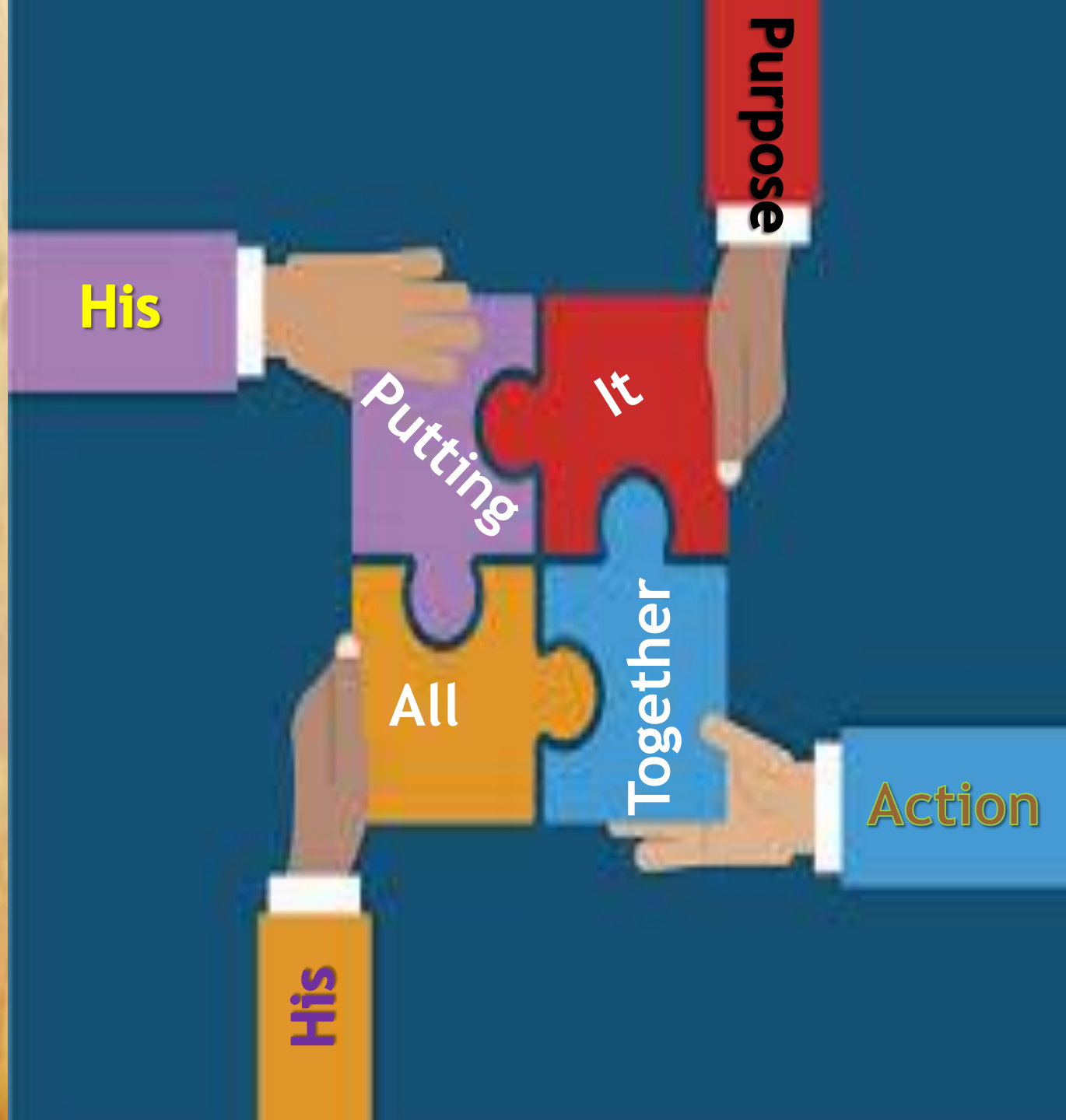


ROMANS 8:28-30



ROMANS

8:28-30



²⁸Now we know that to those loving God, all things work together for good, to those being called according to [His] purpose. ²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰Those then whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; then whom He justified, these He also glorified.

ROMANS

8:28



God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)

²⁸Now we know that to those loving God, all things work together for good, to those being called according to [His] purpose.

Paul begins this section with his third “...we know...!” It’s a very skillful way of carrying along one’s readers as Paul moves forward. It also is assuming their agreement! So in spite of present sufferings (v.18), own groaning (v.23), and the insufficiency of prayers (v.26), we have the whole of this verse!

ROMANS

8:28

God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)

²⁸Now we know that to those *loving God*, all things work together for good, to those being called according to [His] purpose.

Note that the recipients are described in active terms as those who have responded to the love which God has poured out into their hearts (5:5) by “*loving God*” in return. It should also be noted that this is the first time that St. Paul uses the verb “*to love*” (ἀγαπάω). In the text he uses a present participle: ἀγαπῶσιν.

ROMANS

8:28



God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)

²⁸Now we know that to those **loving God**, all things work together for good, to those being called according to [His] purpose.

The description of God's people in terms of their love for Him does have a very rich OT and Jewish background. Its reference would take the congregation(s) in Rome back to Dt. 6:5, which Jesus reflected upon in St. Matthew 22:37, 38!

ROMANS

8:28



God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)

²⁸Now we know that to those **loving God**, all things work together for good, to those being called according to [His] purpose.

Additionally, by St. Paul's use of this participle, he isn't commanding their love (that they must love God), nor is he using love as a restrictive (only if you love God). In reality, Paul is pointing to the love of Christ Jesus that qualifies you and is met through Him. In other words, whenever human love for God exists, the progression which begins and continues through verse 39 profoundly explains what lies behind and reinforcements it – God's love for you!

ROMANS

8:28



God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)

²⁸Now we know that to those loving God, *all things work together for good*, to those being called according to [His] purpose.

“...all things work together for good...” reminds us that all that is truly good is from the hand of God, the giver of every good and perfect gift (cf. James 1:17). Note, though, that Paul doesn't say that *“all things” are “good!”* He does not imply that everything which happens to you in this fallen world comes directly from the hand of God, as if God can be blamed for whatever wickedness or dissatisfaction you may encounter. Yet, be careful, this does not dismiss the Biblical teaching that our Lord is omnipotent and that He remains in control over His entire creation, which also includes evil.

ROMANS

8:28



**God's Good
Purpose
(v.28)**

*²⁸Now we know that to those loving God, **all things work together for good**, to those being called according to [His] purpose.*

You are reminded that all the tragic events in your life in the past, present, and future are a direct result of sin and creation's enslavement to corruption (v.21); for all intents and purposes, this may seem to you as being contrary to God's will for you. But Paul has already addressed this in 5:12; so sin, corruption, and the devil are responsible and the blame of all wickedness!

ROMANS

8:28

God's Good
Purpose
(v. 28)

²⁸Now we know that to those loving God, all things work together for good, *to those being called according to [His] purpose.*

We will address God's calling in v.30, but for now as we read in v.28: "...to those being called according to [His] purpose" we leave this verse and hear from Chrysostom as he addresses the calling of God: "The calling was not forced on anyone, nor was it compulsory. Everyone was called, but not everyone obeyed the call."¹

¹Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle to the Romans* 15. Bray, *Romans*, ACCS, NT 6:234.

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹**For** those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

Paul provides a lengthy explanation by the use of a rather long “for” (ὅτι) clause where he uses five past tense (aorist indicative active verbs) in vv.29-30 that makes it very clear Who “...called according to His purpose...” and Whose action is efficacious. The two verbs used in this verse are shown next with details:

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹For those whom *He foreknew*, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

+ “*He foreknew*” (προέγνω): Those God called He already had foreknowledge of their character. His foreknowledge is more than superficial; rather, it is deeply intellectual and emotional. The root Greek word shown is actually translated from the Hebrew “*to know*” (ed1y2). It is a much deeper knowledge based on a profound intellectual, emotional and intimate relationship that God established!

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹For those whom **He foreknew**, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

In actuality, both Greek and Hebrew words for “*to know*” or “*to have foreknowledge*” is synonymous with love!

To summarize: the main emphasis of God's foreknowledge is on the Divine initiative God took in establishing Baptized believers in Christ as His own dear children!

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹For those whom He foreknew, *He also predestined [to be]* conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

+ *“He predestined [to be]”*

(προώρισεν): Those God called and had foreknowledge of He “*pre-established*” or “*predestined*” to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Of note, this word, when used in the NT is always used in the context of a Gospel word, since it expresses God’s gracious action. To fully comprehend both of these actions of God, let’s review Eph. 1:4, 5.

ROMANS

8:29



God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)

²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

Therefore, what you have already confessed from the Nicene Creed this morning that Baptized believers comprise and belong within “the one holy catholic and apostolic church” is absolutely true!

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹For those **whom** He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

Paul proves that he is not addressing some abstract purpose , but instead, is addressing God's actual purpose for people, since he uses a relative pronoun ("*whom*" – οὓς) preceding the verbs.

Paul is describing all those to whom the whole chain of verbs, in this verse and also v.30, applies. Therefore, the verbs that you have seen and will see cannot and should not be seen as isolated actions.

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.*

(Before Time - v.29)

Yes, dearly beloved, you have been chosen beforehand! Why?

So that you might be, “...conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.” As Paul has done repeatedly, he again draws our attention squarely on Christ Jesus. He does this by interrupting the sequence of the past tense verbs with the use of an adjectival phrase and an infinitive clause.

ROMANS

8:29



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] firstborn among many brothers.

(Before Time - v.29)

This is very important for you! How so? Notice that Jesus is to be the firstborn among the “*brothers.*” In other instances of Him being the “*firstborn*”, Jesus is the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15) or from the dead (Col. 1:18 and Rev. 1:5). But here, upon your resurrection on the Last Day, you will be “*conformed to His image*” and He will be declared the “*firstborn of the brothers*”, which expresses the unique and pre-eminence of Jesus and also the fact that He will share His privileges with His brethren...with you!

ROMANS

8:30A



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

^{30a}“Those then whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified...;”

(Within Time - v.30a)

Paul now resumes his use of the past tense verbs and retrieves the last past tense verb from v. 29 to lead his discussion into God's call.

Notice, though, that Paul no longer uses the prefix (προ-) “before” as in v. 29. Paul now shifts from the past to the present, in time, as it is experienced, as God's action is performed toward man, toward you.

ROMANS

8:30A



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

^{30a}“Those then whom He predestined, these **He also called**; and whom He called, these He also **justified...**”

(Within Time - v.30a)

The first verb is: “He called” (ἐκάλεισεν): Only those spoken of as “called” by God are those who have listened to His voice as addressed to them in the Gospel; hence, these are they whom God has enlisted in the service of Christ. Remember, God’s call is resistible. It is misleading to suggest that God’s call cannot be rejected! His Gospel call has been, is, and will be many times over (cf. Rom. 10:16-21). However, God’s purpose in His “call” is that it will elicit repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, leading to eternal glory in His Kingdom, which is being portrayed by the sequence of these past tense active verbs!

ROMANS

8:30A



God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)

^{30a}“Those then whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these **He also justified...**”

(Within Time - v.30a)

Paul continues with next verb: “*He justified*” (ἐδικαίωσεν): Literally, it means to be cleared of *all charges and deserved punishment related to their sins by the Lord!*

Once again, a past action, and one that He also pronounces in time (Holy Baptism into Christ Jesus; followed by the Means of Grace and also Holy Absolution)!

ROMANS

8:30B



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

^{30b}“...then whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

(Beyond Time - v.30b)

Paul concludes this section with the final past tense active verb: “He glorified” (ἐδόξασεν): This verb clearly refers to your future, end-times glory; which, makes this a very surprising verb for Paul to use!!! Why?

Remember, God transcends time, therefore, the act which “He glorified” describes an act that already stands as accomplished, since God has declared for it to be so! It has not yet, though, happened from our perspective who are bound by time. So again, we have the now, but not yet paradigm, a Divine paradox, that can only be understood by God’s baptized children.

ROMANS

8:30B



**God's Action
Before,
Within, and
Beyond Time
(29-30)**

^{30b}“...then whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

(Beyond Time - v.30b)

To fully understand this verb in its proper meaning speaks volumes: properly, to ascribe *weight* by recognizing real *substance* (*value*).

Therefore, God brings a heavenly dignity and condition! This can only be understood in the manner which Paul uses this verb and that it is rooted in Christ Jesus. Your destiny, your eternal future has already been glorified; so then, in Jesus, your glorification has already been accomplished.

Addendum

A vertical cross is positioned on the left side of the slide, set against a misty, golden-brown background that resembles a landscape or a sky at dawn or dusk. The cross is dark and simple in design.


Verses 29 and 30 causes many a heartache, due to **false teaching**! Paul begins with the teaching of predestination and God's foreknowledge. These two truths are not meant to answer the unanswerable question, "*Why are some saved and not others?*" John Calvin, a reformer who lived in the decades after Luther, tried to answer that question by **falsely teaching** that God predestined some to be saved and others to be damned (double predestination).

Addendum

A vertical cross is visible on the left side of the slide, set against a misty, yellowish background that appears to be a landscape or a church interior.

A contemporary of Luther, who still has great influence on many denominations today, is Ulrich Zwingli. Zwingli taught that double predestination isn't the answer, but **free will**. Zwingli wasn't the first to promote this; Erasmus gave Luther all kinds of fits with this false teaching. So Luther wrote his famous volume *"The Bondage of the Will"* in response to Erasmus's claims. Basically, Ephesians 2:8-10 summarize Luther's whole argument.

Addendum

A vertical cross is positioned on the left side of the slide, set against a misty, golden-hued background that appears to be a landscape or a sky at dawn or dusk. The cross is simple and dark, standing out against the lighter, textured background.

So why are some saved and not others, if it's all by the work of the Holy Spirit?

The Lutheran answer: We don't know because God did not tell us! We will be content with that, since God would have us be content!

Addendum



Holy Scripture clearly teaches that God desires ALL to be saved. Election, as taught by Paul, is to be a comfort *for believers* that assures you that God has always desired your salvation and will also bring it to completion (please note the sequence of God's work in our concluding slide to follow). Paul simply wants to make sure that his readers know that salvation is from start to finish the work of God.

Conclusion



This section can actually be summed up this way: Jesus is the firstborn of the whole sequence. God's purpose for you stands fulfilled in Christ Jesus! God knew you relationally beforehand in Jesus; He chose you beforehand in Jesus; He called you in Christ; He declared you righteous in Christ. You, Jesus' brother (co-heir) await the day when He will share the glory He already has "*among many brothers.*" Then you will be glorified with the Glorified Christ Jesus!

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**



Next Week

ROMANS
8:31-39

WHAT THEN SHALL WE SAY
TO THESE THINGS?



ROMANS 8:31