



Sometimes I feel like life can launch a ferocious attack on me. And I know I'm not alone. If you are reading this, I'm sure you feel the same way at times. Trouble does not discriminate. Trials do not have a mind that picks their host and chooses its victims. Suffering can attach itself to any living and breathing being. Every heart that beats struggles and suffers at some point in life.

I can testify to this truth. In our life together, my husband and I have experienced multiple hospitalizations, including ones for a liver transplant and open-heart surgery. We've lost ones we love and been broken-hearted over ones that love us. We've had financial difficulties, and like most marriages, we have vocalized harsh words and feelings, and tears have fallen. One of the most crushing struggles we faced was the dream of a large family being dashed.

Struggling and suffering are conditions to which we can all relate. Everyone has a nest of suffering, but each nest is unique to the sufferer.

Reflection: What is your current nest of suffering?

As we lie in our nest of suffering, it can be easy to cultivate a downtrodden and crushed attitude. As a result, our outlook on life can become grey and cloudy, with a 100% chance of tears. But for God's children, believers in His Son, Jesus Christ, our perspective can and should be different.

Instead of cultivating a life of defeat and despair, we can flourish and thrive despite the struggle. We can live what I call the "Romans 8:28 life," and our nest of struggle and suffering can become an outpost of God's glory and purpose.

What exactly is the Romans 8:28 life, and how can we live said life? A close look at this verse, written by the Apostle Paul, can teach us how.

"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 NIV](#)

Paul writes "and we know" with confidence. The definition of "know" is "to perceive or understand as fact or truth; to apprehend clearly and with certainty." [1] Paul states that he *knows* that God will work all things for the good. It is a fact he *knows* to be true.

Paul knows Jesus Christ personally; therefore, he knows God's character. Paul knows God is trustworthy, good, and sovereign over all things. Thus, Paul can reason that because of



God's attributes, Paul can trust God with the trials, troubles, and struggles in his life.

I always wanted several children, and when we quickly became pregnant with our first child, our hopes and dreams for a family seemed to be well on their way to being fulfilled. But then I had difficulties after giving birth to our beautiful daughter. After hemorrhaging and suffering from its complications, the doctor told us the chances of having more children were very slim. Years later, I became pregnant, only to miscarry and hemorrhage again. The tears fell, and hope died. Why would God allow this in our lives? How would God use this for good? To this day, I still don't understand the "why," but I know I can trust God with the answer.

Living the Romans 8:28 life means when we know God's character, we can trust Him with the trials, troubles, or struggles we are experiencing. And because we know we can trust Him, we can endure the suffering, knowing there is a greater purpose that God himself has ordained. He is a good God, so his purposes are good. Our outlook can be transformed into a Romans 8:28 perspective, knowing there is a good reason for our struggle.

Reflection: What current situation do you not understand and need to trust God's character in the discouragement?

Joseph is an excellent example of someone living the Romans 8:28 life. He had been his daddy's favorite but reviled by his brothers. They sold him into slavery, and Joseph landed in prison in a foreign land for a number of years. He suffered, but, in the end, he knew his life and its turmoil had been used for the good of God's divine purposes. Joseph lay hold to the Romans 8:28 life when he said, ***"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."*** [Genesis 50:20](#)

Reflection: Can you look back over your life and see circumstances that seemed hard at the time, but you are now able to see the good that came from them? When you do, you can live the Romans 8:28 life.

While God uses our struggles for good purposes, God can also use them to change our hearts. The prophet Isaiah writes of this truth. He reminds us that God allows our suffering to transform and lead us back to Him.

"Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back." [Isaiah 38:17](#)

I can reflect on a specific time of suffering in my life and see how God used it to correct my



ways and tug my heart closer to Him. Sometimes, our misery redirects us when we are heading in the wrong direction. In His grace, God rescued me before I fell into a “pit of destruction,” and because of my experience in the past, I can view future struggles with a Romans 8:28 lens and praise God for the way he will work in my life through them.

Reflection: Has there been a time in your life when you were drifting away from God, and he used a difficult time to bring you back to Him? Remembering how he saved you from the “pit of destruction” can lead you to live the Romans 8:28 life.

Paul writes, “God works for the good of those who love him and are called according to His purpose.” To love God is to have a relationship with Him as He calls us to himself, and we prioritize Him above all things. When our eyes are on the One who loves us most, everything else pales in comparison.

“What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.” [Philippians 3:8](#)

Paul had a passion for his Savior, and nothing compared to knowing and living for Christ. He knew that in Christ, he had eternal life. Despite the struggles and circumstances of life, better days were coming. He knew that his “present troubles are small and won’t last very long.” (2 Corinthians 4:17 NLT) He lived the Romans 8:28 life with the certainty that Jesus was the redeemer of his past, the hope for his future, and his peace for the present.

If Christ is yours and my passion, too, we will view life through a Romans 8:28 lens and find true joy in Him whatever our circumstances may be. We, too, can see Jesus as the redeemer of our past, the hope for our future, and the peace for our present. Our sight brightens, peace settles deeply in, and God’s strength fortifies us in every trial. We will trust God with the good, the bad, and every twist and turn in our lives. We will rest in the comfort of His sovereign hands knowing He is working for our good.

Living the Romans 8:28 life means we can find contentment in every situation and view life with an eternal perspective, eyes intent on our home in heaven with the Savior of our souls.

Reflection and Prayer: Ask God to show you where He might not take first place in your life. What people or worldly things take priority over God in your life? Ask God to give you a passion for Him and a determination to do His will. Ask Him to help you view life through a Romans 8:28 lens.



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