

Men's Bible Study

October 10, 2023

Romans 8:28-38

Session 23

General sections of the text

Our Scripture for tonight may well be divided into four sections:

1. **That which we know.** – an assumption of knowledge. It is a present understanding of that which was discussed before. (Suffering) This knowledge includes God's actions to take all that went before and use them for those who love God for good. And described as those who are called according to his purpose.
 2. **That which God knows.** – The scope of the knowledge of God. Specifically, what was done or completed.
 3. **What shall we say** – A question to be answered from the previous statements or ideas. A prompt to formulate an argument, a stance based upon that previous argument.
 4. **I am convinced.** - The conclusion from the known idea, how I can voice this idea, now becomes a convincing truth.
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Word study of importance to understand the meaning of the text.

Called:

1. Found in Verses 28 and 30 in Romans 8.
2. Found a total of 11 times in the NASB New Testament and 4 times in Romans.
3. The word in Greek is KLETOS. Paul wrote Romans in Greek.
4. The word is in the simple past tense. It is something that was before Paul's writing.
5. Thayer defines this as:
 - a. called, invited (to a banquet)
 - i. invited (by God in the proclamation of the Gospel) to obtain salvation in the kingdom through Christ
 - b. called to (the discharge of) some office
 - c. divinely selected and appointed

Called is simply an invitation to do or be. When your plane is called at Sacramento Airport, it means that the pilot knows you want to go to a specific place, he knows how to fly the plane, he knows what path he should take to arrive on time. But it is still your choice to board the plane. A call is an invitation. I can send you an invitation to Bible Study. That invitation does not determine the response. A call does not mean that your response determines your attendance. A call means you are now aware of an opportunity for action.

Purpose:

1. Found in the verse 28 in Romans 8
2. Found a total of 12 times in the NASB New Testament and 2 times in Romans.
3. The word in Greek is prothesin. Paul wrote Romans in Greek
4. The word is in the simple past tense. It is something that was before Paul's writing.
5. Thayer defines this as:
 - a. A setting forth of a thing, placing of it in view, the shewbread
 - b. twelve loaves of wheaten bread, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel, which loaves were offered to God every Sabbath, and separated into two rows, lay for seven days upon a table placed in the sanctuary or front portion of the tabernacle, and afterward of the temple
 - c. a purpose
6. Strong's concordance defines this word as: a setting forth, that is, (figuratively) proposal (intention); specifically, the showbread (in the Temple) as exposed before God: - purpose, shew [-bread].

A purpose, no matter who has it or designs it, the intent is what is implied. It is not the exhibit of a thing it is the intent. It is the desire behind the act or proposed act. It is the reason for action but not the action itself.

Foreknew:

1. This word is found in vs 29 of Romans 8.
2. It is found in Romans 2 times and only in our selected text out of the six times in the New American Standard New Testament.
3. The Greek word is proginóskō. Paul wrote Romans in Greek
4. The word is in the simple past tense.
5. It is something that was before Paul's writing.

This word is made up in English by two parts: Fore, that which was previous and know, that which is known intimately (as in a marriage).

Predestined:

1. This word is found in vs 29 and 30 in the eighth chapter of Romans.
2. It is found in Romans twice and in the New American Standard New Testament six times.
3. The Greek word is proorizo. Paul wrote Romans in Greek
4. The word is in the simple past tense. It is something that was before Paul's writing.
5. It is defined by Thayer as:
 - a. to predetermine, decide beforehand
 - b. in the New Testament it is God decreeing from eternity
 - c. to foreordain, appoint beforehand

This word may well explained in the context of our study as an eternal decision made by God. This decision is a decree made in the past. There is no causality of future action.

Conform:

1. This word is found in Vs 29 in the eighth chapter of Romans

2. It is found in Romans once and in the New American Standard New Testament only twice.
3. The Greek word is *sýmmorphos*. Paul wrote Romans in Greek
4. The word is in the simple past tense. It is something that was before Paul's writing.
5. It is defined by Thayer as:
 - a. having the same form as another,
 - b. similar

This word is simply stating there is a goal or purpose to be like Jesus.

Elect:

1. This word is found in our text in verse 33 in the eighth chapter of Romans.
2. It is found in Romans three times and in the New American Standard New Testament a total of 24 times.
3. The Greek word is *eklektós*. Paul wrote Romans in Greek.
4. The word is in the simple past tense. It is something that was before Paul's writing.
5. It is defined by Thayer as:
 - a. picked out, chosen
 - b. chosen by God,
 - c. to obtain salvation through Christ
 - d. Christians are called "chosen or elect" of God
 - e. the Messiah in called "elect", as appointed by God to the most exalted office conceivable
 - f. choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellence preeminent: applied to certain individual Christians

In individual relationships, the elect are those who have accepted the invitation or calling.

Section one of our text Romans 8:28-30

While these three verses are a small section of the selected portion of our study, they have been debated, discussed, and minutely divided as a very important part of theological belief structures. It has been used as a proof text to establish the foundation of many houses of belief.

It must be noted this entire section from 8:28-39 all the verbs are in the Past perfect tense. They all have happened before.

We may make the following fundamental assumptions that can be made from the scripture and the words used as defined in the Greek:

Verse 8:28

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.

1. Paul is addressing something that readers know of and about. (V28) “And we know”, it is assumed that all the readers have some acquaintance with what he is about to explain. This knowledge is in the past tense meaning it refers to something in the past.
2. God has the ability to work with current and past events in history to make the result good and good for those who both love God and are invited.
3. God’s intention, and proclaimed purpose for the loving and called is something that the Roman Church was aware of because it was given previously. The members of the church had an intimate acquaintance with this idea.

Verse 8:29

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 brothers and sisters;

1. From what was known by the church, Paul moves on to the knowledge of God the He.
2. Speaking of the loving and the called from the previous statement of past; God knows of these people or persons previously and because again the verbs are all in the past tense. It is not something that will happen, but something that has happened.
3. The proclaimed destiny of the loved and called is to become conformed to the image of Jesus who was the first among many.

Verse 8:30

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.

1. Those who have loved and were called to a destiny, became conformed to an image of God and subsequently, God justified and glorified them.

There have been over the last 2000 years, countless writings, theologies, arguments, church splits, disagreements, and vehement discussions, related to these scriptures. In my theology, in my belief structure these disagreements are non-essential. The differences make little difference to my status before God. I am not telling you that you must choose a specific faith-filled belief. I have found four or five interpretations in the scripture we have before us tonight.

- Each can be held and will not affect your relationship with God.
- Each can be supported with proof texts.
- Each can be strongly preached and taught.
- Each can be the source of disagreement.
- All use verses 28,29,30 as proof text to support their views.
- All agree on certain ideas
 - What is being written about is known to the readers.

- God is the cause of good things to those who love and are called
- God has knowledge of those who love and called
- God has decided or proclaimed a prescribed purpose for these loved and called.
- The purpose declared for these called and known is to conform to an image.
- Those who love and are called are justified and ultimately glorified.

Let us take each in turn examine and understand these views of Romans 8:28,29,30:

The FIVE theologies

Door Number One:

Suppositions:

This scripture is about the Jewish suffering and God's concern for His chosen. It has little to do with a Christian theology other than an example.

- God Chose the nation of Israel God knew beforehand the need of a nation to provide a savior of the world.
- The savior was revealed but they did not find any need to make provision for Gentiles in the LAW.
- If Israel was the example for Group One, why did the Nation of Israel have to go into captivity and lose its favored nation status?
- If Israel was the example for Group One, Why did they deny the Messiah Jesus.
- While this interpretation meets all the criteria set before, it seems to me that it is a theology that tends to excuse Jewish actions.
- It is primarily a group theology and does not address individual actions or responses.
- It is out of the main stream theological debate.

Translation as understood by this group:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, AND SPECIFICALLY to the PEOPLE OF ISRAEL who were called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew to be the chosen people of God, He also predestined as a nation to become conformed to the image of His Son from whom sprang from that nation, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters; That the people would be the first to love God and spread his law. and The Jews these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Door Number TWO.

Suppositions:

- God is absolutely sovereign and therefore no one can thwart God's expressed will.

- These three verses are about the ability of God to choose those whom He will save.
- All men are totally depraved and require God to choose by His will who is worthy to be saved. TOTAL DEPRAVITY
- God, because of his preknowledge, is the causation of those who will love him, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION
- God knew beforehand who would be saved and not saved therefore the Atonement of Jesus was LIMITED
- The elect have no causation for salvation. We become saved because God willed it and bestowed the elements of salvation IRRESISTIBLE GRACE
 - Belief, Faith, Confession, Justification, Glorification. If God has chosen then those who are saved have no choice to not accept
 - The non-elect can never hear the call, respond in justification or be ultimately glorified.
- God's choice cannot be nullified by anything. PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.
 - There is a limit to the amount Of Grace available
- This view is specific and aimed at God's sovereignty and His unlimited total control of all things AND pointed at individuals.
- Further it has been characterized as the "Golden Chain of Redemption" It is a chain that based on the first link the rest must be never broken.,
- Starts with God causing
 - Because of preknowledge
 - Because of predestination
 - Because of an irresistible call
 - Because of an absolute justification
 - Because of an inevitable glorification.
- Every event is the inevitable result of a chain of prior causes and conditions, and that there is no room for chance or randomness in the universe.

Translation as understood by this group:

28 And we know that the Sovereign God is the cause of all things which He works together for good to those he chose to love God, to those He selected and determined to be called according to His purpose. 29 For Those who He knew in the past, knows right now. and knows in the future, He also set a destiny to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that by their caused behavior THEY would show Jesus as The firstborn among many brothers and sisters; 30 and these whom He pre chose or predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Door Number Three

Suppositions:

- God has knowledge of everything that was and is, the future is unknowable even for God.
- The individual's faith is the direct response to the universal call to all men.

- The individual's faith is the cause of justification.
- The individual's Justification is the cause of glorification.
- This view is specific and aimed at the individual and God's working together. For Good.
- This preknowledge is of those who has loved, and is loving.
- Man has the ability (Free Choice) to Love.
- This Free will is the causation of acts of purpose.
- God is working together within circumstances and suffering and the resulting sinfulness to the ultimate good.
- The elect are those who listen to the call, become justified and ultimately glorified.

Translation as understood by this group:

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to ALL those who are called according to His purpose of acts of worship, fellowship, service. 29 For those whom He foreknew, those who are now doing God's purpose which is the proclaimed destiny, are predestined the ultimate goal of spiritual life. These individuals of God's purpose will become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters; 30 and these whom He predestined those who are a part of the proclaimed purpose, are called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Door Number Four

Suppositions:

- God has preknowledge of everything that was, is, and will be.
- This preknowledge is of those who have loved, is loving, and will love God's purpose.
- Those who are known are called to a higher calling to live according to his special purpose.
- This higher calling is more than an intellectual consent to be justified. It is a higher calling to become images of Jesus.
- God is working together within circumstances to nurture and commend those who love on behalf of God's purpose.
- The predestined reward for these special individuals is to rule with Christ Jesus and be the firstborn among many nations.

In the Fourth alternate view of Romans 8:28-29 suggests that God's foreknowledge in Rom 8:29 concerns ruling with Christ. It is not about salvation, it is not about calling. It is about the ultimate destiny of believers. IT is about the believer who loves God is destined to rule with Christ if he perseveres in his love for God.

Translation as understood by this group

28 And we know that the Sovereign God is the cause of all things which work together for good in heaven for those he chose to love God, to those who have chosen to live according to His purpose. 29 For Those who He knew in the past, knows right now. and knows in the future, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that by their caused behavior THEY would show Jesus as The firstborn among many brothers and sisters; 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.

Door number Five

Supositions:

- God knows everything.
- Jesus died for everyone.
- God knows the end of everyone.
- God calls everyone.
- God predestines and sets the results of everyone.
- God's will is that everyone is saved I Tim. 2:4
- God's will cannot be denied.
- God predestined, called, justified and glorified everyone.
- Everyone is already saved.

Translation as understood by this group.

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who are loved by God and all those who received his call to His purpose.

29 For all who God knows intimately, God predestined all to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that who God loves and calls would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters;

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

Understanding of all the belief structures What is most likely?

I am not beginning to suggest that you are predestined by my teaching to understand and accept any position I may or may not take. I do not determine your response to the contents behind any of the doors.

Nevertheless, if you want to know what I think is most likely for our study of Paul writing to the fractured Church in Rome, I can tell you what is more likely by what preponderance of evidence is found here in Romans 8.

If I were to state which of these in order are most logical for the context of Paul in Corinth writing in response to reports from recent visitors, I can make a guess for me. Take any view you want.

OH wait you can't choose any of them if you are predestined to have one of these views because it has been determined by God. 😊

The most likely is number one. Paul was speaking about the Jews. And nothing more. Paul was not talking about determinism or free will or knowledge of the future, or a calling to be more than you are.

Why?

- the word foreknow Proginosko means what has gone on before and now. There is no inference of future knowledge.
- Paul by the use of this vocabulary that before the foundation of the world God declared that the nation begun by Abraham would ultimately produce Jesus.
- God's intervention in prehistory was to set apart a people for a purpose.
- God's predestined plan for His People was to conform to an image of God.
- They failed a lot but they still produced the intended offspring, the first fruits of many brothers.

This belief structure would be Paulean Historical View

The second likelihood scale would be Door Number Three.

If you have to go to the second most likely I have to take **Free Choice**.

- Knowledge does not make a cause.
- A decree does not make a cause
- A knowledge of the past does not make a cause. If you believe that God sees forward then He sees who will make the choice.
- I have a call to a plan to justify and glorify me ultimately.

This belief structure would be Classical Armenian.

Third most likelihood would be a higher calling in Door number four.

- These verses are about the purpose and declaration of a higher calling.
- We are called to more than justification.
- There is a higher calling to be conformed to Christ Jesus.
- This is an effort toward what Paul calls a living sacrifice in Romans 12:1,2

This belief structure would be Wesleyan.

Fourth. EVERYBODY GETS SAVED. IT IS GOD'S WILL

- God is sovereign and has an eternal inescapable will.
- God's will is for all to be saved I Tim 2:4
- God's call is given and all have or will hear the invitation.
- All will respond to God's perfect will perfectly.
- All will be justified.

This belief structure would be Universalist.

Fifth. All things are determined by the cause of foreknowledge.

This would be far down the line. I can not believe in a God who knew in advance of the rise of Germany and the associated murder of the Jews and did nothing to stop it. And Somehow these atrocities are worked together for Good.

- The difference between good things and bad things is more than a Godly Bingo game.
- Lastly is what I would call the deterministic position.
- There would be nothing for me to do. God chose, I don't have to.

This belief structure would be Calvinist or Reformed.

Conclusion of tonight's Study

What shall I say then?

I live in a hope of deliverance toward the glory that will be mine. I live with a purpose to conform myself to the image of Jesus. Only the saved, the justified have this hope, the prospect of deliverance in a life of suffering. Oh, for the day when the Children of God will be revealed. For that day when I can take my rightful place of acknowledgment. For that day when I will receive the full privilege. In this hope we have a faith that my sins are forgiven, that I am adopted. It is a hope in a calling to a God-loving and purpose-driven life.

In the meantime, I wait. For that time when we like the nation of Israel will finally be delivered for all time from trials, tribulation, and war. To live in a time where there is no disappointment in my neighbors. To live in a time when all fear is gone. To a time when I will take my place as a son of God. To live in a time where all the redeemed will be one in perfect unity.

I earnestly crave with longing within my very soul to be a new creature. I want so much that my heart weeps and cries out for this renewed environment of God. I wait earnestly for that day. Because I know, I have an intimate knowledge that God is still working in me for good.

I wait earnestly for that day when I am conformed to the divine purpose. It is because of this hope I shall never give up to those who would try to separate me from God.

Romans 8:31-39 NASB

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring charges against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, but rather, was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, trouble, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Just as it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We were regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.