

Favorite Things



“Rain drops on roses and whiskers on kittens.

Bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens.” (Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *The Sound of Music*.)

These are a few of Maria’s favorite things. A few of my favorite things include Jesus, family, dark chocolate, the U.P, winter, organic food, salad, skiing, biking, canoeing, and the wilderness. What about distress, persecution, famine, or the sword?

These are a few of my favorite things said nobody ever.

Favorite things are supposed to provide comfort, pleasure, peace, fulfillment, and joy. But the Bible says we can count difficult painful trials as good things. Why?

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

Because God will use them for our good. Romans 8:28 does not say all things *are* good, but that He will *use* all things for our good. Some things, good things, bad things, hard things, painful things, evil things, every-things can be counted as good.

Good and good-er.

The word *good* used in this verse doesn't mean ease and comfort. Verse 29 provides a truer definition of *good*.

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, 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.” Romans 8:29

Good is anything that conforms us to the image of Christ.

Conforming is not easy. It's a process of pressure and pain, a re-rolling of the soul. Like dough in the hands of a baker, He pushes, prods, pinches, and molds until we are conformed to the image of Christ.

The Greek word for *conform* is *sym-morphos*. *Sym-* means *with, beside, accompany*. *Morphos* means *fashioned like*.

Sym- + morphis = beside you while remaking you

While we are going through the painful process of conforming please keep a few things in mind:

1. God uses all things to conform us. Things we think may destroy or harm us are used for the benefit of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.
2. When we are conformed, we will be like Christ. That is

good news!

3. Jesus is *with us, beside us, accompanying us* (sym-) through the whole painful messy conforming process.

Whatever you are going through right now, don't let the enemy have the win. God has promised to use it for your good. While your situation may not be a favorite thing, you can count it as a good thing.

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