

Sunday, Feb.7, 2010

Living Hope EFC

Art Smith

The Christian: Predestined to be Like Christ. Rom.8:28-30

PREDESTINED

Resolving the tension between **God's predestination** and **man's choice** has been a debate since Paul wrote the words in his epistles.

- Someone has attempted to resolve the problem using the **gates** of heaven. As we enter we see the words: "Whosoever will may come." Once inside we turn and see written above the gate "Chosen before."

Like Marriage:

Many a young man *thought* that he had chosen his wife, only to later find out it was she who had *first* chosen him. – Green, 116

Since chapter three Paul has been talking about the fact that **we must believe in Christ in order to have eternal life**. And once we believe it is a sealed deal: Justified, reconciled, sins atoned for, saved from wrath, united with Christ in death & resurrection, dead to sin, alive to God, heirs, joint-heirs with Christ, Sons of God, awaiting sure redemption.

In Chapter 8:28-39 – Paul causes us to see the ***other side of the doorframe: God's sovereign calling & predestination of the believer.***

The Concept of "being chosen" evokes different responses in us.

μ&ν: There are many times we don't mind if we are "sovereignly chosen."

- **EXAMPLES:** To win a million dollars. College scholarships. A new car. Hunting rifle. Trip to Disney Land. A makeover. A new home.
- The fact that we were *predetermined* to win, due to nothing we did to deserve it, doesn't bother us in the least! We are very happy!
- **Of course, if someone else is chosen & we're not, we can't complain. We have no claim to the prize. We are left in our current condition.**

Then too, we ourselves *predetermine* many things in our own lives.

ILLUS: Blueprint for a house. God is the Architect. (*Ryrie, 312.*)

No one chooses to build a house and is haphazard about what it is going to look like. A couple carefully chooses the floor plan, colors, etc.

- Each phase requires expertise. **GC** chosen. Contractors are chosen.
- **Each worker** will do exactly as the plan details (in a perfect world)
- **Each chooses** to do his part, but **the finished product** will match the blueprint and the owner's design.
- If someone were to get hurt (hit is thumb with the hammer) no one would blame the architect. **Choice** is involved in the process

IF we humans operate on the principle of **pre-planning** what we build on a finite level, **we should not be surprised** that God has done so on the infinite, eternal level. Would it not be more troubling to have a God who did not plan out and have control of the details of life & eternity?

2 Tim.1:9-10 God, ⁹who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,
¹⁰but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light *through the gospel*.

- The Father is the Architect who drew up the blueprints of eternity.
- The Son lays the foundation for eternal life. (I Cor.3:11)
- The Spirit is the general contractor- guaranteeing the Church' is built.
 - He convicts of sin, regenerates, baptizes, seals & empowers.
- WE – are the workers, who choose to be involved in God's work.
- When all is built- The Church will be exactly like God's blueprints.

POINT: When we talk about "**predestination**" we are not excluding the temporal "**means**" by which God carries out His divine design.

- Fatalism has no place for the personal or the importance of means.
- God's elect purposes include means, which are as essential as the ends. **God has designed human responsibility as part of the means.**

Rom.8:28. God is working all things for the Christian's good.

QUOTE: "We enter this chapter with no condemnation, we close with no separation, and in between all things work together for our good." McGee

1. God works "**all things**" for our good to those who love Him.

- God is the Architect, foundation and Builder of our lives.
- Dark things, good things, happy – sad, big – little, times of prosperity & need. R.A. Torrey called 8:28: "*A soft pillow for a tired heart.*"

2. God is talking about "**those who love Him.**"

- All mankind is divided into two groups: those who love God & those who do not. John reminds us, "we love Him because first He loved us." –1 Jn.4:10. We love Him because His love is in our heart **5:5**.
- NOTE: All things do not work for good – to **those who do not love Him–John 3:36**. Those who do not love God, cannot complain that God is unfair in not giving them eternal life. They chose to not love.

3. Those "**called**" according to "**His purpose**."

Two concepts bear great significance in this verse: called & purpose.

God has " called " the Christian (you), irresistibly, for His purpose!
--

Inherent in His calling us is authority guaranteeing our response to Him.

ILLUS: Parents calling a child in for supper.

- A child responds to his parent because of an innate sense of responsibility he understands toward those who created & own him.
- The words of a parent are invested with the authority of their position
- **SO...God's calling is given with His authority, & we will respond.**

God's Calling	Is by the Gospel	His Word contains His power to achieve	His children respond to Him
Supreme Authority, Creator, Savior	2 Thess.2:14 John 6:45 Rom.1:16	Rom.1:16 Heb.4:12 John 3:17-18	John 10:3,4 "His sheep hear His voice." -Jn 6:37 Acts 13:48

God's Calling is by the Gospel,

2 Thes.2:14

¹³But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because *from the beginning* God chose you to be saved *through* the sanctifying work of the Spirit and *through* belief in the truth. ¹⁴He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 6:45

⁴⁴"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who *listens* to the Father and *learns* from him comes to me.

Rom.1:16

¹⁶I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who *believes*: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile

What the N.T. has to say about God's (our) calling & purpose...

- We see a **Diving means, Human means** & God's **purpose & result**.

Rom. 1:6 (n) Purpose: To ***belong*** to Jesus Christ.

- 1:7 (n) Purpose: To be ***saints***.
- 8:28 (v) Purpose: V.29 ***conformed/ transformed*** to image of his Son.
 - **συμμορφους** – Intrinsic, essential change from inside out.

1 Cor.1:8-9 (v) Purpose: Called into ***fellowship*** with His Son.

- 1:24 (n) Divine means: ***Christ is the power*** & wisdom of God to us.

Gal.1:6,15 (v) Divine means: By ***His grace***. By His unconditional love.

1 Thes.2:12 (v) Purpose: Who calls us ***into his kingdom*** and glory.

- 5:24 (v) Divine means: "The one who calls you is ***faithful*** & will do it
- 2 Thes.2:13-14 (v) Purpose: Saved, ***share glory***. Human means: by gospel
- 1 Tim.6:12 (v) Purpose: ***Eternal life***, Human means: ***made confession***.
- 2 Tim.1:9 (v & n) Purpose: A ***holy life***. Div. Means: His ***purpose & grace***.

- This grace was given us before time began!

Spurgeon: "It was a good thing that God chose me before I was born, because he surely would not have afterwards." – Green, 116

Heb.3:1 (n) Purpose: A ***heavenly*** calling.

- 9:15 (v) Purpose: Receive an ***eternal inheritance***.

1 Pet.2:9 (v) Purpose: Chosen people, royal p'hood, from **dark into light**.

- 5:10 (v) Div. Means: *Grace*. Purpose: His **eternal glory**.

2 Per.1:3 (v) Div. Means: **Divine power**, His glory & goodness.

1 John 3:1 (v) Div. Means: God's love. Purpose: Sons of God.

Jude 1 (n) Div. Means: Loved of God, kept by Jesus Christ.

Rev.17:14 (n) Purpose: With Christ forever.

These are the glorious means and purposes for which God called you and me, His church. This is what it means to be "called."

No wonder Paul prays for us in Eph.1:17-19!

Barnhouse: "In eternity, before creation, God decided that He was going to introduce a plan of salvation that would center in the glory of Jesus Christ. He determined He was going to take us from earth to join Christ in glory. That involved our transformation.

God predestined us to be conformed to His Son's likeness because there is nothing in all the universe as lovely as Christ. He is going to populate eternity with replicas of His Son!

Although now, the practical distance between us and Christ is infinite, the spiritual distance has been bridged, and God's plan is coming to pass day by day as He brings His predestination into "calling, justification" and on the road to "glorification." - 164