

Romans Session 123
The Ultimate Security 1
The Purpose and progress of Salvation 2

Romans 8:29-30 (NASB)

²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

As we began this study we talked about the Purpose of Salvation.

We said that the first listed here is the last.

The ultimate purpose is that we are:

“to become conformed to the image of His Son” (29c)

Again, we need to say that God’s calling precedes and makes possible a person’s hearing and responding in faith to that divine call.

And then that the resulting salvation is made secure by the Lord’s causing everything in a believer’s life to work for his ultimate good.

Conversely, it is impossible for any evil to cause a believer any ultimate harm.

In the middle of verse 29, Paul states the twofold purpose of God’s bring sinners to eternal salvation.

The secondary purpose is stated first as we have said.

The first reason is stated then as:

TO MAKE CHRIST PREEMINENT

“so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren”

God’s supreme purpose for bringing sinners to salvation is to glorify His Son, Jesus Christ, by making Him preeminent in the divine plan of redemption.

In the words of this text, it is God’s intent for Christ to **be the first-born among many brethren.**

In Jewish culture the term **first-born** always referred to a son, unless a daughter was specifically stated.

The reason was that the **first-born** male child in a Jewish family had a privileged status, the term was often used figuratively to represent preeminence.

In the present context that is clearly the meaning.

Also, as it is in almost every instance in the New Testament, the term **brethren**, is a synonym for believers.

God’s primary purpose in His plan of redemption was to make His beloved Son **the first-born among many brethren** in the same sense of Christ’s being uniquely preeminent among the children of God.

Those who trust in Him become God's adopted children, and Jesus, the true Son of God, graciously deigns to call them His brothers and sisters in God's divine family.

Matthew 12:50 (NASB)

⁵⁰ ***"For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."***

And then again in;

John 15:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ ***"No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."***

God's purpose is to make us like Christ in order to create a great redeemed and glorified humanity over which He will reign and be forever preeminent.

In his letter to Philippe, Paul beautifully portrays God's purpose of glorifying Christ:

Philippians 2:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ ***For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,***

¹⁰ ***so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,***

Our ultimate purpose as the redeemed children of God will be to spend eternity worshiping and giving praise to God's beloved **first-born**, our preeminent Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

To the Colossians, Paul further explains that Christ not only is presently the head of the body, the church but also;

Colossians 1:18b (NASB)

¹⁸ ***"He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything."***

God's original purpose in creation was to make a people in His divine image who would give Him honor and glory by serving and obeying Him in all things.

But when Adam and Eve rebelled, alienating themselves from God and bringing damnation upon themselves and all subsequent humanity, God had to provide a way of bringing fallen mankind back to Himself.

So, through Christ, He provided that way by placing the sins of all mankind upon His sinless Son, causing;

Isaiah 53:6c (NASB)

⁶ ***"the iniquity of us all To fall on Him."***

Those who trust in that gracious sacrifice on their behalf are saved from their sins and given God's own glory.

As the redeemed of God, conformed to the image of His Son, we will forever glorify Him with the glory He has given us.

Like the 24 elders, we see in the Book Of Revelation, who fell down before Christ on His throne, we will cast our crowns of righteousness (2 Tim 4:8) of life and of glory (1Pet 5:4) at our Saviors feet, exclaiming,

Revelation 4:11 (NASB)

¹¹ ***"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."***

We thank the Lord for giving us salvation and the eternal life, peace, and joy that salvation brings. But our greatest thanks should be for the unspeakable privilege we have been given of glorifying Christ throughout all eternity.

Now we come to the progress of Salvation

THE PROGRESS OF SALVATION

1. **Romans 8:29a (NASB)**
²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined
2. **Romans 8:29b (NASB)**
²⁹ He also predestined
3. **Romans 8:30a**
³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called;
4. **Romans 8:30b**
³⁰ and these whom He called, He also justified;
5. **Romans 8:30c**
³⁰ and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

In delineating the progress of God's plan of salvation, Paul here briefly states what may be called its five major elements:

1. foreknowledge
2. predestination,
3. calling,
4. justification,
5. glorification

you can see how they relate to the scripture that is above them here.

It is essential to realize that these five links in the chain of God's saving work are unbreakable.

With the repetition of the connecting phrase **He also**, Paul accentuates that unity by linking each element to the previous one.

Know one whom God foreknows, will fail to be predestined, called, justified, and glorified by Him.

It is also significant to note the tense in which the apostle states each element of God's saving work.

Paul is speaking here of the Lord's redemptive work from eternity past to eternity future.

What he says is true of all believers of all times, Security in Christ is so absolute and unalterable that even the salvation of believers not yet born can be expressed in the past tense, as if it had already occurred.

Because God is not bound by time as we are, there is a sense in which the elements are not only sequential but simultaneous.

Thus, from His view they are distinct and in another sense are indistinguishable.

God has made each of them an indispensable part of the unity of our salvation.

So, we want to take the time to look at each of these elements from beginning to end and let God through His Spirit teach us what they are and what they mean.

1. FOREKNOWLEDGE

For Whom He foreknew, (8:29a)

Redemption began with Gods foreknowledge.

A believer is first of all someone **whom He** [God] **foreknew**.

Salvation is not initiated by a person's decision to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Scripture is clear that repentant faith is essential to salvation and is the first step that we take in response to God, but repentant faith does not initiate salvation.

Because Paul is here depicting the plan of salvation from God's perspective, faith is not even mentioned in these two verses.

In His omniscience God is certainly able to look to the end of history and beyond and to know in advance the minutest detail of the most insignificant occurrences.

But it is both unbiblical and illogical to argue from that truth that the Lord simply looked ahead to see who would believe and then chose those particular individuals for salvation.

If that were true, salvation not only would begin with man's faith but would make God obligated to grant it.

In such a scheme, God's initiative would be eliminated, and His grace would be vitiated.

That Idea also prompts such questions as, why then does God create unbelievers if He know in advance, they are going to reject Him?

Why doesn't He create believers only?

Another unanswerable question would be If God based salvation on His advance knowledge of those who would believe, where did their saving faith come from?

It could not arise from fallen natures, because the natural sinful person is at enmity with God.

Romans 5:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Romans 8:7 (NASB)

⁷ because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

Ephesians 2:3 (NASB)

³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Colossians 1:21 (NASB)

²¹ And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds

We can see from these verses that there is absolutely nothing in man's carnal nature to prompt him to trust in the God against whom he is rebelling.

The unsaved person is blind and dead to the things of God.
He has absolutely no source of saving faith within himself.

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NASB)

⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The full truth about God's omniscience cannot be comprehended even by believers.
No matter how much we love God and study His Word, we cannot fathom such mysteries. We can only believe what the Bible clearly says;

That God does indeed foresee the faith of every person who is saved.
We also believe God's revelation that, although men cannot be saved apart from the faithful action of their wills, saving faith, just as every other part of salvation, originates with and is empowered by God alone.

While He was preaching in Galilee early in His ministry, Jesus said;

John 6:37 (NASB)

³⁷ "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

But lest that statement be interpreted as leaving open the possibility of coming to Him apart from the Father's sending, Jesus later declared categorically that;

John 6:44a (NASB)

⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;

You see, New life through the blood of Christ does not come from;

John 1:13 (NASB)

¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Paul also explains that even faith does not originate with the believer but with God;

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

We'll stop here now and continue again next time where we left off.