



Message Transcript

Transformed Into His Likeness

Jon Gaus

Amen. Well church, would you join me in welcoming this morning our Broomfield and Online campuses with a warm welcome? Well, saints for our teaching this morning, we're going to start in Romans 8. That's our main passage. We have two supporting passages that we are going to turn to. The first one will be in 2 Corinthians 12, and then we're going to be also heading to Hebrews 12. So while you're turning there, let's ask God to do a supernatural work through His word in us and among us.

Let's pray. Father, we love you and we give you all praise and honor and glory this morning. And we pray and Lord that you were pleased and you were glorified and you were blessed by your church, your people, your children, reflecting your glory back to you this morning through worship in song. We thank you so much for the Holy Spirit. Jesus that you didn't leave us in this world alone, but you sent us the comforter to always be with us. Never leaving us, never forsaking us. Thank you for the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, we worship you this morning and we testify that you are the perfect teacher.

So we ask you to teach us your living active word, feed our spirits, feed our souls, fill us with your word, stretch us and prune us where necessary. I pray Holy Spirit and when we walk out of here today, each one of us will look more like Jesus, and will be more filled with your spirit and more filled with your power and your peace and your joy and the people we come into contact with this week will know that we are people who are spending time with Jesus. Thank you for saving us. Thank you for calling us to be your ambassadors to a lost and dying world. In Jesus' powerful name and all God's people said, amen.

Amen.

Well, let me start this morning with a quick survey question. How many of you who wear corrective lenses remember the very first pair of glasses you ever had? I think we all do because that's a really important day. That's a big day when you get your first pair of glasses. Now, for me, it was back in fifth grade. It was in fifth grade where my world started becoming blurry and fuzzy and really hazy. I'll never forget when the eye doctor handed me my first pair of glasses. When I put them on, it was like a whole new world. I could see everything much more clearly. I could sit at the back of the classroom and actually read the board for a change. I could look out the window and I could read signs across the street. I could look across the room and I could actually see people's faces and recognize who they were. I mean, it was a game changer.

Well, the passage we're going to look at this morning, just five verses, it's like the Holy Spirit has taken a pair of glasses and giving them to us. We'll call them kingdom vision. If you and I put on this kingdom vision that the spirit wants to give us this morning, it's going to make it much clearer what God's purpose is for our life. If we leave these lenses on, it's going to save us a lot of disappointment in this life.

It's going to save us a lot of discouragement in this life, and it's going to save us from doubting God's goodness even when we go through really hard times. Okay, we're in Romans 8. We're going to begin at verse 28. The Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul says starting in verse 28, "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.

For those whom he foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son. So that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And these whom he predestined, he also called, and these whom he called, he also justified and these whom he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who's against us? He who did not spare his own son, but delivered him over for us all.

How will he not also with him freely, give us all things?" Okay, church, Paul sets the stage and the foundation for these great promises with the first three words in verse 28, when he says, "And we know." It's interesting he didn't say, and we guess, and we surmise and we conjecture and we're pretty sure that this is true. Now he says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good, for those who love Him and are called according to his purpose."

Now he chose an interesting Greek word there foreknow. The Greek word that he chose for no literally means a perfect and deep anchored certainty. So what Paul is saying is when he says, and we know he is saying, saints, we don't care if the earth passes away and the mountains melt into the sea, we will be anchored in this truth for eternity. God's goodness and all things in our life and we know.

We can not be budged from that. What he is saying is no matter what trouble you're experiencing in this world right now, and Jesus said we would experience

trouble. No matter what storms are coming against you, no matter what a heartbreak you may have in your life, no matter what trials you're walking through, no matter what deep tragedy you're going through. I'm talking about those deep tragedies that you never thought would happen in your life.

That happened to other people, but they're happening to you right now. No matter what deep tragedy you're experiencing, deeper yet is the goodness of God. It is holding us up and we are absolutely anchored in it. And someday we will see that God causes all things to work together for good for those who love him. Well, church that leads to biblical truth number one, right off the bat. Biblical truth number one, my life is securely anchored in God's goodness. My life is securely anchored in God's goodness. Now we can't always see that.

When you and I are in the midst of a deep trial and you may be there right now, it's very hard to believe that. I know God's going to work all this out eventually for my good. We're probably sitting in this deep trial where these hard issues going on in our life wondering, "God, how could he even you make something good out of what I'm going through?" It's at that time that our heavenly father lifts our head and he says, "Don't focus on your circumstances. They're always changing. They can't be trusted." Don't focus on your circumstances, focus on me. Focus on my character and focus on my promise that I am causing all things to work together for your good, because you love me and you've been called according to my purpose.

It's powerful that King David emphasized the same truth back in Psalm 23, when he said, "Surely, goodness will follow me and mercy all the days of my life." That you

and I cannot get away from God's goodness, because we're his redeemed sons and daughters. Surely, goodness will follow me all the days of my life. Now it's interesting, there's a secondary application to that verse and that is this, whatever circumstance in life that God calls me into his goodness goes with me. So whatever circumstance he calls sons and daughters into, it could be a major conflict, it could be a hornet's nest, it could be family drama, it could be a situation where there is gossip and backstabbing going on. And what God is saying is, "When I send you in there, I'm sending my goodness in with you."

And the circumstances are about to change in that situation because you are, 2 Corinthians 2:15, the very fragrance of Christ. So God in this life is going to trust us as his sons and daughters and he is going to send us as ambassadors in some really hard situations. Lots of conflict, lots of gossip, backbiting. These sound like familiar situations from your current life? The reason God has sent you in there is because wherever you go, the goodness of God goes with. You are the very fragrance of Christ and that starts to change the whole atmosphere. Now this fragrance of Christ's truth about us reminds me of back when I was in 10th grade.

Back when I was in 10th grade, my friends and I started getting into wearing cologne because we heard the girls like cologne. Way back then, the cologne of choice was Polo in the green bottle with the gold cap. Anybody remember that? Oh, you are old. You are old as I am. I'll never forget when I got my first bottle of cologne. I thought, "Okay, if girls like guys that wear cologne, if I wear a lot of it, then they'll like me a lot." And so I really put it out liberally. Well, I've got three older sisters who love

to keep me humble. And they would say to me, "Jon, how much of that stuff are you going to put on? We can smell you five minutes before you get here and we can smell you five minutes after you leave."

That's what it means to be the fragrance of Christ. Wherever God sends us, He sends us with His goodness and with the fragrance of Jesus and the situations, it might be a hornet's nest, it might be backstabbing. It may be major conflict, but he is sending his sons and daughters in because wherever we go, the goodness of God shows up and the fragrance of Christ shows up. Amen?

Amen.

I think that was worth coming for this morning, right there. Okay. Church, the last part of verse 28 says, "Those who have been called according to his purpose." So what is God's purpose for us? It's right there in the next verse, verse 29, take a look, "For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son." That's it. So that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And these whom he predestined, he also called, and these whom he called, he also justified, and these whom he justified, he also glorified.

So what Paul wants to make sure is that we realize from eternity past God's plan has been to save us through Jesus Christ and then to conform us into the likeness of Jesus Christ. That's been God's plan and purpose for us from all of eternity back. That we would be saved through Jesus Christ and then that he would conform us into the likeness of Jesus Christ through the daily process of sanctification. Now, Paul uses a

powerful word here for conform. It's the Greek word soom-mor-fos. Do you hear an interesting syllable in there that you recognize soom-morph-us?

Now, if you're familiar with Morphine Software, you take two pictures of completely different people and you put them in the Morphine Software and what happens is, the face of this individual gradually morphs into looking exactly like the face of this individual. That's exactly what the spirit is doing in our life day today. He's conforming you and I more and more to look more like Jesus Christ in every part of our life. He is soom-morphing us to looking like Jesus.

Okay, biblical truth number two. We learn from this passage, God is using all things in my life to conform me into the image of Christ. God is using all things in my life to conform me into the image of Christ, because he said back in verse 28, "All things work together for good for those who love God had been called according to his purpose. The purpose is he is conforming us every day to look more and more like Jesus. Okay, so now we're in the real world. This is real life where we live.

So what are some of the awesome tools that God is using day-to-day in your life, in my life to shape us, mold us, form us, prune us to look more and more like Jesus? How about truth number three? God uses our seasons of life to conform us into the likeness of Jesus. Whatever season of life God has called you into, he's you into it so that he can conform you into the likeness of Jesus. Whether it's marriage, singleness, parenting, relationships, or your current work situation. God has called you into that season of life primarily to conform you into the likeness of Jesus.

Well, let's take marriage for example. Now you and I know that marriage is a good gift from God. We know that marriage is a picture of Christ and his bride, the church, and we know that marriage can bring lots of happiness if it's done God's way through the power of the Holy Spirit, and all married couple said, amen. But the primary reason that God called us into marriage is not to make us happy. It's to make us holy, because that's his primary purpose in our life. To conform us into the likeness of Jesus. And though marriage can bring lots of happiness, it's primary purpose is to make me and my wife more and more holy, more and more conformed into the likeness of Jesus.

Now you don't have to be married very long to realize that if you don't start surrendering to the Holy Spirit and letting him form you and shape you and prune you, your marriage is headed for a train wreck. If you believe that I got married so that she could make me happy. That's primarily why I got married. You're missing God's purpose. Now we're putting on kingdom lenses and we're like, "Oh, now this makes sense." Now I understand where the first five years of my marriage was so hard. I thought her role was to make me happy. That was her primary role. That's what marriage was about. Marriage offers lots of happiness if done God's way, but its primary role is to make us holy. Two believers dying to self looking more and more like Jesus every day.

Let's take your current work situation. God has called you into your current work situation to conform you into the likeness of Jesus. Yes, you need to earn a paycheck. You need to support your family. You need to work as unto the Lord, but the primary

reason that you're in the job that you're in right now is God is using it to conform you into the likeness of Jesus. Wow! That's an eye opener. Okay, with these kingdom lenses on, this is starting to make sense now, Pastor Jon, because now I understand why God has me working with all these ornery people. He's trying to conform me into likeness of Jesus.

It makes a lot more sense now that my eyes have been open to his purposes, that I'm around all these hard to love people at my job because the primary purpose I'm there right now is to be conformed into the likeness of Jesus. It makes sense now that God hasn't given me a new job. I've wanted a new job. I can't stay in my current job, but God is not done with me there yet. I'm still in a season where there he is conforming me into the lightness of Jesus. He's shaping me, molding me, humbling me, pruning me, and when that season is perfectly complete, he will give me a new job.

I've often challenged believers that if you want a new job, you go to your job tomorrow and on the way there, you say, "Give me a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, I am here to work as unto you and I'm going to do the best job I can and I'm going to submit to the Holy Spirit and I'm going to flow in the fruits of the Holy Spirit." If you do that, it's going to be amazing how quickly God gives you a new job because he's been trying to get us to that spot before he'll move us to the next greener pasture. The primary reason you're in the job you're in, I'm in the job I'm in is to be conformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Okay saints, another tool God uses to shape us and mold us is number four, God uses trials to conform us into the likeness of his son.

Now, our heavenly father loves us so much. He does not want us to be ambushed. He loves us so much in his word, he warns us, he tells us ahead of time, "In this life, I am going to take you through trials." But they're never random. They're always sovereign. I'm going to use these trials to conform you more and more into the likeness of my son. I'm going to use these trials to soom-mor-fos you to look more and more like Jesus. Listen to what James 1:2-4 said, "Consider it all joy my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials." Why? "Because you're being conformed into the likeness of Christ, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance and let endurance have its perfect result so that you may be perfect and complete lacking nothing."

Now, no believer is exempt from going through trials in this lifetime. That's what God's word has told us. He's prepared us for it. He's warned us. He told us the purpose of it, but no believer is exempt from going through deep sovereign trials in this lifetime. In fact, God's word gives us several examples of what it looks like when believers go through trials and that happens to every believer. I want to show us one of these situations in living color in 2 Corinthians 12.

Turn over two books to the right. 2 Corinthians 12. No believer is exempt from deep trials in this lifetime and they're never random. They're never coincidence. They're never fate, karma or bad luck. They're sovereignly chosen by our heavenly father. 2 Corinthians 12. Here's the context, the apostle Paul is sharing with the church at Corinth that the Holy Spirit has taken him up to the third heaven. Now the third heaven, in the Hebrew mindset, they had three levels of heaven for the Hebrew.

For the Hebrew, the first level of heaven was the atmosphere surrounding the earth, like the clouds and the rain. That was the first level of heaven. The second level of heaven in the Hebrew mindset where the stars and the planets and the galaxies. But when they mentioned the third level of heaven, that means the spiritual, supernatural realm where the very throne of God exists. And Paul was taken up in the spirit to see things and to hear things in the third heaven that were so miraculous, the Holy Spirit says, "You can not share these with anyone."

Okay, now we're going to pick it up in verse seven because he's going to talk about his deep trial. Verse seven, "Because of these extraordinary greatness of the revelations, for this reason to keep me from exalting myself, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from exalting myself." That word thorn in the Greek is the Greek word skolops. It means a wooden stick that's been sharpened on one end. It's kind of what you would use if you were growing a tree, a sapling and you might pound it in the ground to tie the tree too. It's that kind of thing.

And Paul is saying, "It feels like I'm being stabbed by that every day." Now, he doesn't give detail exactly what the thorn in the flesh is. It's just always with him. It's a messenger from Satan and it's extremely painful. Why didn't Paul tell us exactly what it is? Because no matter what trial we're going through right now, or we'll go through that may be extremely painful, and it's with us every day, we can completely relate to Paul's situation.

Verse eight, "Concerning this, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might leave me and he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you. My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore I will rather boast about my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in distresses, in persecutions, in difficulties on behalf of Christ for when I'm weak, then I'm strong." Church, don't you think if anybody should be able to pray their way out of a trial would be the apostle Paul? I mean, he was God's number one missionary man.

The Holy Spirit used him to write 13 books of the New Testament and he was taken into the throne room of God. Yet Paul is here saying, "I've tried three times to ask the Lord to take this away from me, but I understand why he has said no three times because he's using this trial to conform me into the likeness of Jesus. In my weakness, Christ is made strong." Now, here's some great news. Earlier in this letter, in 2 Corinthians 4:17 Paul said, "For our momentary and light afflictions are producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison." Another great benefit of our trials in this world. The truth is, our trials are going to end very soon and they're gaining for us an eternal glory that far outweighs anything that we could imagine with a presence in Christ.

Now saints, a common picture that God's word uses for a trial is the picture of being in a fire. We see this in the Old Testament and the New Testament. That's a common picture that God's word uses to describe what it's like to be in a trial. Listen to Isaiah 43:2. "When you pass through the waters, I'll be with you and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be

scorched nor will the flame burn you." And it's interesting in God's word, we see the picture for fire represent being in a trial or being in the midst of tribulation. There are different kinds of fires and purposes described in God's word. Here's the first one, a fire that purifies. In God's word, that's often called the refiner's fire.

Isaiah 48:10 says, "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver. I have tested you in the furnace of affliction." The purifying fire, that can occur when you and I grab back onto one of our sin habits of old. And the Holy Spirit convicts us as he does to the sons and daughters of God that let that go, repent of that. That's going to destroy your soul and we don't pay any attention to the conviction of the spirit. We stay in the sin habit and we don't pay any attention to the conviction of the word of God. We keep holding onto this habitual sin habit. Well, our heavenly father loves us way too much to see us destroy our soul with it. So often, he will put us in the refiner's fire and that fire while we're in it, this great trial on every side, that's really heated up. First of all, reveal to us that we're holding on to this sin habit.

And then through the heat and through the circumstances, we let go and the impurities will surface and go away. That's the whole idea of the refiner's fire. Now it's interesting, Amy Carmichael, who was a missionary last century to India, in her book, *Learning About God*, she reports that one day she's in the marketplace and she comes up upon a goldsmith in India and he was doing things the old way. He has a refiner's fire going to purify the gold. She watches him and he stokes the heat up so that the impurities start raising up out of the gold to the surface, and then he scoops them

away.

Then he heats it up some more and more impurities surface, and then he scoops them away and she sits there and watches them for some time, and then she finally asks him, "How do you know when the gold is pure and it's ready to be taken out?" And he says, "I look down into the gold and when I can see my reflection of my face, I know it's time to take it out of the fire." That'll preach, won't it? That'll preach. That's exactly what God does when he puts us in a fire. A purifying fire, he's refining out of us any sin habits we have held onto for dear life. We haven't listened to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. We haven't listened to the conviction of the word and because our father loves us way too much to let us destroy our soul and our family, he often puts us in the refiner's fire, conforming us more and more in the likeness of Christ.

In addition to a fire that purifies, the Bible speaks of a fire that strengthens, that prepares us for future calling. We may not be doing anything wrong. We may not be living in habitual sin, but God puts us in a fire to strengthen us for future ministry. Listen to 1 Peter 1:7, "So that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold, which perishes though tested by fire may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Christ Jesus." A TV show that I've often watched over the last five years on the history channel is called Forged in Fire. Any other guys watch that Forged in Fire? It's addicting. The whole premise is they bring these bladesmiths together and they give him some random hunk of steel and then they have a contest.

They have a time limit to see who can make the best, most durable, sharpest, long lasting knife out of this hunk of steel. So the first thing they do is they all put it in

their forges in the fire and they heat the fire up. This is a big determining factor on the success of the knife that they're making. Because if they leave that steel in the fire too long, it becomes brittle and it can make the most beautiful knife, but when it comes against resistance, it's going to shatter. If they take the steel out of the forge too soon, that steel is not as strong. It does not have the tensile strength that it could have.

So when the Holy Spirit takes you and I, and he places us in a fire to strengthen us for future ministries, he does not remove us the day early because we're not as strong as we could be in that fire. But he never leaves us in a day late because he doesn't want to destroy us. He doesn't want us to smash into a million pieces. The Holy Spirit is the perfect goldsmith. When he leads us into a fire of purifying, of strengthening, how long oh Lord, will I be in here until the Spirit's work is complete? And we won't be out a day early and we won't remain in there a day late. God's timing is that perfect.

There's a third kind of fire. The Bible speaks about a fire that brings intimacy with Jesus. As we heard in Isaiah 43, when you walk through the fire, I will be with you. There are times when you and I become too busy to spend time with Jesus. There are times when we start loving the gifts over the giver. There are times in our walk when we become self-focused and self-sufficient. It's at times like this, the spirit may lead us into a fire and it's a fire to produce in us a new intimacy with Jesus because we're running down a bad path. We're not running closer to Jesus in our walk. We're running further from him.

We become enamored by the things of the world and because our heavenly father loves us so much, and that's not a place he wants his children to run, sometimes will bring us into this fire to produce more intimacy with Jesus. And we get into this fire and it's a very hard trial and we become desperate and we drop the things and the idols that we were loving. All of a sudden, all that's left in the fire is us and Jesus because we're never in the fire alone. He's always with us. And we become desperate and we lean into him like never before. Like, "Jesus, if you don't get me out of this, I have no prayer."

We're in this trial and it's so painful. We think to ourselves, "I certainly could not make this another day." And then it's another week and we're still in it. And then it's another month because the refining and what God wants to accomplish has not been accomplished yet. But at just the right time, when we have been reintroduced the savior and seen more of his beauty and more of his righteousness, and we treasure him over even the greatest gifts that he's ever given, God brings us out of a fire. It is so common to speak to a believer who's been in that kind of fire to develop intimacy with Jesus.

They'll often say this, "I never want to go through that again. I wouldn't wish that on anyone. It was so painful. It was so hard, but you know what? I've never been closer to Jesus." That's the fire of intimacy. Sometimes God will lead us through that. Okay, truth number five. Another tool God uses to form and prune us is number five, God uses loving discipline to conform us to the image of his son. There's a powerful description of this. Let's flip over to Hebrews 12. One of the tools God uses to

continue to conform us to the likeness of his son at times, is loving discipline.

When you and I have really crossed the line out of God's calling, when you and I are headed toward bad places, when you and I are starting to do real damage to our soul, sometimes the father will use his loving discipline in our life to bring us back and hopefully to teach us we never want to go there again. Hebrews 12:5, listen to how the writer of Hebrews describes this. "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord nor faint when you are punished by him, for whom the Lord loves he disciplines. And he punishes every son whom he accepts. It's for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children, not sons.

Furthermore, we all had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good so that we may share his holiness. For the moment, all discipline seems not to be pleasant, but painful yet to those who have been trained by it afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness." Many times the tool God will use to conform us more and more into the likeness of Jesus if we're wandering, if we're destroying our soul with something is loving fatherly discipline. It's interesting that we do that. If we love our children, we do the same thing. We will not let them go in dangerous places. We will not let them do things that will continue to endanger their soul.

Now, I have to tell you, I've got a great dad. He's 87 and he loves Jesus and he loves me. He was very faithful in this truth. And the time that it really hit home with me was back when I was 14. When I hit my teen years, my mother and I got into some real World War IIIs. Okay. Can anybody relate to that? Don't leave the pastor hanging up here. Thank you for being real. The A in BRAVE is authentic. So when I hit 14, the teen years, I thought I knew way better than my parents and certainly way better than my mom. So her and I started going through this season where I was debating her and we were arguing and the tension was building and my ego was getting bigger and I was starting to rebel. It was a Wednesday night. We were getting ready to go to church. This is what makes this so ironic.

My mom and I are standing in the hallway and we are going at it. She is making me more frustrated and frustrated because she's trying to exert some authority over me like she's a parent or something, and I'll never forget this. I was going down a bad path and I said something to her that was very damaging to my soul. I said, "Mom, shut up." Yeah, that's the feeling. My dad, because he loves me, took immediate action. By the time the word up was out of my mouth, he had sprung into action. Now I'm not going to get into all the gory details of how he lovingly disciplined me, but I'll just tell you, my dad is old school. He didn't believe in the timeout. He believed in the knockout. Okay. And you know what? I have to tell you, what's amazing is in the 44 years, since I have never been tempted to say shut up to my mom one other time.

So what he did was loving and it kept me from danger. All right, church, let's flip back to Romans 8. There's one final amazing promise back in Romans 8. One final

amazing promise. We'll start at verse 31. Paul says, after going through all he just went through, he said, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" What Paul is saying is since eternity past, God has loved us and he foreknew us and he predestined us and he called us and he justified us through Christ. He's conforming us now through Christ. One day, very soon when he calls us to heaven, we'll be completely glorified and we will look exactly like Jesus. This is God's eternal plan for every believer.

Paul says, look at this, "The God of the universe has put this and unfolded this into motion. Who's going to come against that? Who's going to come against that?" World circumstances? They can't come against that. There is no power in the seen realm or the unseen realm, there's no demon, Satan, nobody who can get us off God's purpose for our life. Psalm 138:8 says, "The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me." Job said in Job 42:2, "No purpose of God can be stopped."

So no matter what's going on in the world's day, what events are going on in the world's day, what's coming against us as believers or the church collectively, from eternity past God loved us and he foreknew us and he predestined us and he called us and he justified us. He is conforming us and one day soon, we'll be home in heaven, completely glorified in our new sinless and sickless bodies and we will look just like Jesus. If God is for us, who can be against us? Amen?

Amen.

I'm going to give you a free one here that has to do with this topic that I came

across a few weeks ago, especially what's going on in the world. Listen to this quote by Anne Graham Lotz. She says, "World events are not unraveling. They're unfolding at the feet of Jesus." Is that beautiful? That'll preach. World events are not unraveling. Everyone is running around like, "What's going on? The world's unraveling." They're not unraveling. World events are unfolding at the feet of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords who's coming back very soon.

Okay. Then Paul concludes with this awesome promise, verse 32, it's like an exclamation point of this whole thing. Romans 8:32. "He, God, who did not spare his own son, but delivered him over for us all. How will he not also with him freely, give us all things?" Okay. This promise right here speaks to two groups of people that are here this morning. It speaks to the people who have admitted that they are a sinner. That they sin against a holy God and by their sins, they separated themselves from God and they had no way to clean themselves up.

They had no way to unchain the chains of sin and they understood they were guilty, and if they died in their sin, they would face adjust eternity of wrath in hell. But you also turn from your sins, repentance and turn to Jesus Christ and believe that he is the one who could save you. That's one group. There's another group in here who has not yet received Christ in his free gift of salvation and forgiveness of sin, but up to this point, you may know about Jesus, but you have rejected him as Lord and savior. This verse is for both groups. He who did not spare his own son, but delivered him over for us all, how will he not also with him freely, give us all things? For the group that has repented and received Christ.

Paul is pointing to the cross and he is going to use an argument as theologians say, from the greater to the lesser. He's saying, "If your heavenly father did not spare the most vital, important, costly gift that he could ever give you his son, is there anything that he would keep from you if you ask him for it?" If you really need something in your life right now, Paul says, listen, before you worry, before you go talking to everyone else, look at the cross. Your heavenly father loves you so much. He did not spare his own son, but gave him for you and with him, he will graciously give you everything that you need in this life.

What a great word of confidence? What a great word of conviction, believer? If in your life right now, you believe I have a true need that's been keeping me awake at night and I have been bowing to worry, the word of God today says, look at the cross. He will provide for all of your needs because he's already given you the most costly gift that he has. Ask the heavenly father in Jesus' name with proper motives and if it's a good gift, you will have it before you get out of this room.

If it's a good gift next week, you won't have it right now because you're not quite ready for it. It's not quite ready for you, but you'll have it next week. If you have a need in your life... "Sometimes we're guilty of not having because we haven't asked," James 4:2. If you have a need in your life, ask for it in Jesus' name with proper motives and if it's a good gift and you need it, you will have it right now. Because the heavenly father only gives perfect gifts in perfect timing.

Now, if you're here and you know about Jesus, but you have never received his

free gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven when you die, Paul says, "Look at the cross." You were chained in your sin. Will you admit that you're a sinner to yourself and to God? Will you admit that you have sinned against God who loves you and created you and wants to be with you for eternity? Will you admit that you've sinned by all of the evil things you've said in life, all the evil things, you've done, all the evil things you've thought? And if you will admit that you're a sinner and it's your sins that have separated you from God for eternity.

The Bible says that if you're willing to turn from those sins and turn to the only one who can save you, Jesus Christ, through his perfect life, death and resurrection by faith, you can receive today, forgiveness of all of your sins past, present, and future. God is going to give you a brand new heart, a clean white heart. He's going to give you a brand new life, which will have the Holy Spirit of God living in you to give you. To give you amazing power to live a life that blesses you, honors God and blesses your family.

He promises that the very second that you breathe your last breath, you are going to be with Jesus Christ, face-to-face in heaven to rule and reign with him in the new Jerusalem. But like any gift, it has to be received. The Bible says that you can receive this through a prayer of repentance and faith. If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you today, 2 Corinthians 6 says, "Today is the day of salvation." That's why the Holy Spirit has been pursuing you in love. You can pray a prayer like this. Pray along with me from your heart.

God, thank you for bringing me to this church today, your church. Jesus, thank you for coming to earth and doing what I couldn't do. You lived a perfect life. You are

the God man. You went to the cross for me. You willingly suffered and died for all of my sins as complete payment. And Jesus, I believe you rose from the dead three days later to give me new life. I choose now to turn from my sins and by faith, Jesus, I receive you into my life. Please be my Lord and savior. Thank you for saving me. It's in your name I pray, amen.