

God at Work

Romans 8:28

The NASB says "*God causes all things to work together for good.*" The NIV also makes God the subject but makes "*all things*" the sphere of his working, not the object: "*In all things God works for the good.*" The King James and the English Standard Version make "*all things*" the subject: "*All things work together for good.*" All these are possible from the Greek wording. When the King James says, "*all things work together for good,*" it does not mean, they work that way on their own, or are good in themselves. It means that **God makes** all things work together for good. So, **God is at work** in all these translations, and what He is bringing about is *good*, and what He is bringing good out of is *all things*.

I. This is a remarkable promise.

So remarkable that the Bible emphasizes it over and over again from beginning to end.

(A). **Joseph** --- God worked when Joseph's brothers sold him into Egyptian slavery.

"When he summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread, God sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave" (Ps.105:16-17).

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Gen. 50:20).

(B). **Job** --- God worked through all the afflictions that came into his life.

People gathered around Job *"And they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the affliction that the Lord had brought upon him"* (Job 42:11).

"You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).

(C). **Jonah** --- enters a ship, then a storm, and is cast overboard by a shipmaster.

"And Jonah entered the city and preached; and the people believed" (Jon. 3:5).

God used Jonah as the appointed means for the salvation of an entire city.

(D). **Jesus** --- the crucifixion of Christ is the supreme example of this promise.

"Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together to do whatsoever God's counsel determined to be done" (Acts 5:28).

II. This is a restricted promise.

To those who --- (1). love God; and (2) are called according to his purpose. This is a two-fold description of the same people. My love is subjective. His call is objective. God's *calling* here is his sovereign action to bring us from the spiritual deadness of unbelief and hostility to God to the spiritual life of faith in Christ and love to God.
"To those who are called, loved by God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ" (Jude 1).

III. This is a realized promise.

*When things don't go the way they should,
God always makes them turn for good.*

The English word "God" comes from the contraction of the English word "good." The basis of this promise is not your belief, "God said it, I believe it, that settles it," but rather, the basis of this promise is the fidelity of God to fulfill all His promises.
"God's goodness is like the Hebrew Bible; begin at the end and read backward."

A.J. Gordan