

"No Experience is Wasted"

"... God causes everything to work together
for the good of those who love God and are
called according to his purpose for them."
Romans 8: 26 (NLT)

August 6, 2017

Sermon Message by Rev. Dr. Parrish L. Bridges

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"No Experience is Wasted"

Bible Texts: NLT (New Living Translation)

Today's sermon theme: "SPIRITUAL GIFTS"

No experience IS WASTED

Genesis 50: 15-21 and Romans 8: 26-39 (see Scriptures below)

Romans 8:28 is one of the most misunderstood verses of the entire Bible. Let me tell you what it doesn't say. It doesn't say that all things work out the way that I want them to. It doesn't say that everything has a happy ending on earth. In fact, we live in a broken and imperfect world.

- So, what does it say? "All" means **everything**.
 - We know that in all things God works ... "for the good of those who love God."
 - We know that in all things God is working. God is working for what? ... "for the good."
- Even in the bad? Yes. God loves to bring good out of bad. God loves to turn **crucifixions into resurrections**.
- That's what God wants to do with your life. God doesn't want you to **waste your experiences**, no matter how bad they have been individually or all put together.

Three things to do if you are not going to waste your experiences:

1. Embrace them.

Galatians 3:4 says, "...You have experienced many things. Were all those experiences wasted? I hope not!"

Jesus once said, "...you don't realize now what I am doing. But, later you will understand." John 13:7 (NIV)

Look at Joseph in Genesis 50:20, "you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." (NIV)

2. Pull the lessons out of them.

II Corinthians 13:5 says, "Examine and test and evaluate your own selves to see whether you're holding to your faith. Do you not realize by an ever increasing experience that Jesus Christ is in you?"

3. Use them to help others.

Paul said in Philippians 1:12, "I want you to know, my friends, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the gospel."

Four Ways To Use Them:

1. Use Them To **Minister** To Others.
(2 Cor. 1:6-7)

2. Use Them To **Motivate** Others.
(1 Thess. 5:11 and 1 Cor. 4:6)

3. Use Them To **Model** For Others.
(Phil. 3:17, Jn. 13:15, Titus 2:7, and Titus 3:14)

4. Use Them To **Mentor** Others.
(1 Jn. 1:3, Proverbs 25:12, Job 32:7, Job 8:8, and 1 Tim. 4:12)

Romans 8: 26-39

26) And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. 27) And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. 28) And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. 29) For God knew his people in

advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30) And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

31) What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? 32) Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? 33) Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. 34) Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

35) Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? 36) As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") 37) No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

38) And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. 39) No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Genesis 50: 15-21

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15) But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said.

16) So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us 17) to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. 18) Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

19) But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? 20) You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I

could save the lives of many people.

21) No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

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