

Conformed into His Likeness

Romans 8:28-30

“These verses introduce us to five great doctrines: (1) foreknowledge, (2) predestination, (3) effectual calling, (4) justification, and (5) glorification. These five doctrines are so closely connected that they have rightly and accurately been described as ‘a golden chain of five links.’ Each link is forged in heaven. That is, each describes something God does and does not waver in doing... The first two are concerned with God’s eternal counsel or past determinations. The last two are concerned with what God has done, is doing, or will do with us. The middle term (‘calling’) connects the first pair and the last. These doctrines flow from eternity to eternity. As a result, there is no greater scope given to the wonderful activity of God in salvation in all the Bible.” Boice

- I. The **“good”** that God brings about for those of us who love him is to make us more like Jesus. **Everything** that occurs in our lives, whether good or bad, is used by God to shape and form our character to be more and more like the character of his Son. His purpose, is to deepen our relationship with him and to strengthen our witness before others through the process of sanctification.

Rom. 8:28

2 Cor. 3:18 *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

- II. Our salvation has been carefully orchestrated by God from eternity past. In love, he determined whom he would call, regenerate, justify, sanctify, redeem, and adopt into his family to enjoy him and his kingdom forever and ever. We, as his children, are recipients of a salvation we do not deserve, and the mystery of why he chose us is beyond our understanding. Our only response should be to humble ourselves before him out of love and appreciation as he continues to conform us into the likeness of his precious Son, our Savior.

Rom. 8:29-30

A. God foreknew us before we were even born. He entered into a relationship with us, loved us and intimately knew us because it was his sovereign will to do so. He knew our personality, our likes and dislikes, our hearts and our inner most being from time immemorial.

2 Tim. 1:9

1 Peter 1:1-2

*“God ‘foreknew’ (**proginōskō**) them, which is to say He knew them intimately even before they were born. The root verb **ginōskō**... describes a scrutinizing knowledge that goes beyond mere awareness. When used of people, the verb depicts thorough knowledge of one person by another.” Swindoll*

***Jer. 1:5** “Before you were formed in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”*

B. God predetermined our destiny before we were even born. Our salvation became his choice, not ours. He chose to give us eternal life and conform us into the likeness of Jesus simply because he wanted to.

Eph. 1:3,11

***proorizō** = to predetermine, decide beforehand. In the NT of God decreeing from eternity, to foreordain, appoint beforehand.*

“Those the Lord knew intimately and actively beforehand, He appointed in advance to become like Jesus in their character. Thus, the one and only Son of God would become, as it were, the eldest brother of all those the Father adopted.” Swindoll

C. At just the right time, God drew us to himself and awakened our hearts to our need of salvation by witnessing to us through his Word and through those who had already come to know him. In his eternal purpose, it was time for us to be justified and declared righteous in his sight so that he could begin a good work in us to prepare us for our glorification.

John 6:44

Rom. 4:25

***Phil. 1:6** being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it onto completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*