

God's Got it! ETC Sunday 4th January 2026

S1:God's Got it...

The context of Romans chapter 8 is meant to be an encouragement against the background of all God has done for us in Christ, in the previous chapters. The reality is, we are still in this world and still in process. Romans 8 encourages us to see that in spite of all that is happening in the world today, God and His promises, remain the same. He talks about the whole of creation groaning for the fulfilment of all things in Him and one day that will happen. In the meantime we are called to be in the world and be salt and light and to reign in life and overcome and grow through all that comes our way.

We don't know everything, nor can we always understand or explain why things happen to us as they do. God says His ways and thoughts are not ours and are higher than ours (**Isaiah 55 vs 8-9**). Our lives in Jesus are lives of faith and we need to learn over and over again to **trust him with the things we do not know, acknowledge he knows and has His reasons**. God never has to explain Himself to us.

God has reasons and purposes for doing the things and allowing the things he does, we know nothing about and in some ways it is not our business. Primarily God wants to us to grow into the people he knows we can be and so we can be an influence for good and change where we find ourselves. I believe that God accepts us as we are but loves us too much to keep us as we are and he uses experiences and events in our lives to do this work.

“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.”

Romans 8:28 NASB1995

“And we know [with great confidence] that God [who is deeply concerned about us] causes all things to work together [as a plan] for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His plan and purpose.”

Romans 8:28 AMP

Do we believe this? James encourages us to be doers of the word and not just hearers (**James 1 vs23-25**), do we live in the reality of this truth of God's word?

Jehosophat's example (2 Chronicles 15-20)-If we believe this of God does it mean we can do what we want because after all God will work it out for our good ? That's clearly taking advantage of God's mercy toward us. He is looking for hearts that are undivided and for him. **Jehosophat** was loyal to God in his reign he taught the people administered justice and even brought people back to worshipping God in song but it says at the end of his reign despite all this effort **the hearts of the people were still divided. They gave the impression of following outwardly, saying, agreeing the right things but in their**

hearts it was different. It is a sombre message for us. We will only get growing in our faith as far as we allow Him to work in and through us.

S2: He knows what he's doing- God's Providence

- **Ephesians 2:4-10: God is working in us to be the people He wants us to really be** and to walk and do the things he has prepared for us. He has a purpose for us. We work with him and co-operate with Him to bring this about. We are invited into His work.
- **Esther 4: 'For such a time as this...'** Some worry about being in God's will, am I doing what God has called me to do? See what is in front of you, where the Lord has led you and what you are doing right now. **He has prepared for where you are right now, all that has happened before is preparation for today.** He has saved us by His grace and He will see it through and make sense of it all one day for us. We are called to trust.
- **Philippians 1:6; & Philippians 2:12-13: He doesn't play games with us**, He brings things to birth and sees it through (**Is 66 v 9**) and we can confidently say that our times are in His hands, despite what we face (**Psalm 31 vs 14-15**). Paul reminds us that it is God who has started His work in us and He will bring it to fruition in our lives. He takes our commitment to Him more serious than us, He is faithful to us-**1 Cor 1 v9, 'God is faithful through whom you were called into fellowship with His son, Jesus Christ our Lord.'**

S3: 'All things...'

The best demonstration of the providence of God is the book of Esther. We see here the way God has perfectly timed things so His purposes can be worked out for His people.

John Calvin says of God's providence that all events happen by the ordination of God. All things contribute towards the ones who are His. The hearts of people and all their actions are in the hand of God.

God uses who he wishes, even unbelievers. He called both Nebuchadnezzar (**Jeremiah 43 v10**) and Cyrus (**Ezra/2 Chronicles**) to be part of fulfilling His purposes to cleanse and redeem His people and prepare them for Jesus, the Messiah coming.

'All things'

- Events in our lives we have no control over - life happens micro and macro
- Suffering and sickness- The man born blind, was for the glory of God (**John 9**)
- The harm people do to Us- Free will is given to everyone we are not always protected from the harm of others choices but God has ordained that all these things he is instantly working and recreating to work for our good.
- Our sin
- God works with our mistakes
- God uses situations sometimes to get our attention, as we might not be listening

Nothing we experience is ever wasted, all things can be used for His glory. He can teach us from what we go through and turn things around for us, always recreating to work for our good, despite it being painful and we suffer.

Sometime we don't know what God is doing unless we look back after some time but in the midst of the time we don't understand what God might be doing or how it is going to work out, sometimes we have to stand back, take our hands off a situation and declare our faith in God and allow Him room to do His work. Often when we try and control a situation we can make it worse. Can we trust God anyway? **God is saying, 'Are you going to trust me?'**

James says that the testing of our faith when going through difficult times produces endurance and that in the midst of this we can ask for God's wisdom but we have to believe that He will (**James 1 vs 2-8**)

S4: Work together for good

1. God didn't leave creation to it he is constantly recreating things for the good of His people.
2. **Richard Rohr** says, '*The Spirit in us knows how to use everything that happens to bring about healing and growth. We can trust that "God is even in this!"*'. *We can trust that nothing is wasted.*
3. **John Calvin** writes, that we will not suffer anything that will happen that will not turn out to our good and safety. We can take great comfort from this reality, *...that our heavenly father so embraces all things under His power, so governs them at will by His nod, so regulates them by His wisdom that nothing takes place unless it is according to his appointment...*'
4. Nothing is a surprise to Him. So he has worked through both the events we face and our choices, to make it all good for us.
5. Bad events that happen to us that are not our making are not our fault or God punishing us in some way but because of his huge respect for people's choice he has instead decided to allow these things in his permissible will and has promised to turn them around for our good.
6. **God is and never has been the author of evil. He allows evil to happen but God has already been creating ways to bring good out of evil for us.**
7. We also do not fully know what God may have protected us from, as he works to engineer things for our lives.

8. How do we see road blocks in the way of us doing things? Maybe God is either putting them there or using them to prevent things as it is not His timing.

9. We need to widen our vision of who God is and see Him in everything.

10. Someone once, described God is like a tapestry maker. Every strand every colour every design is prepared and worked by Him to create a full picture.

Biblical examples:

Joseph – ‘what you intended for bad has been used for good to save thousands of lives.’

David- started well, he made some huge mistakes but God’s promise to him were fulfilled. He brought good out of the situation with Bathsheba and her husband Uriah, who David had murdered. It is through Jesus’ line the Messiah came.

The old testament story is a narrative of God continually making Israel’s mistakes turn to the good and for His purposes to bring the Messiah to all the world.

S5: For those who love God and are called according to his purpose

God chose us based on his foreknowledge of our response to him way back at before creation (**Romans 8 v 29**).

That is why Jesus says in John he knows those who are His and none can snatch us out of his hand (**John 10 v 28**). Once we are his children we are forever and we are justified or put right with God forever when we come to faith and one day we will know His glory (**Romans 8 v 29**).

We are not a mistake. He had had his hand upon us from eternity. **Psalm 139** tells us he knew us in the womb and was overseeing the creative process of our being.

The psalmist rejoices in the God who has promised to preserve and keep us even to our ‘greying,’ years (**Psalm 71**).

I do not believe God looked across at all humanity before time began and chose others and rejected others like some transport at a concentration camp. He saw ahead what and how we would respond to him and chose us as His own.

God’s word to us through Peter (**2 Peter 3 v 9**) that he wants none to perish but all to come to repentance. It’s just he knew in advance who would repent. None have come to him unless he has chosen and called us to Himself. All are called or given the opportunity to come to Him but few says Jesus are chosen to be his children.

1 Cor 2 vs 7-9, Paul talks about a wisdom God hid but which he predestined before the ages for our glory. He quotes Isaiah (**64 v4/65 v17**), ‘...all that God had prepared for those who love Him.’

S6: Reigning in life -Kingdom Living

Jesus said, 'In the world you will have tribulation but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' (John 16 v 33).

Paul says we can 'reign' in life despite all that's thrown against us.

The impact of Jesus' work on the cross was not an isolated incident, it was meant to mean that we can live a life that is one of victory and overcoming. That doesn't mean we are never going to have difficult times but what it does promise is that we can experience a sense of overcoming despite all that is thrown at us.

This isn't triumphalism but a quiet deep faith that no matter what comes our way we can know God working for our good and have a confident faith that he is with us working out his purposes. It is true joy. How do we do this?

We can survive well by declaring the truth to ourselves

Micah writes in the midst of the devastation that was to come to his people and yet he could still declare, **'But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; Though I dwell in darkness, the Lord is a light for me.'** *Micah 7 vs 7-8)*

Opposite spirit living ... 1 Cor 4 vs 12-13, '... when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted we endure; when we are slandered we try to conciliate.'

We can always respond in patient love towards others who hurt or attack us and choose to forgive (though with some situations this can be a long process)

We can remember what God has done before as we look back and how he has brought us through.

The People of Israel were repeatedly told to remember and to pass on what God had done. We need to share our stories to remind ourselves and others of the faithfulness of God in the past.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, 'Remembrance becomes the power of the present because of the living God who once acted for me and who reminds me of this today.'

We can use a faith perspective in how we see things ...

If we truly believe God is in everything that happens to us and is working it out for our good, we can respond in faith and not by sight.

***"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."* 2 Corinthians 4:18**

2 Corinthians 4:6-12, Paul's example helps- '...we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...'

Old testament example: 2 Kings 6 vs 15 -20- Elisha the prophet is being hounded by the King of Aram and his servants comes to warn him and they seem frightened, as the armies are surrounding the city. Elisha asks God to open their eyes to see what is really going on and they see the mountains are full of horses and chariots of fire all around where Elisha was. He says, quite casually, '**Those with us is greater than those with them,**' verse 16.

God gave Elisha faith to believe what others couldn't see and we can ask God to help us to see beyond what is present and ask God for the gift of faith to see what other people can't see.

S7: So... Has God got it?

Take home summary...

1. God has us in His HANDS.
2. Nothing we experience can ever separate us from His love and purposes for us.
3. Everything we go through, God is looking for creative ways to make these things good and worthwhile for our lives and help us to grow our faith in Him.
4. Nothing that happens to us is wasted, all can be used for our good and His glory.
5. We need to purposefully put our trust in God when we are faced with the unforeseen and instead of asking **why? let us ask what?** What is it that you want us to do with this, handle this and learn from this?
6. See God's hand in every detail of your life, have a faith lens, believing he is working all the time to bring your life to be the life he desires it to be.
7. Life is tough and challenging and always has been it is what we do with what comes our way that is a key to our growth and a witness to others.
8. Nothing takes God by surprise
9. He never reveals everything to us, as He wants us to trust him and learn.
10. Can we trust Him afresh to see us though again and again ever changing us from glory to glory.
11. Only God knows the changes he wants to bring for us and how these are best brought into being for us.

Can we say, despite what we might be going through, that God's got it?