

ROMANS: TRANSFORMED BY GRACE

(Romans 8:28-30)

*Do you know what your specific purpose on this earth is? **To live to enjoy & worship God with all that you are. His glory is your purpose on this earth. How?** By sav. faith rel. w Jesus -Christ's coming (The ADVENT) was the pinnacle moment of God's mercy toward a sinful & rebellious earth—a lost humanity. At Christmas, we celebrate the *incarnation* of Jesus (His birth and becoming fully man as He was already fully God). **Christmas is our point of designation to celebrate the Coming of Jesus to redeem sinful humanity.** (Sept./Dec.?)

-Easter is our point of designation to celebrate the reality that Jesus perfectly accomplished that redemption by dying as our substitute on the cross & then being gloriously raised from the grave, from death as victorious over ALL sin and ALL death forever.

=The theme of both Christmas and Easter is the **worship, praise, adoration, & glory of Jesus** who came to become a humble man and died as a sinless man in *your* place in order to save/rescue rebellious man from his sinful life =ALL for the utter glory of God the Father through the Son. Jesus' incarnation, sacrificial death, & resurrection =God's glory.

-God the Father, then makes much of the Son & establishes Him as preeminent in *this* universe

***In this message, I am going to make some very difficult statements: Controversial?**

Main Point: In this ADVENT season, Christ's coming to the earth was never, mostly about you. Your Salvation is all about Christ and His glory, and it's dramatically less about you.

=**Our worship of Jesus should reflect this divine reality** (*this* season, advent/incarnation/birth)

=Even though in your sins & trespasses, **you need** divine rescue; even though in your helpless, depraved spiritual state – you stood condemned *already* apart from God's intervention in your life – **God's plan of salvation for the world is to highlight the Son Jesus as being the most worthy, adorable, honored, glorified Being in this universe – “that at the Name of Jesus every knee will bow in worship.”**

-Phil 2:6-7 “Christ Jesus, who, as He *already* existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped [seized: lit. held on to], ⁷ but emptied Himself [set apart His divine rights to remain in heaven] *by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men.* ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross. ⁹ **For this reason** [the incarnation at ADVENT & death/Resurrection] also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and *that* every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, **to the glory of God the Father.”**

-The **purpose** of the Incarnation & Redemption of mankind is to glorify Jesus & bring humanity up to speed that He alone is worthy of all honor and praise as the Son of God

-Col 1:15-20 “**He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation:** ¹⁶ for by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also the head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness of deity to dwell in Him, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.” For you and me, Christ is EVERYTHING; **It's ALL about Him** =praise/glory

-The purpose of the Incarnation & Redemption of mankind is to glorify Jesus & bring humanity up to speed that He alone is worthy of all honor and praise as the Son of God
-The **means** of Christ's honor and glory is that He saved you – with His own blood/death.
-Jesus' sinless life & sacrificial death on behalf of the whole world – **is the perfect work of Redemption**, that Jesus made sinners savable; & His death was sufficient for whole world.
-Your salvation is about Jesus Christ's ultimate honor & glory (and as a *consequence* you and I were graciously -though unreservedly undeserving – marvelously saved By Christ's perfect work of redemption on that cross). ...AND that brings us to Romans Ch. 8 again:

Ch. 8 begins with *Spiritual help*: why? b/c Christian life is hard. Suffering=loss. GIFT/Holy Spirit

Romans 8:28-30

“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. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He [Jesus] would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.” – We tend to miss the point of this passage & ONLY focus on promise: *all things*

-This small passage is pregnant with divine truth, Christology, & the theology of salvation

-The **POINT** of the passage is to remind & encourage all believers that our purpose on this earth is “To live to enjoy & worship God with all that you are” (HOW?) by knowing Jesus Christ, loving Jesus Christ, worshipping Jesus Christ, & **BECOMING like Him** everyday of your life.

Let's begin with Vs. 29: -so that He [Jesus] would be the firstborn among many brothers/sisters

-This does **Not** mean that Jesus was the first person created/born in creation (heresy); =*co-eternal*

-This does mean that Jesus has been given preeminence, first place, privileged status, **THE** highest honor among all humans (all created beings). “First born” in OT=always *blessing/authority*

J. Macarthur: “*God's purpose is to make us like Christ in order to create a great redeemed & glorified humanity over which Jesus will reign & forever be preeminent*” =He is our LORD bc Sav.

-Col. 1:18 “Jesus is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything” =b/c of resurrection =Jesus reigns as Savior, Redeemer, Lord-**all**

1. Redemption is NOT about you; It's about Jesus. Jesus glorifies the Father through His humility, obedience, sacrifice, & in turn the Father glorifies Jesus as Lord over ALL

2. Our Salvation is the means by which Jesus is honored & glorified -since He conquered sin & death for us forever.

3. Our purpose on this earth is to enjoy & glorify God the Father through worshipping & becoming like the Son everyday of our lives (In Pain/suffering or in Plenty/blessing)-*shaping us into*

As a glorious promise to the Believer in Jesus, a true Christian, amidst peril, distress, pain, suffering, trials, temptations, and loss . . . God reminds us of what is true for all eternity:

Vs. 28: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good. *All things=ALL

-Note: Paul is **not** saying that all things are good: Sin, evil, suffering, rape, abortion, murder-**bad**

-Paul is saying that God is sovereign; all-powerful; all-good; all-wise; & has our very best interests in mind as He created us, loved us, saved us, & now leads us through this life w/help from Holy Spirit (point of Ch. 8). & Now, God emphasizes that NO matter what we go through in this life A. Not alone; B. God is very aware; C. God is still in charge; D. God will allow it, cause it, or use it for your spiritual benefit of shaping/molding you MORE into Christ-likeness.

-Gen. 50:20 Joseph “as for you, you meant evil against me, BUT God meant it for good...”

So, **all** sin, all failure, all weakness, all brokenness, all corruption, all lies, all temptation, trials, abuse, neglect, hurts, wounds, and tragedies of all stripes...God can & will use all of it to transform us into less carnal, less selfish, less idol-worshipping, less fleshly, less unloving people who need to be daily changed, challenged, molded, transformed into Jesus' very image: *What a profound promise: No matter what (good or bad, blessing or evil, right/wrong) = we not only get Jesus as a Savior, we get to become like Him throughout our life in order to be made more perfect in our capacity to love God, know God, enjoy God, & worship Him forever!!!

A. If you are blessed, then you get to Use your blessing as a means of worship & bless others

B. If you are suffering, hurting, exp. Deep loss in your life, then you also get to use your suffering & loss as a means of worship since God is/will use it to make you more like Christ.

-Rom 5:3-5 "And not only *this*, but ^[c]we also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; ⁵and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

-Jas. 1:2-4 "Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces ^[d]endurance. ⁴And let ^[e]endurance have *its* perfect ^[f]result, so that you may be ^[g]perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

What is the qualifier? *Who* gets to be molded into Christlikeness in both blessing & suffering??

Vs. 28: -to those who love God, -Is that you? Do you love the Lord? -Jn. 14:15 *If love=obey Word* -to those who are called according to *His* purpose. =Those God has called to become like *the* Son -Who are these people? They are His! God's saints, (YOU), His chosen ones -the "elect."

Vs. 29: For those whom God foreknew, He also predestined (them) *to become conformed to the image of His Son*, (IF you are saved, you are saved to be made into Christ's image) why? **Because there is no other human worth being changed into, being conformed into image:** -so that Jesus would be the firstborn among many brothers *and sisters*;

"Golden Chain of Salvation" = Order of salvation: (i.e. Heavenly perspective: Divine will of God toward mankind =to perfectly save/redeem those who God has chosen for His own glory)

Vs. 29: -For those whom God foreknew (foreloved-intimacy-love relationship); foreordained - He also predestined **Vs. 30:** and these whom He predestined, He also called; -and these whom He called, He also justified; -and these whom He justified, He also glorified."

-This is God's divine plan & purpose for your life: From eternity past, God has known you, loved you, chosen you, and sent Jesus to save you. He called you to salvation & through Jesus' perfect work on the cross - God justified you/SAVED you. Took away your sin & guilt and gave you His very own righteousness instead; His very Holy Spirit; AND He promised you that IF you are His, you are His FOREVER (assurance/security)=He has already glorified us!...we are just waiting to live out the process/walk of the Christian life & all the blessings of Knowing Him & being molded by Him into Christlikeness UNTIL we die...& then experience glorification

APPLICATION: "It is most important that we look at our salvation from God's standpoint: God's ultimate object in ever planning the scheme of salvation is to glorify His Son; it is as the result of what Jesus has done that He is thus exalted." Martin Lloyd-Jones -How does this change your view of Christmas? Easter? Worship?

1. What about your life is evident that you are being made daily into Christ's image/likeness?
2. Can you think back to how God has used tragedy/pain in your life to help mold you into godliness?
3. How do you need to re-order your thinking & re-orient your heart to learn to thank God for pain/trials in your life, NOW knowing that God allows such in order to lovingly shape you into Christlikeness?