



Romans 8:28-30

Salvation in Five Steps

One of the most amazing men I ever met was a Russian paratrooper in World War II who was wounded by German machine gunners who shot him down while defending his mother country. In his own words was an atheist. He had been taught from a child that there is no God. He was taught to believe in Marx and Stalin and the good of society.

When Germans invaded he was sent to defend his country. With the men under his command he was gunned down by machine guns before he hit the ground. As the bullets penetrated his body he realized death was imminent. He saw his comrades fall and die before his very eyes. Even then he clung to his atheistic philosophy. In intense pain he did not shed a tear. In fact, he didn't even cry when his mother died.

He was taken to the infirmary patched up and left to die. But he didn't die. Miraculously he recovered from his injuries. Later, he found himself in the barracks alone, freezing cold trying to light a fire with a piece of paper that refused to burn.

He began to read what was written on the paper, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). He continued to read these amazing words and other Scriptures printed on the Gospel tract. There in the coldness of the bitter night my friend bowed his head, with tears flowing from his eyes and believed on Jesus Christ as His own personal Savior. He later made his way to the U. S. and earned a doctorate in theology at a Baptist seminary and became a professor in a Christian college.

We read a testimony like that and think how amazing. How marvelous God worked in his life. However, the same thing is true in your life and mine.

God causes everything to work together for good to those who love God and are called by His purposes. Jesus stated God's eternal purpose in those verses we just read. The apostle John expressed it in John 20:31: "these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

The Apostle presents God's eternal purpose for our lives in Romans 8:28-30. "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. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He

these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified."

GOD IS SOVEREIGN.

The important truth in these verses is God causes it to happen. God caused all things to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes. It is not some haphazard evolutionary scheme. "In the beginning God . . ." It is not by accident that you are here today. If you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior it is not by accident or chance that you have come to know Him. It is not by accident that some of you have come today to this website and are reading this Bible study that was preached one Sunday morning in a church. A friend may have brought you, or your child is a part of our AWANA program, or someone invited you to come and worship with him or her. Whatever the invitation you are not here by chance. God brought you here. You cooperated with the Holy Spirit working in your heart.

I can never read this great passage the apostle Paul wrote without remembering Joseph's experience in Egypt. He was kidnapped, buried in a well, sold as a slave to a caravan and carried to Egypt, thrown into prison and forgotten by men. In summing up his whole life experience to his brothers who made all the evil possible he said, "Yea, but God sent me before you to preserve life . . . God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance . . . Now, it was not you who sent me here, but God . . . God made me lord of all Egypt" (Genesis 45:5, 7, 8). Then he sums up his whole life with these words, "And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive" (50:20).

These verses are great assurance for believers. Unbelievers rebel at them. They make no sense to those who do not love the LORD God. They go against their philosophy of life. It is sad to say, but there are many Christians who have let the lost world influence their thinking about this great promise of assurance and security to believers.

There is no greater assurance for the Christian when he is going through extremely difficult times than to remind Himself that God sees beyond today and He always has His eternal purpose for us clearly in mind. The Apostle Paul reminds the believer who groans because of the adversities in life of these precious words of encouragement in 8:28. "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."

The promise is "to them that love God." I repeat this promise is not for those who do not love Him. However, for those who love Him God causes "all things to work together for the good." The context in verses 18-27 is suffering and adversity. It is by God's providence that all things work together for good to those who love Him.

In the sovereign love and wisdom of God He causes all things to converge upon and contribute to the goal of

In the sovereign love and wisdom of God He causes all things to converge upon and contribute to the goal of our being conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. Even things that are evil in themselves are made to work together with the whole for our good and God's glory. Not one detail works in the end for evil to the people who love God. Only good will be the end lot of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes

The apostle Paul uses the language of certainty. It is with great conviction of experience the child of God can claim this promise. "Nothing will be found to work for the final good of the wicked, but all things must work together for the ultimate blessing of those who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.' . . . It is God who turns all things to the good of His children . . . even the sins of believers work for their good, not from the nature of sin, but by the goodness and power of Him who brings light out of darkness," writes Robert Haldane. Only God can do that!

The calling is the effectual calling of God the Holy Spirit who is working in men. Henry Alford explains in *Alford's Greek Testament* this effectual calling as "the everlasting purpose of God whereby before the foundations of the world were laid, He hath decreed by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of the mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation."

The reason why all things work together is in the action of God who has effectually called us into fellowship with Him. It is linked to the process of verses 29 and 30. We are called according to His purpose. He is sovereign. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 1:11-12 of what God is doing. "In Him (Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory."

God's eternal purpose is being carried out in Christ Jesus. God has called us and saved us with His eternal purpose in mind. Paul's last recorded words were written to a pastor named Timothy from a prison cell in Rome awaiting the executioner's appointment. He wrote these words of encouragement to Timothy reminding him, "the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity . . ." (2 Timothy 1:9). Ephesians chapter one tells us what that purpose is. Romans 8:29-30 tells us how God does it. God planned it in eternity past before creation of this world. Your salvation is no accident. Paul now demonstrates for us God's purpose of grace. These five words contain the great doctrines of grace.

Indeed, the most persuasive passage of Scripture on eternal security of the believer is Romans 8:28-30. With five convincing words Paul demonstrates how God has worked out our salvation. Behind it all is God's sovereignty. Every word represents divine action.

Now what did God do? How do we know that all things work for good to those who are the called of God? We know because God "foreknew" you and me. He is working according to His eternal purpose. Divine foreknowledge is God's knowledge of His eternal purpose. This is the divine side of our security.

GOD FOREKNEW YOU.

The word "foreknew" (*proginosko*) means "to know beforehand." God foresees all that will eventually come to pass. There are many that believe that God foreknew who would repent of their sins and believe on Christ. They say, "God foreknew them as His by faith."

It is certainly true that God foresees faith; He foresees all that comes to pass. However, the question is from whence comes this faith? Does man psyche himself up to this faith? Is it something he decides to do? The Scriptures are consistent in their message that the faith which God foresees is the faith He Himself brings into existence (cf. John 3:3 & 6:44, 45, 65; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29; 2 Pet. 1:2). Even our faith is God's gift. There is no place for our boasting. God generates this faith in those whom He foresees as believing. To the arrogant, bigoted Corinthians Paul reminded them, "For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Paul says, "whom He foreknew." These words speak of electing grace. The word "know" is used "in a sense practically synonymous with 'love', to set regard upon, to know with peculiar interest, delight, affection, and action" (Morris, *Romans*, p. 317). Out of His deep intimate love and knowledge God predestinates, calls, justifies and glorifies. "Foreknew" focuses our attention upon the immense love of God. "When God takes knowledge of people in this special way, He sets His choice upon them" (F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, p. 177). Another Greek scholar says, "It speaks of the sovereign act of God foreordaining certain from among mankind to be saved" (Kenneth S. Wuest, *Romans*, p. 144). Others see it referring to "prescience of God," not to the idea of pre election (Robertson, Vincent, Denny, Alford). However, Hendriksen reminds us that "foreknowledge" is "divine active delight." He adds, "in his own sovereign good pleasure, God set his love on certain individuals, many still to be born, gladly acknowledging them as his own, electing them to everlasting life and glory" (*Romans*, p. 282). Herman Bavink, the reformed theologian, wrote "in this purpose according to election the persons are not the objects of God's 'bare foreknowledge' but of his 'active delight.'"

The word "foreknew" in our text is synonymous with "chose." God first chose those who would believe. The apostle Paul has gone to great lengths in Romans chapter three to demonstrate the depravity of man. Because of the fall and its effects on mankind if God had looked down through history to see all who would choose Him, He would not have seen a single soul. Romans 3:10-12 tells us the truth. It says, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one." I think it is quite evident no one would choose God who had not first been chosen and called by Him. How can we imagine sinful man would first choose God? Why does sinful man try to reverse the roles? The Bible says, "We love Him because He first loved us." Why make God subject to our will? Why make man sovereign and God the subject? Why make a holy and righteous God subject of the will of depraved man? If the LORD God can only choose those whom He knows will choose Him, He is not sovereign. He is made dependent upon the will of sinful man. The Bible consistently teaches us that we are saved by God's sovereign grace.

The believer is the object of God's foreknowledge and foreordaining grace. His purpose is to conform us to the image of His Son.

God foreknew you and I would be here, as well as all who preceded us and those who will follow us in history. This foreknowledge of God indicates the active exercise of eternal love for all individuals who comprise those who are the elect of God. This is why God is not going to lose anyone. Whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, and whom He predestined, these He also called, and justified and glorified. What a great salvation God has provided for all who believe. Our ultimate salvation depends, not on our weakness, but on God's sovereign love and grace and saving power. Moreover, the Bible teaches us that those whom God foreknew He also predestined.

GOD PREDESTINED YOU.

God's love is active and constantly seeks the highest goal of conforming the believer to the image of the

God's love is active and constantly seeks the highest goal of conforming the believer to the image of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ. The goal of predestination is to conform us to the character of Jesus Christ. Everything that happens in our lives is with that goal in mind. God is concerned that we be conformed to the image of His Son. God selected His goal beforehand, in eternity past, that we should like Christ.

God is the author of salvation from beginning to end. He took the initiative in saving lost sinners.

This is the clearest and final statement of our salvation by grace through faith alone. I rebel at the idea of making man sovereign in salvation as if God can only look ahead and make His choice if man believes. No where is sovereignty of man taught in the Scriptures. The over emphasis on "free will of man" makes God subservient to man's accepting Him. Yes, I believe man responds to the effectual call of the Holy Spirit changing his attitudes and rebellion and bringing regeneration and faith in Jesus Christ. No one can possibly be saved without putting his faith and trust in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. Man has the responsibility of believing on Christ as his Savior. That is inescapable. More will be said later.

Election is the holy and loving choice by God of those who are to receive His grace. Predestination, on the other hand, has to do with the glorious goal for which the elect are chosen. God sees the end from the beginning. That "end" is conformity to the image of His Son. The glorious end product will be like Jesus in His character and destiny.

The verb *horizo* means "to mark out the boundaries or limits" of a place or thing, "to determine or appoint." The prefix *pro* means "before." Therefore, the compound verb signifies "to put limits or boundaries upon beforehand," thus "to pre determine." The special limitation or boundary set on those whom God foreknew is to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ and placed as adult sons (Ephesians 1:5). Predestination is the carrying out of God's eternal counsel which is His plan for the believer to be like Christ. This is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. It is a gradual process begun the moment the believing sinner was saved and it continues until Jesus returns in glory.

A. T. Robertson noted, "Here we have both *morpheμ* and *eikoμn* to express the gradual change in us till we acquire the likeness of Christ the Son of God so that we ourselves shall ultimately have the family likeness of sons of God" (*Word Pictures, Romans*). It is the outward expression of an inward nature. He works from the inside out. The Holy Spirit works in the transformation of our inner life to resemble Jesus Christ. This inner change of the attitudes of heart and mind set results in a change in the outward expression that reflects our changed behaviors. This "image" is a derived likeness of Christ. The child is the *eikon* of his parents. The believer is the *eikon* of Jesus.

The image of the Lord Jesus in the saint is not accidental, but is the result of God's activity in the believer. A child receives its likeness from its parents. We inherit the image of Christ through the new birth. By regeneration we become children of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the giving spiritual birth. He creates the image of Christ in us; however, it may not be clearly seen in the new convert, it does become progressively clearer and distinctive as that believer matures in his daily Christian life. That is what God has predestined for you and me.

Predestination has to do only with believers. We who have come to know Christ as our personal Savior have been "predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son." What is that goal? How would you recognize one if you saw one? Galatians 5:22-23 gives us a perfect picture. The Apostle Paul wrote: "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

When will that complete conformation take place? This conformity to Christ will be realized when we are glorified with Christ at the final complete resurrection in glory when He returns.

Let's consider what predestination is not. It has absolutely nothing to do with going to hell. It is not God looking over mankind and saying, "Inni-minni-mini-mo. This one is going to hell, and this one is going to heaven." Predestination has nothing to do with election. No where in the Scriptures do we find predestination controlling the destiny of the unsaved.

Predestination has to do with our being like Jesus. Jesus is our big brother, and we are to bear the likeness of the family of God. His goal is to mold us in the image of His Son. Jesus is the eldest in the great family of God. He is preeminent.

Christ is the one who is preeminent. He is supreme. He is the "firstborn." The whole emphasis is to glorify Christ. God gives us His glory that the name of Jesus will be exalted. We are His "brethren." And remember He is not ashamed to call us His "brethren" (Heb. 2:11). We get our glory because we belong to Him and are members of His family. Our glory is reflected glory. The more we are around Christ the more we reflect His glory. This is humbling for there is nothing innate in us that is worth exalting. We bring no virtue to God. "We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). This is why it is so crucial that we grow in His grace. The quality of our reflection of His glory down here is in proportion to our intimate love relationship with Him. The more we become like Christ the more His glorification in us (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 4:32 5:2; Phil. 3:10; Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Thess. 2:13).

Can you see the hand of God in your spiritual life? Those whom God called into salvation, He foreknew, and predestined to become like His Son. There can be no break down in this process. God is at work. How does God bring that person to saving faith in Christ as His personal Savior?

GOD CALLED YOU.

This is where the Holy Spirit gets us involved. Up until now, everything has been centered on God and what He is doing to bring about our salvation.

Those whom God foreknew and predestined to be like His Son He now calls. The Holy Spirit begins to draw us and open our minds and create an interest in our hearts for the things of God. We then respond to the drawing of the Holy Spirit in ways we do not understand. The "effectual calling" is the work of the Holy Spirit who convicts us of our sin and need for God to save us. He enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ and the salvation He freely offers, and renews our wills, and persuades and enables us to believe on Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

There is a profound mystery in our "free will" and God's sovereign choice. In John 6:65 Jesus said, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father" (John 6:65). In our stubborn independence we keep trying to run away, and God in His marvelous sovereign grace keeps running after us until He conquers us. The Holy Spirit, with an internal and effectual calling, makes us "want to" turn to Christ and be saved.

The effectually called are those whose hearts and minds are so thoroughly influenced by the Holy Spirit they become aware and convicted of their sinfulness and their need for Jesus Christ and believe on Him as their Lord and Savior.

The effectually called are those who are brought to accept the blessings to which they are invited. It is the

The effectually called are those who are brought to accept the blessings to which they are invited. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is a "call" that accomplishes God's purpose. It is an unbreakable chain of events that proceeds from God's eternal purpose in election, foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, sanctification and finally in our glorification. The called are called according to God's purpose.

An effectual call from God suggests cooperation on our part to the call. All who are called will be justified and glorified. The called one will respond to God the Holy Spirit by exercising saving faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit gives enlightenment to the soul and creates willingness in the heart to respond to God's offer of salvation by grace through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every person God calls will be justified and redeemed in response to the personal and saving faith in Christ. As the Holy Spirit convicts the unbelieving sinner of his need for the only Savior there comes from within a response to the invitation "whosoever will may come."

This effectual call of God of an individual is the working of the Holy Spirit in the enlightened mind and heart to the end that the individual will choose to exercise faith in Christ and be justified.

GOD JUSTIFIED YOU.

In spite of the horrible fact that we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," we are "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith" (Romans 3:24-25).

Based upon the death of Jesus Christ as our sinless substitute God is holy and just in His decision to declare us acquitted. Because of His death for us and our faith in Him God has chosen to forgive us, cleanse us, and give us a perfect position before Him. We are wanted, loved, cherished, and accepted by God the Father! It is all of His grace.

The Westminster Shorter catechism reads, "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone." God takes away our guilt because Jesus paid the penalty of our sins, and He bestows upon us a positive righteousness, even Jesus Christ Himself, in whom we stand forever, uncondemned and right in God's sight.

God declares that the believing sinner has been made forever right in His sight and acceptable to Himself. This is the eternal position to which the believer has been brought through God's grace.

The one saved was perfected forever in the sight of God as being in Christ. The believing sinner has partaken of Christ's saving merit and standing forever. We don't have to add anything of merit to that which is already perfected forever. This removes works salvation. It is all of grace that it may be by faith. "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). It is impossible for a righteous God to condemn the person He has before justified. God is no "Indian giver"! He is faithful to His promises. Remember that Christ is interceding on our behalf. The ground upon which our justification rest is secure forever. Every believer has this complete standing before God. John wrote, "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:9-10).

Based upon the death of Jesus Christ for our sins God can declare the believing sinner just in His sight. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

The purpose of God's sovereign grace is to create a new people in which to display His glory. He called and justified those on whom He had laid His choice. "And whom He justified, He also glorified."

God in His eternal counsel foreknows and foreordains. That is His prerogative. The calling and justifying takes place in the believer. That is our experience. One day in the future we will be glorified, and will share in Christ's glory.

GOD GLORIFIED YOU.

Glorification is the exciting day when Jesus comes in shining glory and He will present every believer to the Lord God in the same kind of glory that He has. It is the act of God transforming the believer's body into a body like the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus (Rom. 8:11, 23; 1 Cor. 15:43-53; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2). It will take place in the future. However, the apostle Paul speaks of it in the past tense. This has been called the "most daring anticipation of faith" in the New Testament. It is the ultimate and complete conformity of God's chosen people to "the image of His Son." In Romans 8:19 Paul calls this glorification "the revelation of the sons of God." Don't confuse our glorification with His. The glorified Christ does not cease to be the eternal Son of God. It is the eternal and unique, only one of its kind, Son of God who is the glorified incarnate Son. We are His adopted children and we are conformed to His likeness. Jesus is the eternal only begotten (unique, only one of its kind) Son. There is none other like Him!

However, when Christ shall appear in glory, then shall His Bride appear with Him all glorious and complete. Paul wrote in Colossians 3:4, "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

Remember that the whole creation is anticipating that day when God pulls back the curtains and reveals the sons of God in all their beauty. Romans 8:22-23 reminds us, "For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."

We will be glorified with Christ. Romans 8:17 tells us that as God's children we suffer with Christ "in order that we may also be glorified with Him." The Apostle reminds us in verse 18, "The suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Even creation awaits the revealing of this glory (v. 19, 20). When Christ returns we will bear the "image of the heavenly." The Lord Jesus will come from heaven and "will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:21).

Christ is coming back in a blaze of glory. Are you ready? Is your hope fixed upon Him? Has the Holy Spirit placed a hunger in your heart for the day of our redemption, the resurrection of our bodies? Do you get homesick for heaven and long for the day when you will be just like Him? "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2).

Paul speaks of this future glorification as if it has already taken place. Why does Paul use the same past tense for this as he does for the foreknowing, predestinating, calling and justifying? As a matter of experience, we have yet to be glorified. However, as far as the decree of God our glorification has been determined from all eternity. Our glorification is stated as already consummated, though still in the future in the fullest sense. Perhaps he is referring again to our identification with Christ. Paul has declared in previous chapters our co –

crucifixion, co burial, co resurrection, co ascension, and co glorification with Christ. In a sense we "were raised with Christ" (Col. 3:1), and we were with Him when He ascended to heaven (Eph. 4:8). Are we not even now being transformed from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18)? The believer's glory in the future has already begun to be realized.

Why does Paul seemingly pass over our present daily experience of progressive spiritual growth? He jumps from justification to glorification leaving out sanctification.

We call our daily process of spiritual growth progressive sanctification. It is a gradual process of being conformed to the image and likeness of Christ. This is the process by which the Holy Spirit begins to work out in our daily conduct and thinking what He imparted to us when we were born again. We are changed from the inside out. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:49). In reality glorification has already started. It will be finished when we stand before Jesus Christ complete. What a day to look forward to. Our glorification is both complete and certain in God's eternal purpose. Those whom He justified, He also glorified. "

Sanctification is our progressive conformity to the image of Christ in this life. The difference between our sanctification and our glorification is only one of measure. Our glorification is our perfect conformity to the image of Christ. It is only a matter of time before it is complete. Therefore our sanctification is glory begun. The Second Coming of Christ guarantees the completion of the work He has already begun in us.

In the process of sanctification we actually begin to change and begin to be like Christ in our attitude, thoughts and behaviors. It doesn't mean we are perfect yet. It doesn't mean we are sinless. Sanctification is the process of glorification. Therefore, Paul writes these words of encouragement for us today as we struggle with our weaknesses those "whom He justified, these He also glorified."

SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Just think of it, God will not lose a single person. He is responsible for every saved person. No one is going to be lost in the process. He can't be. This is God's work. His name and character is at stake! Those whom He foreknew, before the foundation of the world, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. The same number of people He called He also justified. Everyone He justified He also glorified!

The beautiful divine plan of salvation from its fountain in the love of God to its glorious consummation in the sons of God at Christ's return is all of God. From beginning to end it is all the work of God. He alone gets all the glory. Glorification is the final completion of the process. It is the grand finale of God's redeeming love. God is sovereign. The LORD God reigns!

Yes, the process involves pain, sorrow, groanings, death and tears of disappointment. That is part of the growth of sanctification. No matter what it takes God will complete the process in your life and mine. He never makes mistakes. What He begins He finishes. "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

The message of this passage of Scripture is undeniably clear. God is in control. God is the one who chooses us to be saved. He is the one who calls us to Himself and justifies us and sanctifies us. He is the one who glorifies us. He has done all of these things so that they are as good as done, even if the final consummation is

glorifies us. He has done all of these things so that they are as good as done, even if the final consummation is yet in the future. God is at work. He is at work all about us to accomplish His purposes. Because we are His children by faith He works all things together for our good.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. God has done everything to make it possible for you to spend eternity with Him. "God is working sovereignly in the hearts of men to cause them to respond personally and by their own volition to the call of God to salvation." God's invitation to all men is "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

In His infinite wisdom and love God originated His plan of salvation and based it entirely on grace. No sinful man could ever merit or deserve His favor. Yet every man is entirely responsible for acceptance or rejection of God's grace. Salvation is available to all; it is unlimited. But it is effectively limited by man's acceptance of it. Human responsibility and action is not ruled out. What will you do with this great salvation God has provided for you? What is your response to God's provision?

What is your response to these five words?

Salvation is all of grace. God did it! All we can do is say, "Thank you, Lord. How great You are!" You see God accomplished His goal for man. Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38).

No wonder the Apostle Paul came to this reasoned conclusion and could shout: "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). The sovereign grace of God should cause us to worship Him with all our heart.

Because Jesus Christ died in your place on the cross, God is free to declare the believing sinner just in His sight. Our responsibility is to simply trust Him. The song is exactly right when it says, "Only trust Him." The only condition on our part is to trust Christ. It is faith in Christ who alone can save us. Salvation is all by God's grace.

All the way through the Scriptures our responsibility is to believe on Christ as our Savior. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved (Acts 16:31).

Romans 10:9-10, 13 is very clear as to our responsibility in salvation. Paul writes, "if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation . . . for Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. "

This is a very special hour. If you have never believed on Jesus Christ as your personal Savior you can respond to His grace and love right now. The discomfort you sense in your heart is the Holy Spirit convicting you of your need for Christ. Respond to that plea from the Spirit and believe on Christ. God is at work in your heart, believe on Christ today. Acts 2:21 says, "And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

That is God's invitation to you today.

Philippians 1:6 reminds us of these great truths in Romans eight, "*I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*"

Would you like to know more about how to believe on Christ as your personal Savior? [A Free Gift for You](#) will show you how to be saved right now.

Title: Salvation in Five Steps, Romans 8:28-30

Series: The Exchanged Life in Romans

Message by Wil Pounds (c) 2007. Anyone is free to use this material and distribute it, but it may not be sold under any circumstances whatsoever without the author's written consent.

Unless otherwise noted Scripture quotations taken from the [NASB](#). "Scripture taken from the **NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE**®, © Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)

Scripture quoted by permission. Quotations designated (NET) are from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://www.bible.org/>. All rights reserved.

Wil is a graduate of William Carey University, B. A.; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Th. M.; and Azusa Pacific University, M. A. He has pastored in Panama, Ecuador and the U. S, and served for over 20 years as missionary in Ecuador and Honduras. He had a daily expository Bible teaching ministry head in over 100 countries for ten years. He continues to seek opportunities to be personally involved in world missions. Wil and his wife Ann have three grown daughters. He currently serves as a Baptist pastor and teaches seminary extension courses in Honduras.

Didn't find what you wanted on this page? [Search this Website Here](#)

[HOME](#) | [BIBLE STUDIES & SERMONS](#) | [ABIDE IN CHRIST](#)
[SEARCH](#) | [PERSONAL GROWTH](#) | [LINKS](#) | [LATEST ADDITIONS](#) | [FEEDBACK](#)

[MAKE ABIDE IN CHRIST YOUR START PAGE](#)