallible Guarantee of Glory 3

Romans 8:28 (NASB)

²⁸ *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Paul has been saying that the evil things that God uses for **good** of His people may be divided into three categories: Suffering, temptation, and sin.

We have been talking about the first one, the suffering that believers go through and how God uses that to lead us to a place of complete dependence upon Him. Also, we learned that suffering sometimes comes as a price of faithfulness to God.

We have looked at some of the people that have gone through these things with God. Such as Naomi, and Job, Joseph and the captives under the Chaldean captivity, even the New Testament Church at Corinth. Testing's, trials, even death, to help the believer understand that He needs to be in obedience to the Lord and to His word.

As we continue this subject, we want to look at King Manasseh of Judah, he brought foreign conquest and great suffering upon himself and his nation because of his sinfulness

But when he was in distress, he entreated the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.

When he prayed to God, God was moved by his entreaty and heard his supplications and brought him again to Jerusalem to his kingdom.

It was then that Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.

2 Chronicles 33:12-13 (NASB)

¹² *When he was in distress, he entreated the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.*

¹³ *When he prayed to Him, He was moved by his entreaty and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.*

Although Job never lost faith in God, his incessant afflictions eventually caused him to question the Lord's ways. After a severe rebuke by God, however, Job confessed;

Job 42:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ *"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You;*

⁶ *Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."*

An enemy aggressively afflicted pain on the apostle Paul. Very likely he was the leader of Corinthian hostility toward Paul.

Paul knew that, although this person belonged to Satan's domain, his activity against the apostle was permitted by God to keep him (Paul) from exalting himself because of his visions and revelations;

2 Corinthians 12:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ *For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me.*

⁷ *Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!*

Now, Paul pleaded earnestly three times that he might be delivered from the man's attacks. The Lord responded by telling His faithful servant;

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ *And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*

¹⁰ *Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

Instead of turning down the trouble, God turned up the sufficient grace, so that Paul could endure the situation gladly and be humbled by it at the same time.

Although suffering of all kinds and for all reasons, we can learn kindness, sympathy, humility, compassion, patience, and gentleness.

Most importantly, God can use suffering as He can use few other things to bring us closer to Himself.

1 Peter 5:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ *After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

A puritan Thomas Watson observed, "a sick bed often teaches us more than a sermon" (*A Divine Cordial* [Grand Rapids; Baker, 1981], p.20).

Suffering can also teach us to hate sin. We already hate sin to some degree, because it is the direct or indirect cause of all suffering.

But personally, suffering at the hands of evil men will teach us more about the wickedness of sin.

Martin Luther said that he could never understand the imprecatory psalms until he himself was persecuted viciously. He could not understand why the godly David could call down God's vengeance on his enemies until he himself [Luther] had been tormented by enemies of the gospel.

We also come to hate sin when we see its destruction of others, especially its harm to those we love.

Jesus groaned in agony at Lazarus's tomb, but not because He despaired for His deceased friend, because He would momentarily remedy that.

He was angry and saddened because of the grief that sin and its greatest consequence, death, brought to the loved ones of Lazarus;

John 11:33 (NASB)

³³ *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,*

He also realized that such agony is multiplies a million times over every day throughout the world.

Suffering helps us see and hate our own sin.

Sometimes it is only when we are mistreated, unfairly accused, or are debilitated by illness, financial disaster, or some other form of hardship that we come face to face with, our temper, our self-satisfaction, or our indifference to other people and even to God.

By helping us see and hate our sin, suffering is also used by God to drive it out and purify us.

Job 23:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ *"But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*

In the last days:

Zechariah 13:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ *"It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it.*

⁹ *"And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"*

Through that final and unparalleled period of suffering, the Lord will refine and restore to Himself a remnant of His ancient people Israel.

Listen, suffering divine discipline confirms that we are indeed God's children.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that:

Hebrews 12:6-8 (NASB)

⁶ ***FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."***

⁷ *It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?*

⁸ *But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.*

As the writer of Hebrews notes, wise human parents discipline their children for the children's own welfare.

Even secular psychologists and counselors have come to recognize that a child who is over indulged in what he wants but is given no bounds and held to no standards by his parents realizes innately that he is not loved.

Three times the writer of Psalm 119 acknowledged that the Lord used suffering to strengthen his spiritual life:

Psalm 119:67 (NASB)

⁶⁷ *Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.*

Psalm 119:71 (NASB)

⁷¹ *It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.*

Psalm 119:75 (NASB)

⁷⁵ *I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.*

Suffering is designed by God to help us identify to a limited extent with Christ's suffering on our behalf and to conform us to Him.

It is for that reason that Paul prayed to :

Philippians 3:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

And that he boasted:

Galatians 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

When we are willing to submit it to our Heavenly Father, suffering can be used by Him to mold us more perfectly into the divine likeness of our Lord and Savior.

God uses the evil of temptation as a means of bringing **good** to his people.
Just as suffering is not good in itself, neither, of course, is temptation.

But as is the case with suffering, the Lord is able to use temptation for our benefit.
Temptation should drive us to our knees in prayer and cause us to ask God for strength to resist.

When an animal sees a predator, he runs or flies as fast as he can to a place of safety.
That should be the Christian's response whenever he is confronted by temptation.
Temptation causes the godly believer to flee to the Lord for protection.

Whether Satan approaches us as a roar lion or as an angel of light, if we are taught in God's Word, we can recognize his evil enticements for what they are.
That is why the Psalmist proclaimed:

Psalm 119:11 (NASB)

¹¹ Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

God can also cause temptation to work for our good by using it to devastate spiritual pride.
When we struggle with temptation, we know that, in ourselves, we are still subject to the allurements and defilements of sin.
And when we try to resist it in our own power, we quickly discover how powerless against it we are in ourselves.

In His incarnation, even Jesus did not resist Satan's temptation in His humanness but in every instance confronted the tempter with the Word of God.

Matthew 4:1-10 (NASB)

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

³ And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

⁵ Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

⁷ Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE

TEST."

⁸ *Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;*

⁹ *and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."*

¹⁰ *Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"*

Luke 4:1-12 (NASB)

¹ *Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness*

² *for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.*

³ *And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."*

⁴ *And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"*

⁵ *And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

⁶ *And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.*

⁷ *"Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours."*

⁸ *Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"*

⁹ *And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here;*

¹⁰ *for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU TO GUARD YOU,'*

¹¹ *and, 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"*

¹² *And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"*

God uses the evil of sin as a means of bringing **good** to His children.

That would have to be true if Paul's statement about "*All Things*" is taken at face value.

Even more than suffering and temptation, sin is not good in itself, because it is the antithesis of good.

Yet in God's infinite wisdom and power, it is most remarkable of all that He turns sin to our good.

It is of great importance, of course, to recognize that God does not use sin for good in the sense of its being an instrument of His righteousness.

That would be the most obvious of self-contradictions. The Lord uses sin to bring good to His children by overruling it, canceling its normal evil consequences and miraculously substituting His benefits.

We will continue this next time and then go on to talk about the recipients of security.