

And We Know-rm.8:28 a Soft Pillow for a Tired Heart

by Skip Heitzig

Romans 8:28 is a powerful verse that reminds us of God's absolute care and sovereignty in our lives, and that He causes all things to work together for our good.

Duration: 41:52

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Matthew 6:33, John 6:68, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Weary"

Description

In this sermon, Skip Heisek focuses on the transformative truth found in Romans 8:28. He shares a story of missionary converts who were amazed by modern technology, particularly elevators. He then relates a personal experience of relying on Romans 8:28 during a difficult time. He emphasizes the need for understanding and submitting to God's love and care, especially in times of frustration and uncertainty. He concludes by urging listeners to surrender their lives to Jesus and seek prayer with pastors available after the service.

Transcript

This is tape number 0406 with Skip Hysack. But I'd like you to turn to Romans chapter 8 this morning, verse 28. There are certain truths that are so transforming that you just wish everybody could submit to them and understand them and be changed by them.

I heard of a missionary couple who went overseas to Asia and they were ministering among some of the remote tribes, and they took us and brought some of the converts over to the United States. This was the first time that some of these natives had been over to our country. And they were amazed by the creature comforts, the modern technology, but what really blew their minds were the elevators.

And they stood in a hotel lobby one day, just amazed. And they watched as an elderly woman walked into the elevator, and the elevator ascended, and they just watched. And a few minutes later the elevator descended, and out came this gorgeous young woman.

And one of the guys, this brand new believer, said to his friend, Oh man, we've got to bring our wives here to ride in that machine. That's how I feel about Romans 8.28. We've got to get every Christian into this verse, to ride in that verse, and to be changed by it. It was R.A. Torrey that called Romans 8.28 a soft

pillow for a tired heart.

It is just that. It is probably one of the first verses you have ever memorized. It has become precious to you.

A life preserver in times that you are frustrated in or you don't understand. This has been one of those verses that has sustained me through some difficult times. The night that my father called years ago and said my brother had been killed in a motorcycle accident.

I relied upon this verse. I pray and hope that after today you will gain a greater appreciation for the kind of love and care that God has for you, even revealed in this verse. Because there are so many times in life that we don't understand.

So many times we face frustrations. And we need a life preserver, an anchor of hope, a firm footing. One person said that life is getting used to the things that we constantly don't expect.

A process of getting used to the things we don't expect. And it seems like things just happen, even when you plan things and program them. They don't follow suit.

They don't always fall into place the way you'd like them to. And there are certain times when all that you have left is Romans 8.28. Lord, I don't understand this, but you said that all things work together for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. The entire paragraph of the last half of Romans centers on God's care.

And we're going to look at just Romans 8.28 today, because it is so comprehensive. It is so important that though other verses are connected to it, it bears comment on it alone. But let's go back to verse 24 and just read it through.

To get the context. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. For why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, then we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Likewise, the Spirit also helps us in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Now he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for the good to those who love God and to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called. Whom He called, these He also justified. And whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Now that 28th verse has such magnitude in it that though the entire paragraph speaks about God's care, Romans 8.28 covers every single thing, every aspect in the Christian's life, good and bad. Back in 1873, a fellow by the name of Horatio Spafford, who was a Christian lawyer in Chicago, was having some financial difficulties and he wanted to show his wife and kids that God would take care of things. He had previously boughten them tickets to ride aboard a luxury liner, a craft, a sailing vessel from New York to Paris.

And he let them go. And as the ship went out to sea, it struck another vessel. Within a half an hour after the collision, almost everybody aboard that ship was killed.

When the captain informed Mrs. Spafford that the ship was sinking, she and her four children huddled them together and began to pray. She prayed that God would save them or that God would give them the strength to face death. As she was praying, the ship was going down and a wave swept over the ship and took her three children.

She had one left, took them out into the sea, she'd never see them again. She continued to pray. As she prayed, more waves came and finally her smallest child was taken from her and at the site of the whole ordeal she just fainted.

She woke up two days later in a clinic. She knew that she was bereft of all of her kids. Can you imagine the grief and the anguish that fell upon the heart of her husband, Horatio, when he was informed of the death of all of his children? He simply received a wire back from his wife that said, Well, that night Mr. Spafford went back and forth in his room in anguish, wondering why.

But at the same time he wrote how he experienced a strange peace of God that flooded over his soul. And that night he wrote the words to one of the songs we just sang. He said, Whatever my lot thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.

You cannot say those kind of words unless you believe in the power of that verse, Romans 8.28. So let's look at it. First of all we see in it the certainty of God's care. Notice how he begins it.

And we know. Three simple words that express definiteness. And we know.

The Greek language puts it more forcefully. And we know with absolute certainty that all things are constantly working out together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose. Now 32 times Paul writes in his writings those words, And we know or and I know.

Because the Christian life is one of certainty. It doesn't say, well I hope that all things work for good. I suppose.

But there's that air of certainty. Because if you're a Christian you should live a certain life. A sure life.

You know the world is groping for answers to the deep questions that exist. Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? And they philosophize. They theorize.

And they psychologize. But they never come to a settled answer or solution. Never a firm footing.

The Christian does. Now I'll be quick to confess something. There's a lot of things I don't know.

There's a lot of experiences I go through and I shake my head and I wonder why I can't figure it out. Why would God allow it? But I would never trade what I don't know for what I do know. I would never want to cash in my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ because there are certain things I don't understand.

It's like the disciples that left Jesus. Jesus would lose lots of people when he gave messages. Many of them would walk and leave because some of the things he said were too hard to understand.

Jesus at one point turned to his twelve and he said, will you go also? Are you going to leave? Remember their response? Where else would we go? You alone have the words of eternal life. There are certain foundational truths to grab a hold of that form a basis of security in times of difficulty. Where else would we go? There are certain things we need to know.

Forget about chasing all of the things you don't understand. You can't figure out. That's like the clergyman who was riding the train across the Hudson River back on the east coast.

As he was eating his fish aboard the train, an atheist walked by the car and noticed the clergyman collar that the pastor was wearing. So he thought, aha, I've got a live one. I'll sink my teeth into this clergyman.

So he stopped in the door of the car and he said, excuse me, are you a man of the cloth? He said, I'm a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I suppose you believe the Bible. I do.

It's the inerrant infallible word of God. Well, do you understand it all? No, I don't. Well, what do you do with all of those things that you don't understand, those issues and problems in the scripture? How do you figure them out? What do you do with them? The pastor wisely said, I do the same thing that I'm doing with this fish.

I eat the meat and I leave the bones for some fool to choke on. Romans 8.28 is meat. It's something you can absolutely know, but in all fairness, I should give you what other translations give as the alternate reading to this verse.

This verse could carry the idea of possibility. That is, it could say, and we can know. It is possible for us to know that all things work together for good to those that love God and are called according to his purpose.

It is sad but true that there are many believers who don't know that. They're not assured of that. They wonder if they're going to make it.

They wonder if God really loves them and cares about them. They live in doubt. They live in perpetual fear.

Described by James as the double-minded man, unstable in all of his ways. But you can know and be assured that God cares for you this morning. This can be a soft pillow for a tired heart.

Well, how do you know that? Well, first, you come to the Lord by faith, just like a little kid. Jesus said, whoever would receive me must become like a little child. And when you, by faith, can say, Lord, I don't understand many of the situations in my life.

Yet, I submit myself to you and your care, and I trust you, Lord. God gets, somehow, cements that truth that he loves you, that he cares, that he'll never leave you or forsake you deep in your heart. And then, you have the word of God.

The testimony of God in the Scripture. You've watched it be fulfilled. You've seen those promises unfold in your life.

David said, the testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple. You've got the Scripture to lean back on. Other portions of Scripture that God has fulfilled.

One man put it this way, concerning this. He said, there are times when I sense such a feeling of peace, like the brooding wings from above. And there are times when it seems all feeling is gone.

And so, I rest in the fact of his love. Though kingdoms may crumble, his word is secure. The plan of salvation intact.

Though it's precious to feel that his presence is near, our hope is not feeling, but fact. We walk by faith, not by sight. There are times when you don't feel like God is with you.

We've all heard people say, I feel like God has loved me. Well, he hasn't. He said, I'd never leave you or forsake you.

Don't rest upon the feeling. If you love him and you're called according to his purpose, rest on the fact of his love. And as you come to him as a child by faith, and you rest in his word, you can know with absolute certainty that God cares for you.

Let's go on in the verse. Because next we get the scope of God's care. Because he says, we know with absolute certainty that all things work together for good.

The New American Standard Bible puts it this way. God causes all things to work together for good. The NIV says, in all things, God works for the good.

You see, there's an emphasis in this verse that we can't miss. And that is, if there's anything good that comes, it's God who's behind the scenes causing it to happen. That's the emphasis here.

Things just don't happen to the Christian. There's someone who's orchestrating them. You know, the philosophy of many people of this world is one of impersonal fate.

You master your own destiny. You take hold of the reins and you hope for the best. But not for the Christian.

We know that behind the scenes, there's a loving God orchestrating the events of our life as we submit unto him. First of all, God orchestrated the earth that we live in. It didn't just happen.

There was a cause behind it. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And God didn't leave it alone.

It's his initiative that sustains it. Paul said, all things were made by him. And through him, he said, all things consist or are held tightly together.

It was God who initiated your salvation. Though you may have thought, I was seeking God. Oftentimes, people will say, I'm searching for God.

Why? Is he lost? You're not searching for God. But in reality, God has been searching for you. For the scripture says, no one seeks God.

From the beginning, it was God who sought after man. He initiated your salvation by looking for you. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

He's the one that started it. He's the one that will maintain it. I read a newspaper article about a kid named William.

17 years old. Ran away from home because mom and dad tried to break up the dating relationship he had with a young lady. Well, he was being pursued not only by his parents, but by the police and by medical authorities.

Because about a week or two before he ran away from home, they had discovered that he had an early stage of cancer that could be treated if he got in in time. Now, here's William running away lest he lose his love, being pursued lest he lose his life. God, the great cause of heaven, earth, the sustaining elements, your salvation, and anything good that comes.

For James says, every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the father of lights, in whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. And so God is the cause. Now comes the clincher in this verse.

This is the difficult part, I confess to you. And it's the comprehensiveness of God's care. For we know with absolute certainty that God causes all things.

Think about that. All things. There's no qualification.

No restrictions. No limitations. No conditions.

All things. Wow. It would be so much easier for me to believe that if it said some things.

If it says, we know with absolute certainty that most things work together for good. But all things, good, bad, beneficial, harmful, yep, all things. All things work together.

And folks, failure to believe that could eventually result in you being bitter toward God. But let's face it. There are things in your life that have happened or do happen or perhaps you're in the midst of that you try to intellectually, logically figure out and man, it does not compute.

The computer's going, illogical, illogical. I can't figure, what good could come out of this? Certainly not this thing. It's part of the all thing.

Yes, it is. And unless we believe that, unless we realize that, we can become very bitter and angry with God. Notice it doesn't say that God will keep us from harm.

But that God will use all of those things and weave them together for our benefit. I heard a story of a woman who walked out of her house in one of the San Francisco earthquakes. Her house had just been demolished.

She walked out, turned around, looked at it and smiled. And her neighbor said, how could you smile at a time like this? She said, I rejoice that my God is a God that can shake the world. Look how powerful he is.

Now if God is in control, that means then to complain about our lot in life is to complain about God's control of our lives. And we're really leveling our complaint about God. But according to this verse, whether it's persecution, suffering, good times, bad times, all things God causes to work together and God will work in them.

Now I want you to notice one word, actually two words that are in Greek. One is the Greek word. It says, we know that all things work together.

Now that's interesting. The word in Greek, work together, forms a word whereby we get an English word, synergism. And you could translate this, we know with absolute certainty that God causes absolutely everything to constantly synergize together for our good.

The word synergism means working together of various elements to produce a result greater than the sum of those elements. Once again, the working together of various elements to bring about as a result something greater than the sum of those elements. Let me give you an example from chemistry.

You could take two harmful substances which in and of themselves, singularly, would be harmful if you were to ingest them. If you put them together, it can be beneficial. You could take sodium and you could take chlorine.

You put them together and you make sodium chloride, and that's table salt. That which is harmful, if it's synergized, put together, worked together, can be very beneficial for our lives. So God takes the good, the bad, the helpful, the harmful, and he can cohesed them together to work for our good.

He pieces them together. He got a birthday present, a puzzle. Now, I tried that with my son.

It wasn't a hit. And this little boy took the puzzle and tried to put it together for an hour or so. He noticed that some pieces were bright, some were dark, some seemed to fit, and so he's trying to cram them together, and he got so frustrated he put them all in the box and he gave it to his dad.

His dad took five minutes and said, I saw the picture in the puzzle all along. You only saw the pieces. I was working from this big scope.

You were looking at one piece at a time. How often we take from God the pieces of our lives and try to force them together. I've got to make this thing fit and work.

God sees the picture. You don't. And God causes everything, every piece, to fit perfectly together for your good and for his glory.

So we have the certainty of God's care. We know with absolute certainty we can stand upon it. The scope of God's care.

God is causing every single thing in our lives to cohesed, to synergize together. And now I want you to look at, finally, the last part of the verse, the center of God's care. Before we do, I want to just share some personal experiences with you about this.

God causes everything to work together for our good. God has our highest good in mind even when our plans flop. When you have an anticipation, an expectation, you make up certain plans, you want it to go together well, and it flops.

God's still in it. About a month ago exactly, I was over in the Middle East. I was in Jordan on the way to Baghdad, Iraq.

I was with Franklin Graham and we were going to take some medicine over, about \$10,000 worth of medicine, tracts, Bibles, literature, to pass out to the Iraqi people in Baghdad as a platform for evangelism. We had made our plans. We even brought a guy from Lebanon who was working in Iraq.

He was driving with us. And a series of events happened that caused me to just thank God for his overriding control in my life. We got up that morning and Dennis Agajanian was sick.

He was with us. And we had to send him back to the United States. He was so sick.

Sammy Dagger, the friend that was with us, said, I don't think he's just sick. I think the Lord is perhaps hindering him from going with us. I said, well, that's interesting.

All right. We piled up into the suburban and took about a 10-hour drive to the border of Iraq. It was about a 16-hour drive altogether to Baghdad.

As we're driving, we're arriving at about 4 o'clock in the morning. And I started praying. But God wouldn't say anything to me.

God was silent. Now, at this, I'm getting a little worried because Sammy was the one that was getting us into Baghdad. It was his idea.

And now he says God didn't want to say anything to him on the day we're heading over there. And so thank you, Sammy, for sharing those encouraging words. And then as we're going, no joke, there was a snowstorm in Jordan they hadn't seen in probably 50 years.

You've seen it perhaps on the news. A snowstorm. Then we pass into a rainstorm and then a desert sandstorm.

And the truck ran out of gas and we pulled by the side of the road. The starter had broken in the truck. We had to push start it, waving down another driver, an Iraqi driver, to help us push the truck.

Franklin turns back and he says, just a minute, I think we have a problem. And Sammy said, what? Franklin said, I have a stamp in my passport. So? I didn't know what that meant.

And Sammy looked at his passport and his face just dropped. I said, well, what's wrong? He said, Franklin has an Israeli stamp in his passport. And on another page of the passport is this Iraqi visa.

I know enough about the Middle East to know that that means trouble. But I didn't know exactly how much trouble. Immediately Sammy says to the driver, turn around.

I said, Sammy, what's the problem? He said, Skip, don't you realize, if you get inside of Iraq with this passport, the worst that could happen perhaps is death. Or two years in prison for spying. I said, yes, turn around, right now, keep going.

Obey this man. I was going, whew. I mean, just a mile from the border.

Then Franklin says, now wait a minute here. We shouldn't spoil all of our plans because of me. I'll go back home.

Skip, you go inside with Sammy Dagger. I said, you know, Franklin, I really feel led. I'm with you, you see.

We're a team. I don't know if we should separate because of this. We ought to stick together.

You might need protection. So we got up to the border and we talked to, there's like three checkpoints you have to go to. And the first checkpoint, there's a bunch of Americans carrying medicine for the people in

Baghdad.

But we explained, one of the gentlemen is going back, he has to go home. And the man looked very suspicious and he said, you give me an official reason why only two of you are coming and one of you is staying. At that, Sammy Dagger said, all of you go home, I'll go in.

I've been to this part of the world before. We came within a mile of being in prison. And when we got back to the hotel, it dawned on me that we had experienced something more than acts.

When he said, we tried to go to Asia but the Holy Spirit forbade us. And I was saying, Lord, thank you for forbidding us to go to Baghdad. Because you are constantly working all things together for my good because you love me.

Because I'm called according to your purpose. Even when plans flop, even when you suffer. Now this is a tough one.

It's tough to believe that all things are constantly working together and you're experiencing physical pain because of some disease or some circumstance or someone you love, perhaps a child, would be going through intense suffering. God, how could you? God, why would you allow it to happen? How could this work together? But God can be in it. Classic example, Joseph.

Joseph suffered by his brothers. He was thrown in a pit. He was sold as a slave.

He was in prison two years like I almost was. He was in prison. He never would have had the opportunity to interpret Pharaoh's dream, would he? Which means he never would have been able to rise to power in Egypt.

Which means he never would have been able to come up with that beautiful plan to save that part of the world from starvation. At the end of his life, when his brothers are around Joseph, Joseph looks at them and he's not angry, he's not bitter. He's not saying, how could God allow this to happen? He said, listen brothers, I know that you meant this for evil, but God meant it for good.

To bring, as it is this day, to save many people alive in suffering even. And what about the children of Israel when they were in Egypt? And what about the children of Israel when they were going through the heat of the wilderness and they were being tested? It was there where God reminded Moses that he had their good in mind and he said, I've done this and I understand. And what about the same children of Israel as they went into captivity in Babylon years later? Seventy years, they probably were wondering, how can God do this? I wonder if he loves us.

I wonder if God cares. It was then that God reminded them through the prophet Jeremiah, I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord. Not thoughts of evil, but of good.

To give you future and a hope. I want you to understand those hard blows of God remind me of something I heard about a diamond that was mined in Africa. A rough diamond.

It was sent over to the king of England so that he might wear it in his crown. The king looked at it. It looked big enough, but it was rough.

So he sent it to Amsterdam to be hewn by an expert craftsman, a lapidary from Amsterdam. That man looked at it, studied it, cut a notch in it, took a hammer, the untrained eye would say, you foolish, careless

person. You just ruined a great jewel that the king of England might have worn in his crown.

But you see, that expert saw the flaws in that jewel. And he knew that he would have a greater value if he made two out of them instead of one. Now God will often cause blows to occur in our life.

They hurt when they come. But he is causing all things to work together for good, even when plans flop, even when we're suffering physically. Do you realize that if you took a \$5 bar of steel and you made horseshoes out of it, that it would then be worth \$10? And if you took that same \$5 bar of steel and you made blades for knives, it would be worth about \$350? But if you took that same \$5 bar of steel and made little springs for watches, you know how much it would be worth? \$250,000.

How valuable. But what suffering that poor piece of steel has to go through? What beating, what fire, what torment, what trial, what crushing? But the more it's crushed and beaten, the more valuable it becomes. God knows what he's about.

He knows what he's doing. He allows those circumstances to come your way that you wonder about. Suffering.

And what about evil? What about sin? Can God cause that to work together? Oh, yes. When you're tempted by the devil, even that can be woven into the garment for your good. Because when you're tempted by the devil, it causes you to be stripped of your own self-confidence.

Lord, I cling to you. Lord, help me overcome. That causes you to be driven to the cross and to trust in Christ and his strength.

And when you're in that place of weakness, you experience great strength. So the certainty we know, the scope, all things work together for those that love God. And finally, the center of God's care.

Notice with me that verse again. To those who are the called according to his purpose, and before that, to those who love God. In other words, this promise is not a promise to a human being.

This promise of God's care is only to a select group of individuals designated in this verse as one, those who love God, and two, those who are called according to his purpose. In other words, Christian believers. You know, God has two categories of people.

Those who love him and those who don't. Becoming a Christian is more than intellectually agreeing and assenting with certain truths. It's submitting by repentance and taking control over your life.

And that's who it's for. Those who love God and are called according to his purpose. We love him because he first loved us.

I discovered an interesting thing in the Bible about the word love. Almost every time in the New Testament it is used, it is somehow related to forgiveness. We love him because he first loved us.

And 1 John speaks about love based on what Jesus has done for us. And what about the time when Jesus went into Simon the Pharisee's house? And a woman came in and started crying all over Jesus' feet. Started wiping him off with her hair.

And Simon the Pharisee was thinking, well, if this Jesus is really the Messiah, he would know how wicked this gal is. Jesus said, Simon, I came into your house. You didn't treat me like this.

You didn't extend this warm of a welcome. Because Simon, to whom little is forgiven, the same love is little to whom much is forgiven, the same loves much. I was reading a book recently called The Reproducers.

I've read it before. It's been on my shelf for years. It's an early story of Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa.

It's testimonies of the lives of those who have been changed in this place. And one woman being interviewed said, you know, there's a lot of love at Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa. And it's probably because we recognize the great debt we've had forgiven by our Lord.

And because we're so surrendered to His love and we realize that forgiveness is so great, we love. Oh, how refreshing that is. You know, there's people who go to churches across this nation and they leave feeling absolutely horrible.

Even though they're in Christ Jesus, they feel doomed and condemned instead of forgiven, cared for, loved for by God. And you leave a place like this and you usually know that. Love is always related to forgiveness and if Jesus has done, forgiven us, then we love Him.

Alright, how do you know if you love God? I mean, a lot of people say, I love God. Well, you can tell if a person loves God. Number one, you can tell because that person has a desire for God.

David said, as the deer pants after the brooks of water, so pants my soul after you, oh God. Ever watch A Couple in Love? They can't wait to hang out with each other. As soon as five o'clock hits, he's out the door, gets in the car, goes out with her, wants to be with her.

He has a desire. He loves her. Secondly, you can tell if a person loves God because that person is sensitive to what God loves and what God hates.

Again, A Couple in Love. If he knows that she hates seafood, he's not going to invite her out to lobster dinner. He says, no, she doesn't like that.

Stay away from it. David said, oh, how I love thy law. Because he knew that God loved his law and he published his word above his name.

Peter was sensitive to what Jesus disliked. When Peter failed and sinned, denying Jesus three times, he wept bitterly because it knew in his heart that he had displeased his Lord. Then you can tell if a person loves the Lord because that person cares for the honor of his name.

Remember in high school, someone really wanted to get your goat. They'd say some wisecrack about your mom. That's all it took.

Those are fighting words. You want to defend the honor of your mother. Well, how do you feel when people misuse God's name and use it as a four-letter word? Does that upset you? Or would you just join in the crowd? Do you love him by honoring his name? Then you can tell if a person loves God if that person loves God's kids.

I can always tell if a person loves me by how he treats my son. He loves my son and spends time with my son. I know that person loves me.

John said in his epistle, if we say we love God but we hate our brother, we're a liar and the truth is not in us. Then we can finally tell if we love God by obedience. That's really the tell-tale sign, isn't it? Jesus said,

if you love me, you'll keep my commandments.

And so, if you are a Christian, if you love the Lord, you are called by God according to his divine purpose, then this morning you can know with absolute certainty beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is causing absolutely every single thing that happens in your life to synergize together for your highest good and for his glory. What a promise! What a Grand Canyon view of God's love and care for us. I have a feeling, though, there are some of you this morning, here, perhaps listening on the radio, who are called by God but you have not responded to that call and God wants you to respond today.

God is calling you but the Bible says as many as received him. It's to them that he gave the power to become the children of God, to those who believe in his name, who cling to him, who trust in him. But you must come to him, you must receive him.

And then there are those of you, believers, who of late have been so depressed, so frustrated, so doubtful, so wondering. The bottom line truth I'd like you to walk away with is God deeply cares for you. And Paul goes on to say if God is for us or because God is for us, who can be against us? Strengthen those feeble knees.

Lift up those hands that are hanging down this morning. One person wrote about it in this way, his own personal testimony, when he said at first, I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things that I did wrong. He was out there sort of like the president.

I recognized his picture when I saw it, but I didn't really know him. But later on when I learned to trust, it seemed as though life was like riding a bicycle, a tandem bicycle, and God was in the back helping me pedal. Now I don't know just when it was that he suggested we change places, but life has not been the same since.

When he took the lead, it was all that I could do to hang on. He knew delightful paths up the mountains and through rocky places and at breakneck speeds. Even though it looked like madness, he said, pedal.

I was worried. I was anxious. And I said, where are you taking me? He just laughed and didn't answer.

And I started to learn to trust him. I forgot my boring life and I entered into adventure. When I'd say, I'm scared, he'd lean back and he'd touch my hand.

At first I did not trust him in control of my life. You see, I thought that he would wreck it. But he knows bike secrets.

He knows how to make it lean, to take sharp corners, to dodge large rocks and speed through scary passageways. And I am learning to shut up and to pedal in the strangest places. I'm beginning to enjoy the view and the cool breeze on my face with my delightful constant companion.

And when I am sure that I cannot do anymore, he just smiles and says, pedal. This morning, if you have not surrendered to the call of Jesus Christ upon your life, do it. Throw in the towel today.

Surrender your life not to someone who's looking out for your worst, but who's looking out for your best. There will be some pastors in the prayer room after the service. To my left, to your right.

Walk in there at your own leisure and pray with them. Surrender your life to Jesus today. Let's all stand.

Let's bow our heads and just have a word of prayer. Father, we have to admit first of all that there's lots of stuff that happens that we do not understand. We have tried to figure out why you allow certain people and events to come into our lives.

They've caused pain and hurt. They've caused disruption. Some of them have been good.

Some of them blatantly evil. But Lord, you always bring us back to that place of biblical perspective. Jesus loves us.

God cares. I pray, Father, that we'd walk out of here today our heads high knowing that we have a God who shakes the world and who has our best interests at heart. Thank you, Lord, for your love.

We submit to you in Jesus' name. Amen. May the Lord richly bless you as you continue to study his word.

If you'd like further information, please contact Chapel Tapes at P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

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