

What You Don't Know Can Help You!

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Series: *Seeing **how** Jesus is your salvation will stir your love for him.*

WE DON'T KNOW, BUT HE KNOWS AND COMES ALONG SIDE, FOR HE KNEW AND DESIGNED US TO CONFORM US UNTO HIS SON.

ONE: **For we do not know** how to pray as we ought. *Romans 8.26*

TWO: **But God knows** and has come alongside by his Spirit, bearing and interceding *Romans 8.26-27*

THREE: **So we** who love God **know** all things work for good. *Romans 8.28*

FOUR: **For God knew us** and decided beforehand to conform us to the image of his Son. *Romans 8.29-30*

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1. Paul assumes believers should be praying, but do not always know how. Consider Abraham re: Sodom in Gen 18, Job re: his trials, Elijah in 1Ki 19, Mary Magdalene re: Jesus' missing body in Joh 20.15, Paul re: his thorn in the flesh in 2Co 4.7ff. & even Jesus in Gethsemane (Mat 26.36ff, cf., 24.36). Scripture reveals prayer is work. How do the realities described in the situations above make it harder for you to pray?
 2. Even though we don't always know how to pray, the Spirit does—and he is bearing the struggle with us and interceding for us! How might it help your praying if you regularly thanked him for his labor alongside you as you pray? Give it a try!
 3. The context in Rom 8.26-28 makes clear God can use all things for good for those who love him (believers who have a new heart and purpose). Rom 8.29 reveals that God's purpose is to conform his children to bear the image of his Son. How might it help your praying if you asked for wisdom and strength to be with each situation and *neighbor* as Jesus might be?
 4. We don't know each day—for each of us—the detailed plan/will of God (and only rarely does God illumine special directions). How does knowing the Spirit is bearing us up and interceding give confidence as we seek guidance from God's Word and from wise brothers and sisters?
Paul's proclaiming God's *foreknowledge* (cf., Gen 18.19 [*known/chosen* him], Act 2.23, Rom 11.2, 1Pe 1.2, 20) emphasizes God's relational plan for his chosen people (his "sovereign, distinguishing love"). *Foreknowledge* is not mere seeing into the future that certain folks will have faith. *Predestined* (pro + horizon in the Greek) speaks of God's destinating-in-advance; those he *loves/knows* he destines-in-advance to be transformed into the image of his Son.
 5. God justifies/receives no one who does not come to him in faith (cf., Joh 1.12). After we come to faith how does it bring comfort to know God has **loved** us (cf., Joh 6.44), **known** us and **planned** our destination in advance?