

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Tun your bibles with me to Romans 8

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter that that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write to the believers in Rome and to us here today – about the foundational truths of Christianity.

Our salvation – it is a work that He has done for us –

He reached out to us.

He came looking for us.

at the cross – It is finished!!!!

And because of the work of the cross – we can have peace with Him – we are no an enemy of God

And we can have intimate fellowship with Him as we abide in Him

He is Abba - daddy

Our sanctification

Again – it is a work that He does – as we lean on the Holy Spirit – as we allow Him to lead us – His work results in that we begin to look a little bit more like Jesus.

Some of this work is done from the inside.

And some of this work is done from the outside – through the circumstances and the difficulties that God allows in our lives –

That is why the promise of Romans 8:28 is so amazing and phenomenal –

It is a promise that we should all embrace.

That is why we spent all last Sunday on this one verse -

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

So – we know what the promise is – we just read it

And we know who the promise is made to

Remember – it is not a blanket promise –

It is a promise that is reserved to the believer – the ones who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ

In our text this morning – Paul is going to give us two more reasons why we should embrace Romans 8:28 –

He is going to remind us of Who the promise giver is –

And he also is going to give us the reason for the promise.

What is the end result – what is the destiny of the believer?

Let's pray...

I am going to go ahead and read the text –

And I am going to start from verse 28 – because these three verse are all connected

**[Rom 8:28-30 NKJV] 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to [His] purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Now –

As we I want you to circle these 5 words in our text –

Because there is a flow or a progression that we will see in our text – these words are all linked to Jesus and His work on the cross.

You may even want to write them down separately.

Foreknew, Predestined, Called, Justified, Glorified

Let's look at our text –

**29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.**

The reasons that Romans 8:29 is so important is that –

the reason that we can have complete confidence in verse 28 is because of all that is contained in verse 29

For whom He foreknew – since God is omniscient and He knows all things, we can trust Him.

We can trust Him in the good times.

We can trust Him in the bad times.

And we can trust Him in the in between times.

Why? Because He knows.

Nothing takes Him by surprise

Nothing knocks Him off the throne

You see loved ones – a promise is only as good as the person that gives the promise – so we need to know who God is and who it is that gives us this glorious promise.

And so Paul reminds us that our Promise Giver is the God who foreknows.

Turn with me to the left to Acts 26 –

Because here in Acts 26 – Paul actually uses the same word that he uses in Romans 8:29 for foreknew –

And here in Acts 26 – we find Paul sharing his testimony for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in the book of Acts – this time before King Agrippa

Look at verse 4

**[Act 26:4-5 NKJV] 4 "My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5 "They knew me from the first (this is the word foreknew), if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.**

Paul is telling Agrippa here that the religious rulers – they knew Paul before he was a Christian.

They knew what a zealot he was

They knew his devotion to the law

They knew he was a pharisee of a pharisee

But God..... had other plans for Paul

In the same way – God foreknew the believer

He foreknew you and me

He foreknew every mistake we have every made

He foreknew every mistake we will make, every failure, every stumble, every time we chose to rebel against Him and pursue our own will instead of His perfect will He has for us.

He foreknew.

And He still loves us

**[1Jo 3:1 NKJV] 1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.**

And because we are His children – we know that we know that we know - that all things work together for good to those who love God.

When did God foreknew –

Before everything began!

Turn your bibles with me to Ephesians 1

**[Eph 1:4-6, 11-12 NKJV] 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the**

**good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. ...**

Jump to verse 11

**11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.**

So, think about this –

If He knows all –

He knows the outcome – He knows the end result.

We may not know – we may not understand – but He does.

Even before we were born – we already existed in the mind and affection of God!!!!

Now, we have to keep this in context –

For whom He foreknew – is in reference to those that the promise of Romans 8:28 – is made to -

**to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**

And the reason that this is important is because Paul also says – that these are also those that God also predestined.

Predestined means to predetermine, to decide beforehand, to foreordain, God, in advance, independent of you and me, knowing you – knowing me – He still chose us, He called us, He elected us.

Who did God predestined?

Those He foreknew.

The believer

God plan for the unbeliever is that they repent and place their faith and trust in His Son

But God also have a predetermined plan for the believer –

And the one thing that leads the believer to doubt God's plan in their life is that they doubt God's goal for their life.

I am going to say it again - the one thing that leads the believer to doubt God's plan in their life is that they doubt God's goal for their life.

And that goal – is to make us like Jesus

The believer has been predetermined / predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Question – does this mean that God's purpose for our life is to be like Jesus? Yes!

Can this be achieved if I try really really really hard or follow a list of rules? No



It is a work that He does – in us and through us

He reproduces in us the character qualities of Jesus

What are the character qualities of Jesus????

We find them in the gospels

How did Jesus act?

How did Jesus speak?

What did Jesus do?

What did Jesus refrain from doing?

Paul provides for us a list in Galatians 5:22-23

**[Gal 5:22-23 NKJV] 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

To the church in Corinth

Paul provides a beautiful description of love -

**[1Co 13:4-7 NKJV] 4 Love suffers long [and] is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but**

**rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

If God is love, and Jesus is God, then it's not that big of a stretch to take the word "love" and substitute it with "Jesus" in the passage.

As we read through it this way, it makes total sense.

Jesus suffers long [and] is kind; Jesus does not envy; Jesus does not parade itself, Jesus is not puffed up.

But -

When I put my own name in there, it doesn't quite fit.

But God is conforming me into Jesus' image.

This is what He's making me to be.

Shaping into an image isn't really a pleasant thought.

It means that some areas are going to be pushed and molded.

Some things may need to be cut off or trimmed. Some other areas may need to be added.

Some areas may need a total overhaul.

But this is what God is trying to do in our lives.

You see loved ones –

What Paul is telling is that as we live our lives – that all of the circumstances that we face day in and day out –

God is using all of them –

To give us a heart like Jesus

to make us more loving

To make us more kind

To make us more selfless

To make us more like Jesus

The question that Paul invites us to ask this morning is this –

Will God's plan for my life (as a believer in Jesus Christ) succeed?

Absolutely –

How do we know?

Because God's plan is safely contained in His foreknowledge.

Paul is clear –

God is the designer and planner – it is His plan



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And therefore, all who continue in His plan – by loving God, will finish in the plan.

That is the promise.

Now – the enemy might sometimes whisper in our ears – you're a failure, you're a hypocrite, you're a loser – you're not going to make it.

You are never going to be like Jesus.

But God's promise – you will be like Jesus

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son,

God has initiated the plan, God has perfected the plan and God has all the resources of heaven and earth to make the plan come to pass.

And if God has determined that you and I are going to be saved, then God has determined that you and I are going to be kept.

This is Paul's way of saying – that God knows the beginning, the middle and the end.

I try to see my mom at least once a week –

And this past week – as I was sitting with her talking, I was facing the refrigerator.

And on the refrigerator – my mom – like many other moms – she has pictures.

And as I look at some of the pictures – I am reminded of the times that I spent with that loved one – and I was reminded of the times when I was younger, with more hair.

But here is where I am going with this –

He has a perfect plan for each & every one of us.

He already sees what we will become when all is said & done & He's at work in us by His Spirit to turn us into that glorious ideal.

If God has a refrigerator, He'd have our picture on it, but it would be a picture of what we'll be when the Holy Spirit has finished His glorious work.

Why is He going to make us like Jesus? For His glory!

**[Rom 8:30 NKJV] 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

I like the way the NLT has it –

**And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.**

In John 10 –

Jesus reveals to His disciples and to us one of the “ I Am” declarations that He is the Good Shepherd

**[Jhn 10:3-4, 27-28 NKJV] 3 "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 "And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ... 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.**

Our spiritual maturity is summarized in Romans 8:30

This is how we go from those He foreknew to predestined, to being justified and then glorified.

It all begins with God's call.

Our faith would accomplish absolutely nothing if there wasn't an objective offer from God for it to respond to.

Our salvation begins with God. He calls, only then can we respond.

**[2Th 2:13-14 NKJV] 13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

For the believer – God chose you, God chose me

God called you – God called me.

Do you remember when God called you???

October 25<sup>th</sup> 1991 – Friday afternoon 4:15 PM

Sitting in the assistant pastor's office

He says the words

Jesus loves you – and those three words broke me

And I just broke down.

I thought the world was the problem

I thought everybody else was the problem – my parents, my boss, my classmates

I was self righteous

I thought I was good but in reality I was broken and in desperate need of a Savior.

He foreknew, He predestined, He called, He justified.

**[Rom 5:1 NKJV] 1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

The bible speaks of our need to be justified –

Because we are sinners by nature and by choice

Justification means that God is completely satisfied with the sacrifice of Jesus and that we have accepted Him –

**[Rom 3:23-24 NKJV] 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,**

And so what Paul does here in verse 30 is that he connects the dots.

Those who have been justified, those who have a right standing with God because they have placed their faith and trust in Jesus – they will also be glorified.

This is the perfect conclusion to what begins in v. 18 as Paul tells us what our perspective on life ought to be.

He says the sufferings of the present are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall soon be eternally ours.

Here in v. 30, that glory which is God's end game is so sure, Paul speaks of it in the past tense.

God's plan for you & I to come to perfection is so sure Paul speaks of it as a done deal.

it's going to happen – and from God's perspective, it already has.

Remember the five words I had you make a note of –



Did you notice the connection, the progression?

Foreknown – Predestined – Called – Justified – Glorified

God doesn't lose a single person in this process.

The idea is that if we are "foreknown", we will be "glorified".

If we start, we'll finish.

We have an Awesome God. He knows what's up ahead.

He's prepared for it.

He cares for us and loves us

And He has promised to take us through.

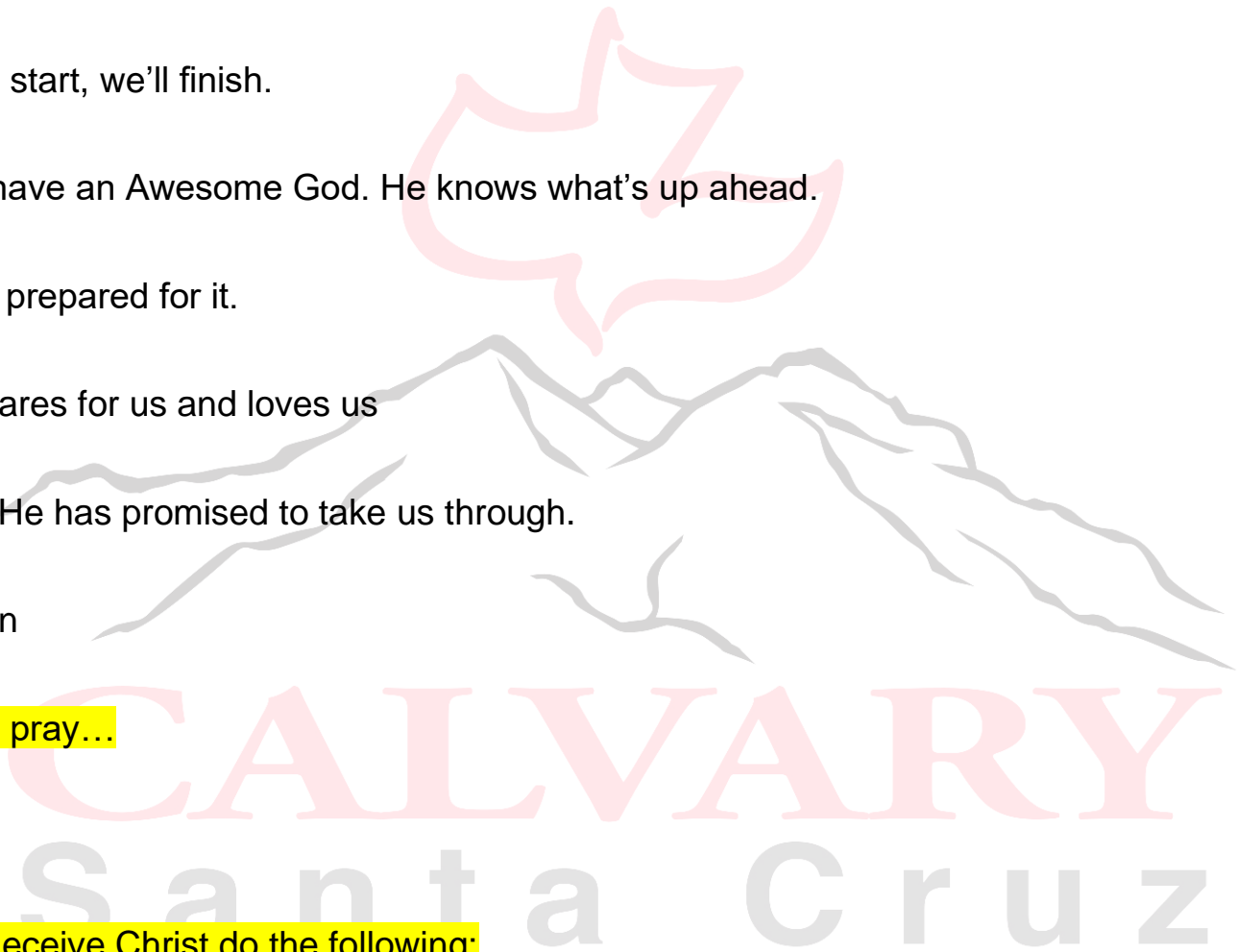
Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.



Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

I was reading a story the other day about the heroes of the Alamo – I had a friend who had just been there in December – The U of A had their bowl game there

And the article was talking about the lesser known heroes –

We all know Davy Crockett

James Bowie

But there were many lesser known people

And there are plaques and bronze statues with the portraits of those who fought and were killed

And on the plaque of one of the old dead dudes – it says that the portrait that is there does not belong to the name – maybe the guy was camera shy or didn't like sitting there why they painted his portrait – so on the plaque it says that the portrait belongs to the old dude's nephew who looked just like him. The family had donated the portrait so that people would know the appearance of the man that died for their freedom.

Here is the point –

The world has no portrait of Jesus

And we are the nephews.

God is at work in you and me to give the world a likeness of His Son who sets us free.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'