

Series: God Saves #1305

Title: Romans 8.28a
We Know

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. I am glad to have you back with us on the radio and/or the podcast as we end this week in dialogue with one another. I assume you talk back to me, in the sense that you are engaging with the Bible passage before us – seeking understanding and application in your own life wherever you are. Always feel free to write to me and share with me how God is revealing more of Himself to you. I am also available to answer questions and to pray for you. By now you know my addresses, so reach out to me this weekend. And of course they will be given at the end, so stay tuned.

We have entered the doorway marked Romans 8 this week. Our main interest comes towards the end of the chapter, verses 28-30. Specifically, verses 29 and 30 contain what is known as the order of salvation or the golden chain of salvation and through this we see *how* God works such that everyone from Adam to the very last human who will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is saved from sin. But, as is our practice, we step back from the verses under our focus to first learn about the context. So, the last two days I have [red] from all of Romans chapter 8. And we saw how what comes before verse 28 then allows the Apostle Paul to begin verse 28 with these words: **“And we know...”**

And we know what? He continues, **“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.”** Oh! We are going to have dig into *this*! Does Paul mean we can actually, truly *know* that God is causing all things – really, *all things* – to work together for the good of those who love God? You are sitting there listening and you say, “I love God. Is this what God is doing for *me*? Is He working together all things for *my* good?” You are no doubt thinking about the “all things,” and especially the bad things in your life and you are very curious as to how Paul can *know* this?

But he does know this and he says we can know this. Know is a very interesting word in the Greek language. In fact, I urge you to write in this Greek word above the English word “know” in your Bible. The word is *eido*. You spell it e-i-d-o (e-i-d-o). Listen to what it means: *absolute knowledge*! We have complete knowledge, perfect knowledge, thorough knowledge, unqualified knowledge, we have absolute knowledge that “God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Did you get that?

Friends, this is not, “Well, maybe on a good day, when things are really going my way, God is causing all things to work together for my good. Oh, when I am living as God wants me to live, when I am obedient to Him, yea, *then* I can *know* all things are working together for my good.” No! (As in n-o.) This is not a shaky knowledge, a shifting knowledge, a wavering knowledge, a “now I know but the next day I am not so sure I know,” this is not that! The Apostle says, “And we know...” That is, “And we have absolute knowledge.” He is *firm*. He is very *confident*. He is full of re-assurance. “And we know...” *Eido*. Absolute knowledge.

I want to make certain I emphasize how firm the Apostle Paul is here, because on this matter of knowledge there can be a lot of wavering as to what we can know and how well we can know it. And I am speaking of this in the context of you who are already Christ’s people. Do you go back and forth, based on your emotions, how you are *feeling*, as to how much confidence you have in what you know about God in relationship to you? Paul, writing to the Romans in the first century says, “We know,” but I am speaking you in the twenty-first century. Do you know? Do you have absolute assurance about what God is doing in your life?

If not, then I strongly encourage you to read all of Romans chapter 8 this weekend for yourself. As you read, please believe. This is for “those who are in Christ Jesus,” as verse 1 says.

What are some ways that we can strengthen our knowledge of the saving grace of God in our lives? Well, let me ask this: how did Paul *know*? What is Paul the Apostle basing his knowledge on? What is the

foundation of his absolute knowing? More than one of the commentators I have been reading suggest two things and I am borrowing these, because I agree.

First, Paul knows with absolute knowledge what God is doing in relation to him because of his own experience with God. Second, Paul knows with absolute knowledge what God is doing in relation to him because he has read what God has done with God's people in the past, and he applies that to his present.

Let me just put down a couple of examples to help us see this. First, when you read Paul, *and* when you read Bible passages *about* him, you immediately see that he had a very dynamic relationship with the Lord. This resulted in him knowing certain truths about who God is.

How is it that he can begin Romans 8 with conviction saying that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus? He can write that because if anyone deserved to be condemned, it was Paul, yet he was not condemned. Back when he was Saul, the Pharisee, he took up arms and relentlessly hunted down the early Christians, the people of The Way (they were called). He was responsible for the persecution unleashed on Christ's first converts and disciples. How do I know that? Listen to Paul again, in his own words, in Galatians chapter 1, verses 13-14.

"¹³ For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; ¹⁴ and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions."

He tells us himself: he was a fierce enemy of the church. He deserved the full wrath of God on him for his sins, *but* God was merciful towards him and delivered him from his sin. (We will learn more about that further along here in Romans 8.) My point is Paul knows with absolute knowledge what God is doing in relation to him because of his own experience with God. He can write, "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" from personal experience. Can't you, dear Christian? You have your experience with God. Therefore, there are certain truths you *know* with absolute certainty because of your own dynamic relationship with the Lord. Do not let Satan rob you of what you *know* is true!

Second, Paul knows with absolute knowledge what God is doing in relation to him because he has read what God has done with God's people in the past, and he applies that to his present. Paul knew the Old Testament. He read it. He studied it. He memorized it. He pursued it. Paul was a Bible man. He read and believed the Word of God. And when he did study what is our Old Testament, he found repeatedly the same thing you will find if you devour the Bible: God absolutely causes all things to work together for good to those who love God. Off the top of my mind, I am thinking of Joseph.

Remember him? Forced into slavery by his brothers, shipped down to Egypt, young and imprisoned. Very far away from home without any hope of being rescued. The recipient of such mistreatment from his brothers. And yet, one thing leads to another and we keep reading the later portions of the Book of Genesis and we find that God is at work. God is causing, even sinful things, evil things, to work together for the good of Joseph. Joseph loves God and when we read the story from beginning to end, as Paul did, we come away with the same conclusion: we can *know*, based on what God did for Joseph, that God will do that for us who also love God.

Let me say something to you, and I want to say this lovingly yet boldly: if you are wavering, Christian, on what you know with absolute certainty about God, then you are not reading your Bible. Or, you are not believing as true for you what you read about God doing for others in Holy Scripture. You are assuming that while the Lord did that for others, He will not do that for you. And that is a bad assumption. If you are in Christ at this hour, then every single thing we read in Romans 8 this week applies to *you*. "And we know" includes *you*! *You know*! More on this Monday because we know God Is!

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