

Romans Session 124
The Ultimate Security 2
The Purpose and Progress of Salvation 3

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 continue our study of the progress of salvation, we are reminded that even our faith does not originate with us, 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.*

God's foreknowledge is not a reference to His omniscient foresight but to His foreordination. He not only sees faith in advance but ordains it in advance.

Peter had the same reality in mind when he wrote of Christians as those;

Who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;

1 Peter 1:1-2a (NASB)

¹ *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen*

² *according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,*

Peter used the same word "foreknowledge" when he wrote that Christ;

1 Peter 1:20b (NASB)

²⁰ *"was foreknown before the foundation of the world,*

The term means the same thing in both places.

Believers were foreknown in the same way Christ was foreknown.

That cannot mean foreseen but must refer to a predetermined choice by God.

It is the knowing of predetermined intimate relationship, as when God said to Jeremiah;

Jeremiah 1:5 (NASB)

⁵ *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."*

Jesus spoke of the same kind of knowing when He said'

John 10:14a (NASB)

¹⁴ *"I am the good shepherd, and I know My own,*

Now, since saving grace is foreordained by God, it would have to be that the way of salvation was foreordained, as indeed it was.

During his sermon at Pentecost, Peter declared of Christ;

Acts 2:23 (NASB)

²³ *this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.*

The word, “predetermined” is from *Horizo*, from which we get the English word *horizon*, which designates the outer limits of the earth that we can see from a given vantage point.

The basic idea of the Greek term refers to the setting of any boundaries or limits.

Plan is from *boule*, a term used in classical Greek to designate an officially convened, decision making counsel. Both words include the idea of willful intention.

“Foreknowledge” is from the noun form of the verb translated **foreknew** in our text. According to the what Greek scholars refer to as Granville Sharp’s rule, if two nouns of the same case (in this instance, plan and foreknowledge” are connected by *kai* (*And*) have the definite article (the) before the first noun but not before the second, the nouns refer to the same thing. (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* [New York: Macmillan, 1927]. P. 147).

In other words, Peter equates God’s predetermined plan, or foreordination, and His foreknowledge.

In addition to the idea of foreordination, the term foreknowledge also connotes forelove. God Has a predetermined divine love for those He plans to save.

Foreknew is from *proginosko*, a compound word with meaning beyond that of simply knowing beforehand. In Scripture, to know often carries the idea of a special intimacy and is frequently used of a love relationship.

In the statement “Cain had relations with his wife, and she conceived (Gen 4:17, the word behind “had relations with” is the normal Hebrew verb for knowing.

It is the same word translated “chosen” in Amos;

Amos 3:1-2 (NASB)

¹ *Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt:*

² *"You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."*

Here God knew Israel in the unique sense of having predetermined that she would be His chosen people.

In Matthew’s account of Jesus birth,

Matthew 1:25 (NASB)

²⁵ *but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.*

Here “kept her a virgin” translates a Greek phrase meaning literally, “did not know her”

Jesus used the same word when He warned;

Matthew 7:23 (NASB)

²³ *"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'*

He was not saying that He had never heard of those unbelievers but that He had no intimate relationship with them as their Savior and Lord.

But Paul says of believers;

2 Timothy 2:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ *Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."*

Now we begin to look at the next phase, "predestination"

PREDESTINATION

Romans 8:29b (NASB)

²⁹ *For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined*

From foreknowledge, which looks at the beginning of God's purpose in His act of choosing, God's plan of redemption moves to His predestination, which looks at the end of God's purpose in His act of choosing.

Predestination (Proorizo) means literally to mark out, appoint, or determine beforehand.

The Lord has predetermined the destiny of every person who will believe in Him.

Just as Jesus was crucified;

Acts 2:23b (NASB)

²³ *by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God,*

So, God **also** has **predestined** every believer to salvation through the means of that atoning sacrifice.

In their prayers of gratitude for the deliverance of Peter and John, a group of believers in Jerusalem praised God for His Sovereign power, declaring;

Acts 4:27-28 (NASB)

²⁷ *"For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,*

²⁸ *to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.*

In other words, the evil and powerful men who nailed Jesus to the cross could not have so much as laid a finger on Him were that not according to God's predetermined plan.

In his opening of his letter to the Ephesian believers, Paul encouraged them with the glorious truth that God;

Ephesians 1:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love*

⁵ *He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,*

Today, much of our evangelistic efforts gives the impression that salvation is predicated on a person's decision for Christ. But we are not Christians first of all because of what we decided about Christ, but because of what God decided about us before the foundation of the world.

We were able to choose Him only because He had first chosen us, "*according to the kind intention of His will*" Paul expresses the same truth a few verses later when he says;

Ephesians 1:7-9 (NASB)

⁷ *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace*

⁸ *which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight*

⁹ *He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him*

And then he adds;

Ephesians 1:11 (NASB)

¹¹ *also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,*

So that now brings us to the next step of progression our calling;

THE CALLING

Romans 8:30a (NASB)

³⁰ *and these whom He predestined, He also called*

In God's divine plan of redemption, predestination leads to calling.

Although God's calling is also completely by His initiative, it is here that His eternal plan directly intersects our lives in time.

Those who are **called** are those in whose hearts the Holy Spirit works to lead them to saving faith in Christ.

As noted under the discussion of verse 28, Paul is speaking in this passage about God's inward call, not the outward call that comes from the proclamation of the gospel.

The outward call is essential, because;

Romans 10:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?*

But that outward call cannot be responded to in faith apart from God's already having inwardly **called** the person through His Spirit.

The Lord's sovereign calling of believers gives still further confirmation that we are eternally secure in Christ.

We are saved because God called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

2 Timothy 1:9 (NASB)

⁹ who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Emphasizing the same truths of the Lord's sovereign purpose in His calling of believers, Pau assured the Thessalonians that:

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

¹⁴ It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From beginning to end, our salvation is God's work, not our own. Consequently, we cannot humanly undo what He has divinely done. And that is the basis of our security.

Now we have to strongly emphasize that the Scripture nowhere teaches that God chooses unbelievers for condemnation. To our finite minds, that what would seem to be the corollary of God's calling believers to salvation.

But in the divine scheme of things, which far surpasses our understanding, God predestines believers to eternal life, but Scripture does not say that He predestines unbelievers to eternal damnation.

Although those two truths seem paradoxical to us, we can be sure that they are in perfect divine harmony.

Scripture teaches many truths that seem paradoxical and contradictory.

It teaches plainly that God is one, but just as plainly that there are three persons, The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit in the single Godhead.

With equal unambiguity the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man.

Our finite minds cannot reconcile such seemingly irreconcilable truths, yet they are foundational truths of God's Word.

If a person goes to hell, it is because He rejects God and His way of salvation.

John 3:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And John declared earlier in his gospel, believers are saved and made children of God'

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.

But we notice that he makes no corresponding statement in regard to unbelievers, nor does any other part of Scripture. Unbelievers are condemned by their own unbelief, not by God's predestination.

Peter makes plain that God does not desire;

2 Peter 3:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Paul declares with equal clarity;

1 Timothy 2:3-4 (NASB)

³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Every believer is indebted solely to God's grace for his eternal salvation, but every unbeliever is himself solely responsible for his eternal damnation.

God does not choose believers for salvation on the basis of who they are or of what they have done but on the basis of His Sovereign grace.

For His own reasons alone, God chose Jacob about Esau;

Romans 9:11-13 (NASB)

¹¹ for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls,

¹² it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER."

¹³ Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED."

For His own reasons alone, He chose Israel to be His covenant people;

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 (NASB)

⁷ "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples,

⁸ but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

We cannot understand God's choosing us for salvation but can only thank and glorify Him for;

Ephesians 1:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

We can only believe and be forever grateful that we were called;

Galatians 1:6b (NASB)

⁶ by the grace of Christ,

And that "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable"

Romans 11:28-29 (NASB)

²⁸ From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;

²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.