

## 1) Confidence in suffering (Romans 8:28)

*Amidst present suffering, those who love God, called according to His purpose, are certain that all things work for their good.*

[P] <sup>28</sup> [but/and [δὲ]]

[M] We know [RAI, οἶδαμεν, complete understanding, deep perception]

[Ed] that all things work together [PAI, συνεργεῖ, synergy, help in the work, partner in the labour] [for the good [ἀγαθόν, agreeable]] of those

1.) who love [PAP, ἀγαπῶσιν, well pleased, contented] God,

2.) who are [PAP] [the] called [κλητοῖς, divinely selected and appointed] [according to his purpose [πρόθεσιν]].

## 2) Confidence in God (Romans 8:29-30)

*The called's confident assurance rests in God's sovereign work of foreknowing, predestining, calling, justifying, and glorifying them.*

<sup>29</sup> For [ὅτι] those [who are presently suffering, who love God, and who are called according to His purpose]

1.) 1.) he foreknew [AAI, προέγνω, knowledge before hand, election to salvation, predestinate]

2.) he also [καὶ] predestined [AAI, προώρισεν, decide before, decree from eternity, foreordain] to be conformed to the image of his Son,  
[so that he [the Son] would be [PAN] the firstborn [πρωτότοκον, firstbegotten]] [among many brothers and sisters/brethren].

2.) 1.) <sup>30</sup> And [δὲ] those he predestined [AAI],

2.) he also [καὶ] called [AAI, ἐκάλεσεν, invite];

3.) 1.) and [καὶ] those he called [AAI],

2.) he also [καὶ] justified [AAI, ἐδικαίωσεν, to render righteous, to show one to be righteous, to declare one to be just];

4.) 1.) and [καὶ] those he justified [AAI],

2.) he also [καὶ] glorified [AAI, ἐδόξασεν, to make glorious, adorn with lustre, clothe with splendour, impart glory to something].

### This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
  1. First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
  2. Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
  3. Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
  - P: present, continuous or linear action.
  - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
  - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
  - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
  - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
  - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
  - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
  - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
  - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
  - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
  - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
  - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
  - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

### This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.

- [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
- [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
- [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while, on the other hand).
- [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
- [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
- [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
- [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
- [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
- [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
- [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
- [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
- [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except, provided that).
- [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
- [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
- [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
- [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
- [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
- [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
- [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

### This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

**On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:**

**1. How has the author organised this passage?**

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

**2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?**

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

**3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?**

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

**4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

**5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?**

**6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.**

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

**7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.**

**On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:**

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a).

# Sermon preparation worksheet

**Passage:** Romans 8:28-30

**1. How has the author organised this passage?** a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) Amidst present suffering, those who love God, called according to His purpose, are certain that all things work for their good (Romans 8:28).  
2) The called's confident assurance rests in God's sovereign work of foreknowing, predestining, calling, justifying, and glorifying them (Romans 8:29-30).
- b) I identified discourse and used syntax analysis. I paid attention to the key verbs (know, work together, love, called, foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified). To the key conjunctions (δὲ, καί). And to the key prepositions (for, according, so that, among). Flow of ideas (believer confidence, sovereign guarantee). Repetitions (God/he). Keywords (work together, good, love, called, purpose, foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified). Key verse (Romans 8:28).
- c) God's sovereign purpose is to conform sufferers to Christ's image which guarantees that their present pain serves their ultimate glory.

**2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?** a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) 1) In Romans 8:18-27, Paul contrasted present sufferings with future glory. And in Romans 8:26-27, the Spirit's groaning intercession assured believers that God partners in their weakness. Now in Romans 8:28-30, Paul cites the sovereignty of God as the theological anchor for enduring hardship.  
2) In Romans 8:28-30, Paul encourages believers that their suffering is not outside of the sovereign purposes of God intended their glorification from eternity past. In Romans 8:31-39, Paul further secures believers in the knowledge that nothing can separate them from Christ's love.
- b) Romans was written between 56-57 AD. Believers faced social ostracism, economic loss, and, in 57 AD, state persecution under Nero. It would have been a very unsettling time. When Paul writes all things work together for good in Romans 8:28, it assured believers that even persecution served God's redemptive purpose. The aorist verbs in Romans 29-30, emphasize God's settled sovereign decree amid present suffering.
- c) 1) In Romans 8:28, Paul says that believers are being conformed to the image of his Son (τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). Roman emperors demanded conformity to their image on coins and statues. Paul subverts this. Believers are stamped with Christ's eternal image, not Caesar's.  
2) In Romans 8:28, Paul calls Jesus the firstborn among many brethren (πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς). In Roman culture, the firstborn inherited authority and honour, and could disinherit his siblings. Christ, as the supreme heir, has irrevocably shared His inheritance with believers.
- d) Romans 8:20 alludes to the creation account in Genesis 1:26-27. In Genesis 1:26-27, God creates man in His own image. This image was marred in the fall, when man sinned, and, and this marred image was inherited by all of Adam's subsequent generations (Genesis 5:3). God's sovereign purpose in salvation is that redeemed sinners would be conformed towards the image of His Son (τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). This means that our present sufferings are purpose driven pains.

**3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?**

God sovereignly orchestrates your present suffering to conform you to Christ's likeness guaranteeing your eternal glory through His unbreakable saving work.

**4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

Romans 8:28-30 is anchored in the finished work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection from the grave. His death is the ground of your justification (Romans 8:30), the declaration of your righteousness before God comes from His sacrificial atoning death. And His resurrection secures your glorification (Romans 8:30), your life flows from His life. Jesus Christ passed through suffering to glory, and the power that now conforms you to His image, works within you. Your present suffering cannot void God's sovereign purpose to bring you to eternal glory.

**5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?**

We are confident in suffering because we are confident in God's plan to conform us to Christ.

**6. What applications will you make?** a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) Trust God's purpose in suffering. Actively declare, This is not chaos, God is sculpting Christ's endurance in me, for His glory, and for my good.
- b) Precisely because salvation is a sovereign work of God, you can put your faith and trust in the finished work of Christ today, knowing He saves to the uttermost.

**7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline?** a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Confident Calvinism.

God's purpose in your pain:

- a) 1) Confidence in suffering (Romans 8:28)
  - i) Your identity amidst chaos. You are called according to His purpose, not random, but chosen for eternal design. Caesar's image vs. Christ's.
  - ii) Your certainty in confusion. You know God weaves all things, even suffering, for your ultimate good. Nero's persecution redeemed.
  - iii) Your hope in heartache. Your good is Christlikeness, suffering sculpts you into His endurance. Suffering to glory arc.
- 2) Confidence in God (Romans 8:29-30)
  - i) His eternal plan. He foreknew and predestined you. Image restoration from Genesis 1.
  - ii) His effectual call. He called and justified you. Christ's death declares you righteous forever.
  - iii) His guaranteed glory. He glorified you, resurrection glory is as certain as the cross. Christ's irrevocable inheritance.