

Fundamentals of the Faith
Lesson Six—Salvation, Part One
The Work Of God

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 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.

Romans 8:28-30 (NASB)

~Contrary to popular misuse, the promise of Verse 28—that all things work together for good—only pertains to those who love God

~Verse 28 describes those who love God as those who are called, and that calling is according to the purpose of God

~That thought is the controlling thought for Verses 29 and 30, often referred to as the golden chain of salvation

~It focuses on what God does in salvation

~“*those whom He foreknew*”: The Greek word speaks of “before knowing intimacy” (see Genesis 4:1, Jeremiah 1:5 for Hebrew use)

~It is upon this foreknowing that God’s election is based upon (see 1 Peter 1:1-2)

~Does this then mean that foreknowing means “looking down the corridors of time and seeing who would believe, then electing them?”

1. Scripture paints God as sovereign over all things, even salvation. Passages such as Acts 13:48 and 2 Thessalonians 2:13 speak of salvation as being by the sovereign appointment of God

2. Passages such as John 6:44 speak of an inability of man to come to God unless God draws. This does not accord with the “looking down the annals “view.

3. This would affect God’s omniscience, as it paints a God who actively learned

*****Context refresh:** Remember this is all in the context of assuring believers that all things will work together for their good

~ “*He also predestined*”: Like foreknow in that it has “beforehand” connotations. Predestined carries the idea of “to set bounds before,” or “mark off before.”

~Predestination is the marking of a certain boundary by God in which the foreknown would exist

~That boundary is, quite simply, conformity to the image of the Son

~This conformity leads to a (non-divine) sonship for the believer

Salvation can rightly be seen as: For the Son (*Colossians 1:16*), By the Son (*Hebrews 10:26*), In the Son (*Ephesians 1:11-12*), Like the Son (*Romans 8:29*), With the Son (*1 Thessalonians 4:17*)

******Context refresh:** This predestination of a people to be conformed to the image of the Son is part of God’s eternal purpose, part of the exaltation of the Son, and the ultimate definition of the “good” spoken of in Verse 28.

~“*He also called*”: Has the idea of call by name, summons, invite

~Scripture speaks of a general call and a particular call (Matthew 22:14)

~Those who respond to that call, respond to that call by faith

~“*He also justified*”: God declares those who respond to His call by faith innocent

~It is that declaration of innocent that stops the war with God and brings peace (Romans 5:1)

~“*He also glorified*”: Brought into the final state, final goal of salvation

~This ultimately speaks of the uniting of body and soul (1 Corinthians 15:50-58) and being brought into the perfect, glorious presence of our Holy God (1 John 3:2)

Theological Note: The Golden Chain of Salvation is a wonderful testimony of the inability to lose one’s salvation. God foreknew us from eternity, and nowhere in the chain is there a hint that what God begins He will not finish. The Golden Chain cannot be broken, as it is the work of God. Further, this Golden Chain of Salvation is the basis for assurance during times of doubt, tumult, and persecution (Romans 8:31-39)