

**Date:** 30.08.2020

**Time:** 11am

**Service taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Reading:** Romans 8

**Text:** Romans 8: 29-30

**Outline: The order of salvation**

a) Introduction

1. God's foreknowledge

2. God's predestination

3. God's calling

4. God's justification

5. God's glorification

## **The order of salvation**

- **Introduction**

**Apostolic comfort:** Paul's purpose is to encourage the believers. Paul reminds us of the struggle against sin and how we fail to obey God's commands and continue to do what's wrong. Paul shows us that thankfully salvation is not of our doing – there is no condemnation because we are united to Christ and He did what we could not do. Paul reminds us of reasons to be hopeful and joyful – the salvation of Christ, the Spirit of God working in us and speaking for us, God as the Father who has loved us and who we have access to. All is working together as part of God's plan for our good.

**Apostolic emphasis:** Paul turns to the gospel and reminds us about salvation. We're reminded of the importance of the gospel for believers. Paul reminds the believers of the salvation of God. Paul gives us the steps that God follows when He saves us. Salvation isn't an act of God, but the work of God. We see here the order of salvation and some of the main things involved.

### **1) God's foreknowledge**

Every Christian believes that God knows all things; He knows all that has happened, is happening and will happen. God is never surprised by what happens as He knows all things. God knows everything before it happens. God knows those who will believe, repent and those who will be adopted, justified and saved.

What is foreknowledge? There are occasions in the Bible when knowledge means theoretical knowledge. But more often in the Bible, knowledge is about acceptance and love. The devil knows so much about God, but doesn't have eternal life. Knowledge that brings salvation is for those who set their hearts on God, not those who know the facts about God. "God knows the way of the righteous" – God loved us. "Adam knew Eve" – Adam had known who Eve is before this; this is an intimate knowledge, this is love. Foreknowledge means that God loved us before the foundation of the world. God has loved us because He loved us. We are the object of God's delight, of God's affection, of God's love before the foundation of the world. He knew us in a different way from how He knew the rest of the world.

## **2) God's predestination**

This doctrine really divides the people of God. God predestines certain people for salvation. Some say they are Christians because they have chosen to believe and think it unfair that God has chosen some not to be saved. If you don't believe something that's in the Bible, that's a dangerous place to be. Before the world was created, we were destined for something, somewhere.

**To be like Jesus:** We have been destined to be conformed to the image of the Son. The purpose of God's salvation is for us to be conformed into the image of the Son. It's more than forgiveness, justification and adoption that we've been saved for, but to be like Jesus. God will transform us in such a way as to become like Jesus. When you're aware of who you are and who Jesus is, you realise how amazing and almost unbelievable that is. We've been predestined to be like Christ; to be righteous, without sin, loving, holy, obedient and zealous. He makes us like Jesus to have the same inheritance as Jesus. He is King of kings and our Great High Priest, and we are chosen to be conformed into the image of Christ.

**For Jesus:** By making us like Jesus, God makes us brothers and sisters and so we're given as family to Jesus. The purpose of this is that Jesus is the firstborn, not in terms of time, but in importance, authority and pre-eminence. This is so that Christ be glorified and honoured. We don't exist for ourselves; we exist for Christ and to give Him the glory.

## **3) God's calling**

Those God has chosen and predestined, He has called.

**External calling:** There is a call of God that is external and universal – that is the gospel. All men are called to turn from sin and to be invited into the family of God through the preaching of His Word. This is not the call that Paul is talking about here.

**Effectual calling:** The call Paul speaks about is to those who are predestined and that is not a universal call. This is an effectual calling; the work of the Holy Spirit that wakes us from our deadly sleep, and brings life where there is death, that brings light where there is darkness and reconciliation where there is war. Those who are predestined don't hear a man speaking to them, they hear God – sin becomes serious and Christ becomes precious. We're united to Christ by the

work of the Holy Spirit. I am a Christian because God has made me alive – God opened my eyes and removed the stony heart, to give me a heart of flesh. God gave me spiritual understanding. He gave me faith and repentance. He called me out of darkness into light. He has saved me. The people of Evanton need God to address them and to reach them in their needs, to awaken and to save them. We have to prayerfully reach people with the gospel. We ask God to do the work of saving for those about us in our communities and families. God will call all who He has predestined – we don't know who they are, but God does.

#### **4) God's justification**

*Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone (from the catechism).*

Justification is an act of God. It's not something that man does. It's done by God once and for all.

**Divine forgiveness:** God forgives us and pardons us of all sins. The Spirit of God makes us aware of sin and our deserving of Hell, but we're given a desire to be saved and hope in God. God forgives us from all sins, not some but all – past, present and future. We can fear that we won't ask God's forgiveness for a sin, but God has pardoned all our sins, even those we're unaware of and that we haven't done yet. If you have come to God, asking Him to save you in Jesus, you are justified – all your sins are cast into the ocean.

**Divine acceptance:** He accepts us as righteous. How can God who is just, holy and righteous justify unrighteous people? Christ is the answer. The life that we could not live was lived by Jesus and was imputed to us. What God sees is the righteousness of Jesus – He accepts and receives us. He declares us righteous. We talk about "accepting Jesus", but the truth is that "God accepted us" and that's what saved us. There is now no condemnation because you have the righteousness of Christ.

#### **5) God's glorification**

**Future:** Paul is looking to the future – this is a certain future. Our being in the likeness of Christ, enjoying Heaven with Him is certain.

**Certain:** As He has justified us, He will glorify us. Despite our unfaithfulness, despite our failings, despite us not doing the good we want to do we will be glorified. Nothing will separate us from the love of God.

We are known, predestined, called, justified and glorified. God did everything. Don't be afraid, believer. God will do all that you need. God began a work in you and will carry it on to completion.