

Expecting the Unexpected Romans 16:7

Andronicus and Junia were possibly brother and sister or husband and wife. The NIV calls them “*relatives*” of the apostle Paul, but more than likely they were simply fellow Jews or “kinsmen” as Paul uses the word in Romans 9:3. Paul says, “*they are of note among the apostles.*” This simply means that they went the extra mile for the cause of Christ. But what strikes me about them is this statement --- “*my fellow-prisoners.*” Does not that seem dichotomous? They were noteworthy Christians in prison. You would think that if they were of note it might be said they are, “citizens of heaven;” but no, Andronicus and Junia are called fellow-prisoners. Are there times in your life when you feel things should be going smoothly and all of the sudden the unexpected happens?

I. Unexpected trials and tribulations are ordained . . .

The apostle Paul tells the Thessalonian Christians “*no man should be moved by afflictions; for you know that we are **appointed** thereunto*” (I Thessalonians 3:3). The word translated ‘appointed’ is the same word used by Simeon in Luke 2:34 of Jesus Christ when he said to Mary, “*Behold, this child is set (ordained) . . .*”

(A). All events in your life pass through God’s wise counsel . . .

“*God either permits, promotes or prohibits all events in your life*” A. W. Pink.
Someone might say, “But do not people have free will? Can’t they do harm?”
God said to Abimelech, “*I withheld thee from sinning against me*” (Gen. 20:6).

(B). All events in your life promote God’s ultimate plan for your life . . .

“*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (Romans 8:28).
Notice, it doesn’t say all things are good, but that all things work for good.
Or you could say, “All things work for God.” All things; even your trials.

II. Unexpected trials and tribulations are opportunities . . .

Since all events in your life (including prison for Andronicus and Julian) work for God (and your good), then it would seem every time an unexpected event arises:

(A). It is an opportunity for you to learn more about yourself . . .

It is amazing how a person’s relationship with Christ is deepened, strengthened, and broadened through affliction. When Satan sought permission to trouble Job he said to God, “*Does Job fear God for naught?*” (Job 1:9). Yes, he does.

(B). It is an opportunity for you to lean more upon God . . .

“*Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*” (I Peter 4:19).
Solomon encourages people to “*Trust in the Lord and lean not on thine own understanding*” (Prov. 3:5). When you can’t see the good, see God behind it.

(C). It is an opportunity for you to live by faith before men . . .

“*Faith is the daring of the soul to go further than it can see*” **William Clarke.**
“*A witness in a court of law has to give evidence; a Christian witness has to be evidence. It is the difference between law and grace*” **Geoffrey R. King.**