

## The March CFAMC Devotional Page

As most of you know, I have been having quite a time with grief and loss in the past six months, and the beat is going on this month. My best friend just had brain surgery...without sufficient anesthetic. Result: The surgery was successful, and he can remember just about every bit of it! Meanwhile, his nephew got tagged with getting his bank account absolutely drained while trying to take care of his uncle's business...and here I am in the middle of it. At the same time, God keeps piling opportunity and blessing in stacks so high that in my present state I can't even see over the top. The contrast has really struck me and started me thinking in this past month...

About three days ago, I encountered a verse I hadn't really paid attention to before:

Acts 15:18 – “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.”

Of course, intellectually I know that... I learned about omniscience and predestination years ago, being the child and grandchild and great-grandchild of Sunday School teachers, superintendents, and preachers. But the verse struck me tremendously, as I overlaid it with...

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

It dawned on me that, not only is God working everything together for good for those that love Him, but He has known how He was going to do it, and has been doing it, since the beginning of time. I'm sharing this because if He's doing that for ME, He's also doing that for you.

Jeremiah 29:11 – “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

Let's go one step further... That combo of Acts 15:18 and Romans 8:28 also means that God already knew about all the painful circumstances that were coming into our lives and even PLANNED them for our good long before they rolled our way. That also means that all the people who get on our last nerves, who delay our plans (someday I'll tell y'all about the multi-thousand-dollar business plan that I'm working on with the one group of folks in the world who just can't seem to get it together...), who steamroll over our hearts to get what they want, are only doing what they are permitted to do to work out God's perfect timing and God's best blessing in our lives. This realization eased a lot of stress from a lot of continuing situations I am dealing with in both my business and personal life.

And then there is the subject of hope... God keeps giving me glimpses of how He is going to answer different prayers for me in due time, in both realms of my life, and keeps stacking up blessings for me on every corner (literally; I walked through a neighborhood and found the world's most perfect birthday present for somebody I love, sitting on a “free” rack at a store) even through the struggles. I am finding that as I understand more that everything that is happening is completely within the confines of God's good plan that He's been (and will keep) working out forever and ever for all those that love Him, and as I look for more signs and find them (Jeremiah 29:13 says “And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart”—it is true, in every situation), my joy is increasing!

Psalms 71:14 – “But I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more.”

May that be your experience too, as new mercies from God continue to pour forth in this year!