

Foreknown, Predestined, Justified!

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[0 : 00] The last time I said this, I really meant it, but it didn't turn out that way. And I said something like, for the last time, turn to Romans 8.

This time I'm saying the same thing, but this time I really mean it. As is our custom, at the conclusion of a major portion of Scripture, we have been going back over it and consolidating the passage into one teaching session.

That is what we will be doing this morning. For any who are here with us who are thinking, my, he's really biting off an enormous amount of material, I agree.

But the portion that we are going to be studying has already been over, as we've already gone over it once, in about 15 to 20 congregational hours. So if anyone would like a more detailed exposition of the verses in question, I would suggest that they get those tapes.

Because in this particular session, all we will be doing is hitting the highlights and moving very rapidly. So hang on to your seats. And with that explanation, let's go to Romans 8 and verse 19.

[1 : 12] Romans chapter 8 and verse 19. We will be moving rapidly through these next 20 verses.

And we would encourage you to follow along in whatever translation is available to you there. I have long since concluded that the content of this portion of Romans chapter 8, for anyone who even slightly understands it, has to come across as utterly breathtaking.

It is an awe-inspiring passage of scripture. I am satisfied that there probably has never been a preacher live anywhere who has ever done justice to this text of scripture.

Perhaps we could say that about every text of scripture, but I think in this case it is even more emphatic. The content of these verses is exhilarating. It is comforting. It is encouraging beyond words.

And all of this content flows from the matchless heart of grace and love of God. Suffice it to say that if this portion of scripture is ever grasped, even partially grasped, it will end all debate and all controversy and all issues about the security of the believer.

[2 : 22] You really need nothing more other than what is set forth here in this chapter to finally and forever, in my estimation, put an end to the question, is the believer in Jesus Christ eternally secure?

There cannot be any doubt if we take this passage at face value, and I don't know how else to take it. So let us commence, if we may, with verse 19, where we see in verse 19 through 22 we have the first groaning that is mentioned.

It is the groaning of creation. Then we will be looking at 23 through 25, the Christian groaning, and then the spirit groaning in verses 26 through 27.

If you wonder, what is all this groaning about? What is all the sighing about? What's going on? The answer is, all of creation in general, and mankind in particular, is laboring under an enormous load. The load is going to be referred to later on in this passage as our weaknesses. It is in keeping with our fallenness, with the sin and disobedience of Adam that not only caused the image in which he was created to be marred, but it caused all of creation over which he had been established as head to fall with him.

[3 : 39] So that all of God's creation is groaning and sighing under an enormous burden, looking forward to the time when it is relieved of this load.

It is the results, the consequences of sin that is heaped not only upon a fallen mankind, but upon all of creation. Paul personifies creation.

He uses a legitimate literary tool called personification. It means that you take inanimate objects that have no will and no sensibility and no volition, and you speak of them as though they do.

It is like talking about a rock. Well, I guess we've even done that, haven't we? We've got pet rocks now. They're out. I'm glad.

I hope they don't come back anymore, but that's a mock kind of personification. It is talking about trees and rocks and brooks and streams and hills and mountains as though they are people.

[4 : 40] And Paul is saying that all of these things in creation are anticipating and looking forward to the revelation or the revealing of the sons of God. And that is because when man fell, when he became a fallen creature, he was living in an unfallen environment, and they were incompatible.

And because of the fall of man, God cursed all of creation. He cursed the ground. He cursed the animal kingdom and all that is in keeping with creation so that it would be compatible with man in his fallen nature.

Well, let us read it. Verse 19. For the anxious longing of the creation. Now, you would ask the question, well, how can creation long for anything?

We aren't talking about creatures so much as creation. Paul says, the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

You and I are the sons of God. And all believers who have lived before and will live after, they are the sons of God, the children of God. All of creation is waiting for the sons of God, the children of God, to come into their own.

[5 : 52] They are waiting for them to be revealed in all their glory. Because when they are, then all of creation will be shed of its burden and its load that it has been carrying under the curse as well.

It is the time spoken of in Acts chapter 3 that Peter referred to as the time of restitution of all things. You see, God is engaged in a great reclamation project.

He is in the process of restoring all things unto their original condition. You and I may differ somewhat and argue with the timetable that our Heavenly Father has designed, but make no mistake about it, it is perfect as He is perfect.

Everything is right on schedule. God is doing what He is doing today through the church, the body of Christ, and ultimately through Israel, His covenant people, to restore all of creation back to its original state.

And He is right on schedule with every particle of all of these things that are involved. We are told further in verse 20 that the creation was subjected to futility, that is, emptiness.

[7 : 03] That means that creation is incapable of providing and performing that for which God originally intended it. It means that all of creation is out of kilter, that things are lopsided and out of balance.

Things are not right. I think that man, regenerate or unregenerate, even realizes within himself that he is not a finished product.

There is something lacking, and there is. And Paul says it is the glorification of the body. You are only partially complete. Your spirit and soul have been redeemed through Jesus Christ, but your body is locked into this temporal life.

And the time is coming when it too will be redeemed. But it is not now. God isn't finished with us. He isn't finished with humanity, nor with any of creation. We are told that it was subjected to futility or emptiness or an inability to fulfill its desire, its intended purpose, not of its own will.

That is, creation isn't responsible for its own fault. But God brought creation down to where man was to be compatible with him. You see, creation doesn't have a will.

[8 : 12] The animal and vegetable kingdom, per se, has no will and no volition, can't make any decisions. But man, as an intelligent creature, can and did.

And when he did, he became estranged from his own environment, incompatible with it. And God came in and said, curse it is the ground.

And what did he say? For thy sake. For thy sake. And the thorns and the thistles and everything else that the earth brings forth is compatible with and in keeping with the fallenness of a lost humanity.

He brought everything down on the same par. You see, man is not now what he has evolved into being.

He is now what he has fallen into being. We are not on an upward climb as the evolutionist would have us believe.

[9 : 12] We have hit bottom. We're at the bottom now. Do you know where the bottom started? It started in Genesis 3. We've never gotten off the bottom. We're still on the bottom.

Look at this, if you will. This, by the way, is a great erroneous concept under which the majority of the world, and in this nation, under the majority of which, most people in positions of power are working and laboring.

And it's all built on a false assumption. Our educational institutions, our government institutions, are all operating on this basis as though this were true. But it isn't true.

And if you operate on a wrong premise, you're going to get all kinds of wrong conclusions. And brethren, we've got plenty of wrong conclusions. Here is the premise.

That man started down here as some kind of a one-cell amoeba, some little nothing, some slimy whatever, that climbed up on a muddy bank somewhere, who knows where, and that he evolved from this into this into this, and somewhere along here is the ape man, the cave man, and so on, you know.

[10:24] And he evolved, and finally we kept getting better and better, and climbing the evolutionary ladder until finally we arrived up here at Homo sapien, where we are now. My, look at us. We are the people.

It has been a long climb. It took us billions and billions of years to get all the way from there, clear up to there, but there's where we are, and man is getting better and better all the time, and all we need for man to be perfected is more time, more education, and more technology.

And boy, we'll have this world by the tail. We'll whip all problems. We'll whip this. We'll whip that.

We'll do this. We'll do... Sounds like a politician, doesn't it? Vote for me, and I'll... But the scriptures say that's not the way it was at all.

The way it was is, man started at the top. He didn't start at the bottom. He started at the top. He was made in the image of God.

And when he fell through disobedience, he fell this way. He fell down. This is Genesis 3. And here is man in the present day, and we are still living under the dictates of the fall in Genesis 3.

[11:32] All along here. This is where we are now. This is where we have been ever since Genesis 3. And when the church is raptured, or when the individual dies and receives a glorified body, and his body is fashioned like unto Christ's body, then we go this way, back up to where God intended us to be.

Man is going here. He is going to the top, not by his own effort and not by any evolutionary upward climb, but by the grace of God. He is going to be restored and will be what God originally intended him to be.

So all of this, you see, is a lesson in redemption. All of it represents what God is doing in humanity right now. Then he concludes by saying that God has subjected creation in hope.

That means in the absolute assurance that he will restore it and bring it back to what it was originally intended to be. God put creation down. Knowing full well he was going to bring creation back.

And he's going to do it through a process. The process involves the angelic spheres. It involves the body of Christ. It involves the nation of Israel. It involves all these key ingredients. He subjected it in the absolute confidence that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery.

[12:59] And man is the one who is responsible for enslaving it and himself from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We do not now enjoy that.

But we will. For we know that the whole creation groans, labors under a load, sighs. The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

This is the way the apostle describes it. There is intense labor and pain and agony involved. We live in a society, in an environment that, as the poet said, is red in tooth and claw.

Everything prays upon everything else. But the time is coming when this will be reversed. And when it is, it will be just as a woman is relieved when she is delivered of her child.

All of creation, Paul says, is groaning and laboring to bring forth a baby. And the baby will be the new world, the new society, the new heavens and the new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness and so on.

[14:13] And we are not deceived. We are very much aware that we are not there now, regardless of whose politics you follow or what philosophy.

It is up until this present time, Paul says, as of the writing of this in his day. So there is creation groaning, and this moves to the Christian groaning. And not only this, verse 23.

But also, we ourselves, we believers, having the first fruits of the Spirit. This is the down payment of the Spirit. We looked at that, and we discovered that the first fruits of the Spirit is God's guarantee or assurance that he is going to accomplish that which he has begun.

Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He has given us the earnest of our inheritance. That is the Holy Spirit.

And it is God's guarantee, having deposited the Spirit of God in you, that he is one day going to complete the transaction that he has begun. You see, he's already made a capital investment in you.

[15:17] And he is going to redeem the totality of the product. Bodily, as well as spiritually. And the guarantee of that is the Spirit of God who dwells within us.

He says, we, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons. What is this groaning? If you listen quietly, and put your ear to the bosom of the average Christian, can you hear any groaning?

Well, you'll likely hear a thump, thump, thump. I hope you hear a thump, thump, thump. Because if you don't, they've already gotten their glory.

But you won't hear them groaning. This groaning is an inward dissatisfaction, an inward discontent, an inward sighing, an inward realization that we are not finished.

Something's lacking. I am not all that I am intended to be. And Romans 7 makes that very clear.

The old man that is dwelling within is always vying for the ascendancy, always climbing back up on the throne.

[16:27] There needs to be an inward sensitivity to sin and having displeased our Heavenly Father. And when we do, we have that.

Call it conscience, the prick of conscience, call it the prompting of the Spirit inwardly, whatever you want to call it. It ought to be there. And we need an inner sensitivity to being displeasing to the Lord in and about anything.

Now we have that capacity. I have got enormous capacity for displeasing God. And I don't like that. But I do it anyway.

The time is coming, Paul says, when you won't have that capacity. Isn't that great? I'm realistic enough to know there's only one way that I'll be able to live without sin, and that's when I won't be able to sin.

But I'm able to now. Anybody disbelieve that? I didn't think so. My wife doesn't. The time is coming, however, when we will not.

[17:37] We will be entering into our adoption as sons. That is the ultimate realization, the actual placement. We are there spiritually. We've been adopted. Spiritually.

But we haven't been literally placed into that family in a physical way the way we will be in that redeemed body. And when we are, it's going to be a whole different ballgame. It is the redemption of our body.

That's the emphasis here, you see. God is moving toward a goal, Paul is saying. And he has not left the fruition of that goal to you. He is saying, no, no, there's too much at stake.

I'm not going to leave this to you. You'll mess it up. Oh, I won't mess it up. Yeah, that's what you said back in Genesis 3. You mess it up. God says, I have a goal in mind and I am going to operate on the basis of my plan and my program to meet my goal and I'm going to use you to do it.

But it won't be your effort and it won't be your wisdom and it won't be your expertise. It'll be mine. And you won't have any complaints. You'll love it when you get there. God is working this out.

[18:44] It is the redemption of our body. Our souls and spirits are already redeemed. He is saying, this is the completion of the package. For in hope we have been saved. Now, this word hope we've looked at before.

It has two aspects about it that are very, very significant. First of all, it is always connected with absolute certainty. There is no ambiguity in the biblical concept of hope.

There is nothing but uncertainty in our concept of hope. Anytime we say we hope, that means it could go either way. We don't know.

We hope it's going to be a nice day tomorrow. Maybe it will, maybe it won't. The Bible never uses the word hope like that. It is always an established certainty and it is always future.

Those two things about the biblical concept of hope. Always a certainty, always future. If it were not future, there's no point in hoping because then you have the present reality and hope is no longer

hope.

[19 : 47] The reason that it is always connected with certainty is because its fruition and realization is never contingent upon man. It's always contingent upon God.

And he who calls things that are not as though they were can use the word hope and it is as good as done. The future with God is as certain as his history.

There is no ambiguity. There is no doubt. God says here in Romans, this is what I'm going to do and nobody's going to stop me.

Nobody. I don't know about you, friends, but that provides real stability for my soul. All I can do is sit back and say, Amen, Lord. Go at it. And I'm going with you.

I'll pull all my ignorance and weakness and everything else along, but I'm coming to. And I'm not going to fight you in your program. And I'm not going to insist on getting a slice of the pie or get my two cents worth and you do it all.

[20 : 44] That's fine with me. I'm willing to be used in however you want to use me. And God says, The ultimate goal is mine and I'm going to do it. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen, that is presently here, is not hope, for why does one also hope for what he sees?

Listen, I'll tell you what this does not mean. Oh, this just burns me. I heard somebody talking about this passage of Scripture and they relegated this to a, I hope I will, have you ever heard anybody close out a prayer, and we hope to be saved in heaven at last.

Such blasphemy. That's all it is. Blasphemy. Blasphemy. Oh, I don't know if I'm going to heaven or not, but I sure hope so.

What they're saying is I can't trust God any more than I can trust me. And if that's their view of God, they've got every reason to be shaky. Doesn't mean that at all. We've been saved in hope that we, hope will make it.

I'm hanging on, doing the best I can. Oh, that's enough to, oh, terrible, terrible, terrible, terrible.

Gives me the willies. Let us move on.

[22 : 01] Verse 26 here is the Spirit's groaning. In the same way. Got a lot of groaning here. You know why? Because everything's out of kilter. That's why. The world doesn't need to be turned upside down.

It needs to be turned right side up. It's already upside down. Has been since Genesis 3. The same way, the Spirit also helps our weakness. Why are we weak?

Because we're fallen. We're not plugged in. We're not tuned in to the reality of God and His image. We are fallen creatures. We've got all kinds of limitations imposed upon us, all kinds of deficiencies, all kinds of ignorance.

Someone said, not only do we not know the future, there is a lot we don't even understand about the past. And some of us are in a fog in the present. No wonder we've got weakness.

That is just humanness. It's part of being what we are. I really like what he says here because I've found myself in this position so many times.

[23 : 01] The Spirit helps our weakness because we do not know how to pray as we should. Anybody ever been there? Sometimes I think I live there.

Our prayers are often not intelligent for we don't know what's good for us from one day to the next. But the Spirit of God does.

His prayers are always intelligent and they are always in accordance with the will of God. Now I want you to see this tied in here with God's great program of redemption. What he is saying is this. You do not know how to pray for what you need that will be for your ultimate spiritual good.

None of us do. But the Spirit of God who dwells in you knows what's best for you and he knows what your individual needs are as opposed to the next person and he will pray to the Father on your behalf regarding those needs and it is in the will of God and God will do it.

And you will have what you need for your spiritual life guaranteed. It's not left to chance. Not left to chance. So in the midst of my ignorance and weakness and this weakness is not physical weakness or it might include that but it certainly isn't principally that it is our lack of knowledge and understanding about the world around us about even our own heart which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

[24 : 40] The Spirit of God helps our weakness. the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words and he who searches the hearts that's the Father.

We've got the whole Trinity here in action for us. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All of these are actively involved in bringing the child of God to the goal that God has set for him.

The Father who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is because he, the Spirit, intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

This is enormously encouraging to me. Many of the things that I have had to pray about that were major decisions involving and affecting my life and my family's and other people's, I don't know how to pray.

I don't know how to pray. Now, there are an enormous number of things that are spelled out in Scripture in chapter and verse as to what the will of God is and when you find one of those, do it.

[25 : 46] Don't fool around praying about it. Just do it. You don't need to pray about God's will if he's already revealed it in Scripture. All you need to do is do it. Then it becomes even wrong to pray when you already know God's will.

But a lot of life's major decisions aren't covered by chapter and verse. And I don't know how to pray. A man may not know whether he should resign his job here and uproot his family and move six states away and take this job.

Where do you find that in Scripture? Where do you get guidance about that? You want to do the right thing? Well, yes, I want to do the right thing but I don't know what it is. Well, I'm convinced that the thing God holds us chiefly responsible for is our inner attitude.

attitude. And if you want to do the right thing and you're open to the right thing, do you know what my advice is? The same as St. Augustine's.

Love God and do as you please. Ever occur to you that God is giving you the desire of your heart? If you love God as you ought then what you do will be what is pleasing to him as well as what is pleasing to you.

[27 : 00] And many of these things can be decided by your own personal preference and your own personal choice. God may not care whether you work here or work there. Where do you want to work? Now, there are a lot of factors involved and each one is different.

No two cases are exactly alike. But what I'm saying is that many of these things are not as deep and dark and mysterious as we make them out to be. But despite all of that the spirit of God dwells in the believer and he prays in accordance with the will of God and all you've got to be concerned about is stay open and stay available and stay with the right attitude and then the ball is in God's court.

Beautiful. Beautiful. I've come to that a lot of times. Now, verse 28. This is the icing on the cake. We're in the middle of the cake but you know some cakes have icing in the middle too.

And that's what we've got here. And we know. This is Paul buttressing and shoring up his previous statements with this statement. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good. And we know. How do we know that? Well, we know that by experience. Well, I don't. There's a lot of these things that I don't know by experience. I think the only way that we know is because God says that that's the way it is.

[28 : 22] I don't know much of this from experience. Have you ever had difficult situations come into your life? Things that just absolutely bowl you over and you say to yourself, how in the world this could ever work for my good or anybody else's?

I don't know. I can't possibly see how it could. Not ever. And you never have yet seen how it works for your good. You may go on for weeks and months and years and you may never see how it works for anybody's good.

This side of glory. But that doesn't negate the promise that it does. You know the old story about sweeping the about the less than diligent housekeeper that sweeps the dust under the rug?

I have over the years developed an expression and many of you have heard it and some of you have heard it more than you want in private counseling and other. Well, they say, what am I going to do about this?

How am I going to handle this? What? And my advice frequently is I don't mean to be facetious. I don't mean to be unkind. But many times I say this because this is the only thing I can say.

[29 : 48] Just throw it under Romans 8.28 and keep moving. You can't believe how many things I've thrown under Romans 8.28. You can visualize a carpet, can you not, with dust that's been thrown under?

I've got this carpet called Romans 8.28 that's a mountain. It's got a big heap in it and I keep throwing things under there and there are a lot of them that I've looked for. What's the good that's coming out of this, Lord? Where is it? And heaven is as brass. There's no answer. But that doesn't mean there isn't any.

It just means that the Lord is saying, you'll get it. I'll show you what the good is. But I'll show you according to my timetable, not yours. Maybe it'll be tomorrow.

Maybe it'll be next week. Maybe it'll be when you see me. Then I'll tell you. But we know, not on the basis of experience so much, but on the basis of revelation.

[30 : 54] What do we know? that God causes. I love that. God causes. None of this nonsense. Things just kind of fall into place.

That's absurd. You've heard people say it. I've even heard Christians say it. They don't really realize what they're saying, I'm sure. But it is a favorite kind of cliché among unregenerate people.

Well, cheer up, take heart. You know what they say, all things have a way of working themselves out for the best. That is sheer baloney. At least in the case of the Christian it is.

Things just don't work themselves out for best. God works all things together. There is intelligence behind the working of those things. He is bringing the pieces of the puzzle together.

He's doing it. He's energizing. He's working them together. They don't just fall into place. No such thing as dumb luck. God takes a vested interest in every one of his children and he is actively engaged on behalf of every one of them to bring into their lives that which they really need.

[32 : 10] Whether they know it or not. Whether they believe it or not. Whether they like it or not. For he doesn't ask permission before he brings them, does he? all things work constantly and consistently.

They are not inactive. They are active for good. Good. Only good. Always good. Ever good. Not necessarily individual.

Say, I'm not telling you, oh listen, just buck up and put a smile on your face. face. So you got run over with a truck yesterday. That was a good experience.

It wasn't a good experience. It was terrible. Almost killed you. Hurts. It's painful. You experience all kinds of heartache and disappointment.

And nobody's saying these things are good. They're devastating. They just reach in and grab your heart and wrench it and you think you're going to bleed from the inside out.

[33 : 11] They are not good. Nobody is suggesting, nor is the scripture writer here suggesting that everything that happens in your life is good. But he is saying that God works all things together, together for your good.

In and of themselves they may be anything but good. But he's the master designer and he can put the package together. We told you about the lady who was in the kitchen baking bread.

She's got all these ingredients. Flour and water and shortening and yeast and salt and every one of them by themselves is yuck. Tastes terrible. But you give her a few minutes with those ingredients and the know-how.

And she puts this together and that together and she folds in this and she ends up with a big lump of dough and she kneads it and she pounds it and she folds it and she kneads it and she kneads it and the yeast begins working in it and she doesn't just put these things in any old way, in any old amount, at any old time.

They have to be the right ingredients. They have to be added in the right order. It is the timing also, not just the event or the ingredient. And then when she puts them all together and puts that thing in the oven and the heat gets to it, the heat's necessary too, isn't it?

[34 : 41] The fire of the oven is necessary, isn't it? The intense pressure and the buildup of the heat and then it isn't long until what do you have?

Ah, that aroma wafts throughout the household, fresh baked bread, is there anything like that? Oh, boy, that's good. It's a sweet smelling savor because somebody had the ingredients and somebody had the know-how putting them together and that's what God does.

God says, can you trust my ability to bake a loaf of human bread? How does he do all this?

Well, he's got a plan. God says, I have a particular methodology that I'm going to use to make sure that everything works together for your good and that you are going to arrive at the ultimate glorification that I've intended for you.

God says, I've got a formula. And here's my formula. It's coming up in the next verse. And it's something like this. F plus P plus C plus J plus G equals God's purpose.

[36 : 02] purpose. That's the way it works. God says, that's my formula. It is for knowledge plus predestination plus calling plus justification plus glorification equals the finished product.

God's purpose. This is where we're going. God's purpose. This is how we're going to get there. And he spells it all out. Beautiful, beautiful concept. Look at it, if you will, in the coming verses here.

For whom he foreknew. And this ought to be rendered because. And I tell you, you must see the connection between these verses. Let me do this. Let me read verse 28 and 29.

And I want to translate the word for, because. It's a good translation of the Greek. It really helps to establish the sense I'm saying there's a very vital connection between these two verses.

If you miss them, you miss the import of the whole passage. Now here's what he's saying. 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, because whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

[37 : 24] Do you see how that because works? And God is doing that. That's his formula for making sure that all things work together for your good, now and ultimately. You note the clarification of the audience.

It's for those who love God. Verse 20, it's not for mankind at large. Not for the world in general. All things work together for those who love God.

Who are those who love God? What's the supreme manifestation of love to God? If you do not hear anything else I say this morning, please hear this.

The supreme manifestation of your love to God is your obedience to him. if you love me, keep my commandments.

Jesus told his apostles, you really want to demonstrate your love for me? Keep my commandments. Young people, children, I want to tell you there is no greater way in the world that you can demonstrate and prove your love for your mother and father father more than by being obedient to them.

[38 : 44] That's the greatest possible thing you can do to show your love to your parents is by being obedient to them. That is the essence of love to God, is obedience to his will.

And for those who are as children of God, they have the promise that God is working all things together for their good. Now, let's take a look at this word foreknowledge, if we may.

I'm not going to put this on the overhead for time's sake, but it is a word that we've examined in considerable detail. It's prognosco, and it means to know beforehand.

But it is not to be diluted the way most people dilute it, which means to say that God knew about certain people beforehand. That is redundant. God has always known about everything and everybody beforehand from eternity past.

That isn't what it means. It has to do with an intimate knowledge, a personal relationship, an in-depth acquaintance. It doesn't mean that God knew about these people.

[39 : 48] There isn't anyone about whom God doesn't know. But it means that God knew these people personally, in-depth, intimately.

It is the same word that is used in connection with Joseph, knowing Mary in a husband-wife way, relating to personal, sexual experience and knowledge one of another.

Now that's pretty intimate. And that is just the way the word is used here. Whom he foreknew. He knew these people beforehand. Who? He knew all of the elect beforehand.

Beforehand. Eternity past. He knew you in a personal, intimate way. And because he knew you, he predestined you.

Now a lot of people have real problems with predestination, and I would simply like to inform them that their problem is not with predestination. It's with foreknowledge. Foreknowledge selects the people whom God foreknew.

[40 : 52] Predestination. No big deal. There's nothing there. All that predestination is saying is that God has predetermined what these people whom he foreknew are going to be.

He has foreordained it. He has predetermined it. He has made up his mind about it in advance.

That's what predestination means. It means the destiny is determined beforehand.

What's the destiny? Heaven? No, no. That's not what the context is. It is he predestined to be conformed to the image of his son. Who did he predestine to do that?

Everybody whom he's foreknown. Everybody whom he's foreknown. He has established as having the same destiny. They are all going to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

And only those whom he has foreknown. And you know what he did to make that a reality? When you were born physically and you came into reality in time and space, you reached a time in your life when you made a conscious decision for Jesus Christ.

[41 : 56] And you believed on him and were saved. Do you know why you did that? Because he called you. The reason he called you was because he predestined you. And the reason he predestined you is because he foreknew you. Why should he foreknow me?

I don't know. I don't know. But I'm not going to lose any sleep over it. I'm just glad he did. Why didn't he foreknow everybody? I don't know. I'm not God. I don't have to worry about that.

That's his bailiwick. And I'm not going to try to explain it or get God off the hook or try to keep him from looking bad. He is the sovereign God of the universe.

He can do whatever he wants. And I'm not going to find fault with it. I'm just going to preach it.

That's what I'm doing. So, there is a parenthesis, by the way, in verse 29, to become conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

And that means that Jesus might be the firstborn among many brethren. He is the first of a kind, and there's a whole bunch coming after him. And who are they? You, and you, and all other believers who've lived down through the ages.

[42 : 59] Jesus Christ is the trailblazer, and there are myriads who are following in his wake. then he slips back to picking up his thought in verse 30, having dealt with the parenthesis there in verse 29, which begins with two and ends with brethren.

And actually, we could read it this way, verse 29, because whom he foreknew he also predestined, and whom he predestined these he also called, that is, called unto himself.

This is the effectual call. This isn't a call, and nobody's listening. This is the call. Come unto me.

And you come. And the only reason you came was because he called.

You never came because you wanted to come. You came because he enabled you to come. He worked on your water. This thing started with him. It didn't start with us. The calling is in time.

The foreknowledge and the predestination is in eternity past. And the glorification is in eternity future. After he called us, do you know what else he did?

[44 : 07] He justified us. That means he pronounced us as righteous as Jesus Christ, and he placed us in union with the Son of God so that we are part and parcel of the Savior.

We are members of his body. He called us unto that, and he justified us. That means he took vile, wicked sinners who had nothing going for them, and he gave us everything, and he cleaned us up, and he made us presentable to himself, and he planted us in Jesus Christ, and we can never be moved from that by anyone or anything.

And he's called us and made us his own. And he did that all on the basis of grace, and I don't know why he did some and not others, but I know he did, and I know nobody would be there if he hadn't done it. Justified means there's nothing on the account against you.

You are just as righteous as Jesus Christ because his righteousness has been imputed to your account, and you're free.

that's justification by faith. And then he glorified you. Would you look at that? You know these are all in the aorist tense.

[45 : 25] I'm not glorified yet. Neither are you. Glorified means when our body is fashioned like unto Christ's body. Glorified means without sin of any kind, without even a stain.

Glorified means that we will in a practical way be brought right up to the level as our position in Christ. Now we live up here positionally, seated with Christ in the heavenlies.

Where are we practically? Down here, wallowing around in the earth and its defilement and our sin and shortcomings and all the rest of it. But when we are glorified, then our reality will be up here.

Not only will we be up here positionally, we'll be up here practically. We will then have arrived, but none of us have arrived here. A man who said, shake hands with a man that hasn't sinned for 40 years.

A fellow did that to Dr. Walter Wilson and he shook hands with him and he says, my, my. Boy, I wish I could say that. A man says, yep, I haven't sinned for 40 years.

[46 : 38] I bet you're proud of that. Sure am. That's blasphemy. Anybody who says they haven't sinned for 40 years, they don't have any idea what sin is.

They've got a low view of sin. The glorified is aorist, even though it is not a reality because the God who calls things as though they are, even though they are not, is behind the glorification and it is as good as done.

And then Paul comes to verse 31 and he says, well, what shall we say to these things? I would translate this not wanting to do any disrespect to the scripture or to Paul, people.

But I would, a Wiseman translation of verse 31 is, ain't that something? Wow. What do you think of that? What's your response?

You see what God has done for you? The sovereign God moving on your behalf to accomplish his will and to bring all things into your life for your own good. Isn't that something?

[47 : 50] What shall we say to these things? What's your response to that? If God is for us, who is against us? We pointed out to you that there are three, the big three are against you.

The world, the flesh, and the devil are all against you. The world hates you because it hates God and it hates Jesus Christ and it is not a friend of grace to help you unto God. The world is at enmity with God and it's at enmity with everybody who loves God.

Because you are marching to a different drumbeat and the world doesn't like that. John tells us that the whole world lies in the lap of the evil one. It's not your friend.

It's against you. And the flesh is against you. The flesh is that thing within me, within my heart, that wants to go its own way.

That is self-willed and self-pleasing. That's my flesh. And all it wants to do is go its own way, which is always the opposite of God's way.

[48 : 48] That's not my friend. The time is coming when God is going to root it out and it won't even be there. But it's still there. And it's active. And it climbs back up on the throne every time it gets a chance.

And then the devil. Ha ha. No difficulty in telling where he stands. He was against Christ. He's against us. And he always will be. But what Paul is saying is, listen, all that matters, all that matters, is that God is for you.

And if God is for you, though the whole host of hell be against you, it doesn't make any difference. Because God plus one is a majority. Forget about those who are against you.

If God is for you. He caps it off by saying, he who did not spare his own son. Does that prove he's for you? Doesn't that say that God's attitude toward you isn't, oh, oh, hum.

He's for you. He demonstrated how much he was for you in that he did not spare his own son. He made this enormous capital investment in you.

[50 : 02] It is as though God took everything he had and he wrapped it up into you. And the person of Jesus Christ whom he gave to you.

You represent the wealth of heaven because he has a vested interest in you. You are the purchased possession. You are of infinite value.

And because he has made this capital investment, how will he not also with him freely give us all things? This is an a fortiori argument.

It reasons from the greater to the lesser. And we saw that in Romans 5 with all of the much more.

And it means if God has done the big thing, the ultimate, can you not count on him to take care of all the little piddling stuff by comparison?

He has already made the great outlay. It is like a man who is a multi-millionaire who buys his wife a million dollar mansion.

[51 : 07] And then she says, well what about the furniture? He says, oh well forget that. I am not going to provide you everything. You say, how stupid. He went and paid out all that money for that big mansion. Now he won't even furnish it.

It is ridiculous. Well we can't charge God that way. God said, I will take care of all the maintenance. I'll take care of all the upkeep because I've made the capital investment and you can be sure I'm not going to let anything happen to it.

And who will bring a charge against God's elect? Who can lodge an indictment so that it will stick?

The only one who could do that is God himself. Can't be any of you people. I don't ever have to worry about any of you bringing an indictment against me.

Because you are not Mr. Clean. So I don't have to worry. There is only one person who can ever bring an indictment or a charge against me.

And that is the God of heaven. But he has already spoken and you know what he says? I am not interested. I have done something else. He cannot bring a charge against God's elect because God is the one who justifies.

[52 : 16] He's told us. He's not interested in bringing charges. He justified us. Fantastic. Is this security or is this security? I tell you and he is infinity.

Who is the one who condemns? The chapter opened with there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ. And then he goes on to develop that theme throughout this whole chapter. To assure there is no condemnation.

Why? Well because we're good people and we're nice and sweet. And all that. For those who are in Christ. In Christ. In Christ.

In Christ. That's why there's no condemnation. In Christ. The only one who could condemn is the very one who died and rose for us and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Consequently, therefore, in conclusion, who shall separate us? Is there any way, Paul says, that anybody can put space between us and the love of God?

[53 : 20] There are those who would try. Tribulation would try and distress and persecution and famine and nakedness and peril and sword. All those things would try to put an insurmountable gap between you and the love of God.

And any or all of these things may befall you. You may experience tribulation and distress and persecution and famine and nakedness and peril and like John the baptizer and Paul the apostle, you may experience the sword too.

But even if you go through all of those things, they will not separate you from the love of God.

Separate your head from your body. Separate your soul and spirit from your body.

But they'll not separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. As it is written, Christians are regarded as expendable.

That's what he's saying. The world places no value upon us. We're expendable like a bunch of dumb animals led to the slaughter. For thy sake we are being put to death all day long.

[54 : 23] We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. But in all these things, in all these things, not despite them, but in them. We are super conquerors.

Paul uses the word here. Super conquerors. We conquer above and beyond. In all these things.

And the in all these things means we, through the indwelling spirit and the power of God, these things that are against us are made to work for us so that in them we become conquerors.

They are actually turned and made to work effectively for us. So that that which was designed for our undoing is actually for our upbuilding.

And there is no way that a believer in Jesus Christ can lose. There's no such thing as a Christian loser. There are lots of Christians who think of themselves as being losers.

winners. But there is no such thing in the eyes of God as a Christian loser. Everybody's a winner. Everybody is a super conqueror through him who loved us.

[55 : 31] Only through him who loved us. Through him we are justified. Through him we conquer. And then he lists these extremities. And I'm just going to enumerate them. I am convinced. Paul says this isn't my personal philosophy.

This isn't my theory. This isn't my idea. I receive this by revelation. I believe this because God revealed it to me. I'm convinced consequently that neither death nor life.

The only two things that can hurt you. Death and life. Neither of them. Neither extreme. Nor angels nor principalities. Some take that to be good angels and evil angels.

Nor things present. Nor things to come. He's already dealt with the past. Nothing present. Nothing future. Nor powers.

Nor height. Nor depth. There are two more extremes. And then the last part is for the billy goats of the church.

[56 : 35] I don't know if we've got any billy goats here. And I'd like to think we don't have any billy goats. But we may. A billy goat is somebody who always has a yes but.

But. But. And they but this and they but that. And Paul says I've got something here for the billy goats. And that is. Nor any other created thing.

There you Philadelphia lawyers find a loophole in that. Nor any other created thing. nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Can separate us.

From the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And you may be sure. That it is not found anywhere else. Because Jesus Christ is the sole tributary.

For dispensing the love of God. And you won't find it any place else. It is the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[57 : 38] And it is yours if you are in Christ. If you are justified. All these things belong to you.

This my friends is a demonstration of the God of heaven doing all that God can do. To assure you and comfort you and stabilize you and provide for you and give you every cause for rejoicing.

And I care not who you are if you are a believer in Jesus Christ however insignificant you consider yourself to be you are right here on the top of the totem pole with every other child of God.

There are no degrees involved here. If you are not in Christ none of these things are for you. For we are told that there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ but for those who are not in Christ condemnation is all there is.

That is all there is. My plea to you would be for you to come to the Savior and put your trust and your confidence in Him and throw off your works and your righteousness and your good intentions and all the rest of it and look to Jesus Christ and Christ alone for salvation and for certainty.

[58 : 56] May we pray. Our Father we have been over this text and over it and we have found so much but we know we've missed more than we found.

We attribute that to the very nature of the revelation of our God. thank you for the scripture we can comprehend and thank you for what we don't comprehend.

And now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before His throne with exceeding joy to the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty dominion and power both now and evermore.

Amen. Amen.