

The Components of Christian Invincibility

Scripture: Romans 8:29-30

Code: 80-255

We are going to continue tonight in our discussion of Romans Chapter 8, Christian Invincibility. "If God is for us who is against us? This is a very very important subject, this matter of our personal security with God. One of the major debates through the centuries within the framework of Christianity has been the debate about whether can lose their salvation. It has been an issue that has split Christianity into two sides and also created a moderate middle ground as well. This is not only an issue in this part of the world; it's an issue all over the world. There really are two distinct branches of evangelical Christianity, orthodox Christianity in the sense of foundational doctrine. There are those who believe you can lose your salvation and those who believe you cannot.

One of the struggles that I've had through the years in my many many treks over to Eastern Europe and into Russia and the former Soviet Union is the fact that for many many decades over there they have been convinced that it is possible to lose one's salvation. And so this has been a formidable opportunity for me to try to help them to understand the other side of that debate. I was in a former KGB military training camp holding a pastor's conference, that in it self was very satisfying to know that that place was being used for a pastor's conference.

This was in Belarus, which is a tragic tragic place. Everybody in the country has been affected by Chernobyl. The population is dying, affected by the ground water, which has affected the crops that grow there. Radiation has basically affected everybody in Belarus and there is a passion and a zeal among the pastors and the leaders there to evangelize that nation. There's a sense of urgency about that and so they invited me to come to this conference and to talk to these pastors.

I remember staying in a very clean and simple place and eating soup in a sort of a cool time of the year and it wasn't much as amenities go, but there was this literal exhilaration on the part of these people as I was every day teaching them the word of God. And along the way I was talking about God's plan, his big unfolding plan and I got into the issue of the eternity of salvation.

That is to say that once you have been justified, once you have been redeemed and converted and born again, that's forever. And I said something to that effect, the words I obviously wouldn't remember at this point and afterwards there was a, well there was a little bit less of a gregarious response I'll put it that way. And I came back in the morning to start up again and the leaders of the conference came to me and they said, "We want to know if you can do something for us before you start teaching what you were going to teach." And I said, "Sure." They said, "Well we have all been

up all night." And I said, "Why have you been up all night?" "We have been looking through the Bible to find every Scripture that proves you can lose your salvation and we want you to answer them all." Fair enough.

So that's basically what we did for hours. Even at the end of that time it was hard for them to move away from what they had believed for so long. Well I continued to try to meet that situation head on. A recent translation of my commentary on the book of Romans will be a help because they're going to have to deal with Romans 8 just as we are tonight.

Frankly Romans 8 provides for us the clearest and most powerful statement of the believer's security in Scripture. And this is something that we need to know about. You know there are those people who say, "Well you don't want to get into divisive doctrinal issues. You don't want to be dealing with things that people can't agree on. It just polarizes people. I'm the very opposite and at the same time I don't want to become obscure by being so profound and so technical that we lose the value of this, which I think can be understood in a rather simple way.

So we're looking at Romans 8:28-39, and we're spending most of our time sort of getting into this thing in Romans 8:28, which is a critically important verse. Let's go back to that verse for a moment. "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." Simple verse. If you're called according to his purpose, God causes all things to work together for good. Another way to say that was, as we pointed out last time, nothing can work together for bad. Nothing. This is one of those comprehensive statements that has no exceptions. There are no caveats. God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, we talked about that last time, to those who are called according to his purpose.

Now really the key phrase in the verse is the phrase according to his purpose. God has a purpose and all those who have been called to that purpose are put into the condition where he causes everything to work together for their good. We are therefore, forever secure because that was God's purpose.

His purpose is actually unfolded in verses 29 and 30. "For whom he foreknew," that's when his purpose began, foreknowledge, "he predestined to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren whom he predestined. These he also called, whom he called he also justified, whom he justified these he also glorified." And there you have the unfolding of the purpose of God.

If you're called according to his purpose you are in that progress from predestination to calling to justification to glorification in verse 30. If you're called according to his purpose you are predestined to be conformed to his Son. If you're called according to his purpose he is causing all things to work together for good and therefore nothing can work together for bad. His purpose is to get you to be

conformed to the image of his Son. His purpose is to take you all the way from predestination to glorification. This is patently obvious in the text.

We start to talk about these things, there's problems in our human reasoning and we think, well this doesn't seem to square with what sounds sensible or reasonable or fair. Just keep this in mind; whatever you don't understand or have a hard time accepting has nothing to do with God and everything to do with your own limitations. Let's just identify where the limitation is, it's not with God. It's with you.

To question the wisdom of God, to question the justice of God, to question the love of God, to question the purpose of God is a reflection of your feeble mindedness and mine. To say to God well that doesn't seem to make sense to me is the height of folly. Or to say well God my concept of this whole deal goes like this, really. What we want to do is come humbly to the sacred, infinite and holy mind of God, hear what he says, and believe it. Human reason, logic, human understanding are not adequate to the task. We cannot ultimately reconcile in our pea brains the vast purposes of God.

The only thing that's ever going give you peace in these great doctrines is faith. You're going to run out of reason, as my dad used to say, if you get into these doctrines and you keep tracking eventually you're going to find yourself under the bed saying the Greek alphabet. It's just too confounding. You can't reason it all out. At some point you settle on the fact that you're going to trust God to be holy and just and good because that's what Scripture says that he is. The general truth here is this: God has a purpose. If you're in that purpose everything works together for good.

Salvation does not ebb and flow based upon what you decide. Salvation is defined by what God has decided. So much of modern evangelism leaves people the idea that they need to decide whether to accept Christ. The truth of the matter is sinner needs to pray that Christ would accept him.

How do you expect an unconverted person to come to the conclusion that the gospel is true and confess Jesus as Lord on his own since he's dead in trespass and sins Ephesians 2 says, since the natural man cannot understand the things of God, to him they are foolishness. Even the preaching of the cross is those that perish foolishness. The god of this world has blinded his mind lest the light of the glorious should shine on him.

In a condition of being dead and blind how does one expect that someone's going to respond? They can't any more than a corpse can join in the singing at his funeral. Man cannot make a move toward God and a move toward Christ until God has begun to unfold his purpose toward him. That why Jesus said, "No man comes to me expect the Father," what? "Draws him." John 6. And if you're starting to question God about whether that's fair or just recognize that as a temptation and resist it and recognize it as a foible of your fallen ness. The problem is not his; it's yours.

With that in mind let's go back to verse 28. We talked about the extent of security, all things so that there's nothing and the language later on in this chapter that can separate us from the love of God. Nothing can do that because all things God works together for good. We talked about those all things, good things and bad things, all of them. That was the extent of security. It embraces all things and it would have to, which means there is nothing that can separate us and then after the extent of the security we possess we talked about the recipients.

Who is it that is really secure? And last week we took that phrase in verse 28, those who love God. And that looks at this matter of security from our viewpoint, from our side. Who are believers? Who are the truly secure? Who are headed to heaven? Who are generally God's? Who are really in the kingdom? Who possess eternal life that can never be broken? Who is it that are moving down this path to glorification and nothing can change it? Who are they? They are those who love God and we went into the height and breadth and length and depth of what that means. That's from our side.

But look at it from the other side. Back to that verse, those who love God are also identified as those who are called according to his purpose. From our side we love God. From his side we are the called. There is in Matthew 22, a parable that Jesus tells in which he says, "Many are called but few are chosen." Remember that? Matthew 22, I think it's verse 14. "Many are called but few are chosen."

There when he's talking about called he's just talking about a general call to come into God's kingdom. It's not technical. It's the call of the gospel. But when you get into the Epistles, out of the four gospels, and you get into the Epistles and when you're reading the Epistles and a writer of the Epistles, I don't care what writer it is, talks about the call it is always an effectual saving call in the Epistles. It is not an external invitation; it is an internal wooing by the Spirit of God that results in conversion. Never in the Epistles is the term called referred to an external invitation. It always means what theologians call an effectual call. That is to say, it is a call that has the effect of doing the work of God, the saving work of God.

And that's exactly the way Paul uses it here. In verse 30, "Whoever he predestined he called and whom he called these he also justified." So this is an internal call to justification. This is not just a general announcement that you ought to come to salvation. When the writers of the Epistles talk about a call they're talking about an effectual call. They're talking about a real call to justification. You find over in the 9th Chapter of Romans and I'll just give you a couple of illustrations. Paul writes about Paul's purpose with regard to Isaac and he says, "God's purpose according to his choice might stand, not because of works but because of him who calls." And here again this was a call that was a choice that God made. It was that the older would serve the younger. "Jacob I loved, Esau I hated."

Whenever it talks about call then, it is a specific call to salvation. For example in I Corinthians 1:2, "To the Church of God, which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling." There again is that calling unto sainthood. You find the same thing in that very chapter down in verse 24, "To those that are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God." So when you see the term call in the New Testament apart from that parable in Matthew 22, it is speaking of a divine sovereign saving call by which God internally awakens the heart to embrace the gospel.

Martin Lloyd Jones used to like to refer to the call as God sovereignly interfering with your life, stepping in. It is the divine act that initiates salvation and brings it to its fulfillment. Ephesians 1, "Paul, an apostle, by the will of God to the saints who are at Ephesus, who are faithful in Christ Jesus."

Who are these people? Down in verse 11, "Who have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to his purpose who works all things after the counsel of his will." He says, you saints are the people whom God has called to an eternal inheritance based on predestination according to his purpose and he's working everything after the counsel of his will. I mean it's whether he's talking to the Philippians or talking to the Thessalonians the called are always those called to redemption.

Jude, just to see someone other than Paul, "A bond servant of Jesus Christ, brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved of God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ." The called are beloved and are kept.

You can't be saved until you're called. Until God calls you from the dead like Jesus called Lazarus from the dead, you can't be saved because you can't understand the truth, you're dead; you can't understand the truth, you're blind; you're natural and the natural man understands not the things of God. The only way anybody would ever be converted is by this divine call.

Now how does this call come? Romans 10:14, "Faith comes by hearing" the truth concerning Christ, the message of Christ. So first of all the call comes through the Scripture. In I Peter 1, "You have been born again not of seed, which is perishable, I Peter 1:23, but imperishable." That is through the living and abiding word of God. "And this is the word that was preached to you." If salvation is by hearing the word of Christ, Paul said, "How will they hear without a preacher, how will they preach unless they're sent?"

So the call has to come in response to the Scripture. What happens is when the Scripture is proclaimed the Holy Spirit works through that word of God, through that truth. John 16 says, "The Spirit convicts of sin and righteousness of judgment." One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit, of course, is to point to Jesus Christ as our Lord said in the Upper Room discourse with his disciples,

"The Spirit is the one who speaks concerning me and leads you into all truth."

A wonderful statement is in the 16th Chapter of Acts in verse 14 about Lydia who was a Gentile woman, a worshipper of God, and Paul was preaching and this is what it says: "The Lord opened her heart to respond." The Lord opened her heart to respond. That's the only way anybody will ever be saved. The only way anybody can come to salvation is if the Lord opens the heart, if the Lord takes off the blindness, if the Lord overpowers the natural misunderstanding, if the Lord gives life to the otherwise dead soul.

So the word comes and with the word comes the Spirit, the Spirit quickens the word, awakens the heart, regeneration takes place, life comes and then in response to that God grants faith, justification, conversion. So who then are these people for whom everything works together for good? They are the people who love God. Why do they love God? Why do they love God, loving also the Lord Jesus Christ? Why do they do that? Because they are the called. God went into the darkness and deadness of their heart and awakened them. That's what the called means.

And so as we think about this wonderful verse we see that the recipients of security are those who love God, that's from our side, and we love him because he first loved us and effected that call, which awakened us. And there are a lot of illustrations about that. You'll see them as you flow through the New Testament, but just know that every time you're reading in the Epistles and you come across the call it's talking about the effectual call that actually produces the transforming work of salvation.

Now what is the source of this? We've seen the extent of it, we've seen the recipients of it, what is the source of this? Asking this question: why does God call certain people? Why does he go into the lives of certain people and interfere, as Lloyd Jones said, and awaken them from the dead? Why? Well let's go back to our verse in Romans 8:28 and it's there. I mean as much as you're going to know is there. This is what it says: "God is causing all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to," what, their merit, their sensitivity, their religious sensibility, their desire? No. "According to his purpose." According to his purpose. All this springs from God.

This is the bottom line. You are saved because God purposed to save you and my friend this is the supreme guarantee of your eternal salvation. The reason you'll never lose your salvation is because God purposed to save you eternally. You didn't save yourself and you can't keep yourself saved. It's not based on your decision and your purpose. It's based on his. This is the supreme guarantee of the believer's security according to his purpose. It would satisfy a lot of people if it said according to your decision, but it doesn't.

In fact, John 1:13 says, "You actually were born spiritually not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In fact, left to yourself you would never believe. You never could believe. Some

writer wrote, "Why was I made to hear his voice and enter while there's room while thousands make a wretched choice and rather starve than come. It was the same love that spread the feast that sweetly forced me in, else I had still refused to taste and perished in my sin."

This is the incredible reality. Salvation is based upon the sovereign pleasure of God. He purposed it and so he will complete it. Whatever God determines to do he finishes and since he is infinite power he has the ability to sustain his will to its fruition, to its utter completion. So we see the extent then of our security, we see the recipients who are those who love God because they have been called, we see the source of our security his purpose.

There is in this verse another little note: the certainty of our security, as if we needed any more than this, but we need to take a look at it. The certainty of our security. The beginning of the verse, "And we," what's the next word? "And we know." Now if you're a person who believes you can lose your salvation what do you do with that? And we don't know? And we can't know? And we're really not sure, kind of hoping? I mean what does he have to say to make the point? And we know. How do we know? Because the New Testament makes it so absolutely clear, but so does the Old. When you're forgiven in the Old Testament of all your sins Scripture says they're buried in the depths of the deepest sea and removed as far as the east is from the west and God remembers them no more. How do we know? Not my some mystical intuition. We know because of divine revelation. We know, Paul says, and then he launches into the verses all the way to the end of the chapter, which tell us how we know.

And we do know this: God never breaks his word, right? Never comes back empty, always accomplishes what he sends it to do. He said, "I am the Lord, I change not." The gifts and callings of God, Romans 11 are without repentance, he never changes his mind about a calling so it is absolutely certain. Never ever for a moment have to fear the loss of your salvation. You can know because is causing all things that are going on, all things to work together for your, not only your good in time, but your good in eternity because you love him, and you love him because you were called by him, and you were called by him with an effectual saving call because he purposed to do that.

Now what's the purpose of our security? If you're numbering is that five? The purpose of our security. Now there's a lot to be said about this but look at verse 29. "Whom he foreknew he also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Now you might think that this is a little strange, this is the purpose? Isn't the purpose salvation so we can be in heaven forever and be happy? Isn't the purpose of salvation so we can go to heaven and play a harp and sit on a cloud and be perfect, praise God and all of that? No. That's a side benefit and the purpose of God has a lot of side benefits, but the purpose, the reason God is bringing many sons to glory, the reason God is making sure that everything is working for our eternal good, the reason that God has purposed to save us is verse 29, "to conform us to the image of his Son." It is to make us like Christ.

Now what is Christ like? Well we know that, holy, sinless, sure, undefiled, and he is the God-man. And God has determined that his saving purpose is to make us as much like Christ as is possible. I said to the students at the Bible conference this week, "As much as glorified humanity can approximate incarnate deity we will be like Christ."

Now let me clarify what I'm saying here, what Paul is saying. The goal of the purpose of God was to make you like Christ. You say, "Well in what way are we going to be like Christ?" Well, first of all, when you get to heaven there will be nothing that defiles, right? The end of Revelation makes it clear, nothing unholy, nothing defiling, nothing impure, in heaven there is no sorrow, no sickness, no sighing, no dying, because there is no sin. So you will be sinless. You will not be God and Jesus will always be God, but like Christ you will be without sin. Not only that you will have, as he does, a resurrection glorified body, right? He came out of the grave with a glorified body. He ascended into heaven with a glorified body, Philippians Chapter 3. Look at this Philippians 3:21, "When Christ comes," verse 20, "He will transform the body of our humble state," this body, "into conformity with the body of his glory."

So what are we going to be like in heaven? Well we're going to be like Christ in holiness, like Christ in purity, like Christ in sinless ness and like Christ we will be consumed with what is righteous, and we will be consumed with honoring God and glorifying God and enjoying, and Christ prayed for this in his high priestly prayer, enjoying a perfect love relationship with God, with Christ, with the Spirit, and with each other.

Remember Jesus prayed that we would love him the way the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father in John 17. So when we get to heaven we're going to be like Christ in that spiritual part of us, but even in our glorified bodies we're going to be like him. We're going to have a body like unto the body of his glory, like his resurrection body.

You can go back in the New Testament and you can see what his resurrection body was like. He could walk through a wall, rearrange the molecules of that supernatural body and go right through a wall and panic the disciples. He could travel in space. He went from Jerusalem Judea area up into the Galilee, disappeared in one spot, appeared in another spot, without particularly passing through the space in-between. At the same time he could eat, he could drink, he could talk, he could be touched. He had the wounds for Thomas to see and to touch. This is his glorified body. When we get to heaven then in spirit we'll be like Christ. We will be sinless, pure, holy, souls worshipping and serving God and loving one another and God and Christ and Holy Spirit perfectly, and we will have bodies like unto the body of his resurrection glory.

Paul, in wonderful promise, says that we will actually become, verse 17, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We will actually share in the inheritance that Jesus receives from the Father. And what is

that? Well according to I Corinthians essentially Jesus becomes Lord of everything. The Father literally subjects everything to him, I Corinthians 15 says. Subjects everything to him so that the Father gives the whole new heaven and the new earth, the whole of the eternal state to the Son and we become joint heirs with him. We receive his spiritual virtue as much as glorified humanity can be like incarnate deity, we'll be like him. We'll receive a body like unto his resurrection body and we'll receive an inheritance like that very inheritance, which the Father gives to him. This is what Peter called "Our inheritance incorruptible laid up in heaven for us," in I Peter 1.

You see that word conformed there? To be conformed. It's a word that just means _____ to the same form. It's the very same term used in Philippians 3:21 that we just read. We'll have a body in conformity with the body of his glory. We will be in, and there's the other concept, we will be in the image of his Son, the icon. It refers to a derived likeness, not an accidental one, as a statue might be made to replicate, or as a son who is the spitting image of his father. Because we belong to him we will be conformed to him.

In II Corinthians 3, we find a further insight to this in verse 18, "As we behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord we are being transformed into the same image from one level of glory to the next by the Holy Spirit." This is an amazing thing. As Christians living now, the more you gaze at Christ, the more you focus on him, the more you spend time with him, the more you absorb the glory of Christ through the revealed word of Christ, the more you are imperceptibly being transformed into his image.

When a man is fully disciplined he's like his teacher. That's true even humanly and as you spend time with Christ just being exposed to his glory the Spirit of God literally conforms you into his image from glory to glory, moving from one level of glory to the next. Well that goes on in this world and someday when we enter into heaven and are exposed to the fullness of his undiminished glory, we will immediately be transformed into that fullness of glory.

Now you see this is the whole point of God's plan. It isn't primarily about us. It is primarily about his Son. Now listen carefully because here's the point. The reason God is redeeming us, Paul says, is because he wants to give to the Son a redeemed humanity who can reflect his glory. This is a grandiose thing. We didn't just trip along one day and say, "I think I'm smart enough to become a Christian." This wasn't your deal. This is God's plan and he moves into history and he calls with an effectual calling and he awakens the dead and blind soul and the Spirit comes and converses a conviction of sin and then the Spirit produces repentance and then God grants faith, and then comes justification, and then there is that transformation that conversion that we call salvation and the soul is flooded with new life, and then there is sanctification by which we are initially separated from sin and continually being separated until the end when we will be glorified.

And what is this about? It is that God determined that he wanted to give to his Son a bride, as I have said so many times, a redeemed humanity who would reflect his glory. Imitation is the supreme

compliment. It's the supreme compliment to imitate someone and people do that with their heroes. Little kids run around with the jersey numbers of their athletic heroes. We all understand that. I was kidding the people at Dr. Creswell's funeral because all the preachers who came up and preached sounded just like him. And I don't think they even realized it. But because they revered him and adored him and loved him they all developed the same little inflections and same little mannerisms. And he being dead speaks through them all, hundreds of them, who are a reflection of what he was.

And this is, in a meager sense, what we're talking about, the ultimate compliment to the Son, the ultimate expression of the Father's love to the Son is that I love you so much that I want to put your glory on display in a manifold way so I'm going to purpose to bring to glory a redeemed humanity who will reflect your glory by being conformed to your image both in terms of soul and glorified body. And then he says, this is done, the end of verse 29, that Jesus Christ might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Now this is the end. This is the goal and it's not about us, it's about him. The goal of this all is to conform us to Christ's image. You say for our sake? No for his sake that he might be the chief one. You can't be the chief one if there's nobody else. All right? If it's only you you're not the chief 'cause there's nobody to rule over, there's nobody to lead, and there's nobody around to honor you and respect you and serve you and revere you. Well the Father says, "That's not appropriate. The Son is so magnificent, the eternal Son of God is so all glorious that the Son needs to have an entire redeemed humanity whose purpose for ever and ever is to do nothing but recognize him as the chief one."

So the Father then determines to redeem this humanity in order that forever the Lord Jesus Christ in his exalted glory in heaven will be considered to be the preeminent one, but there has to be somebody there to acknowledge that preeminence. And the Father deemed it suitable that there be that redeemed humanity who would forever recognize the preeminence of Christ.

The word firstborn here isn't talking about chronological birth. It's a term in the Greek protodikos, it means the premier one, it means the right of primogenitor, the firstborn was not always the first one born, but the person who received the highest inheritance.

And so, what is the ultimate purpose of our salvation? The ultimate purpose of our salvation is that the Lord Jesus Christ might have gathered around him, reflecting his glory, a redeemed humanity whose purpose it is to realize that he is the preeminent one. So what are we going to do forever in glory? We're going to be acknowledging that Jesus Christ is preeminent. And to put it in words of Philippians Chapter 2, every knee is going to bow, and every tongue is going to confess that Jesus is Lord forever. And that is everybody one the earth and under the earth, everybody, so that the end of salvation or the goal is the glory of the Son.

Now understand this: whatever, very important to understand, whatever the end result of God's plan was the initial intention of that plan, right? However it ends up is the way he designed it because there isn't any possibility of an interruption. Whatever God purposes to do, Isaiah says, he does it and nobody can stop it. And the Father purposed to call effectually unto justification and sanctification a redeemed humanity who would some day take on the very image of Jesus Christ and would forever gather around Jesus Christ to give him the preeminence. And so we would see a glimpse of this in the 5th Chapter of Revelation as we see the saints around the altar and what are they saying? Worthy is the lamb and that's what we're going to be saying forever and ever and ever. We are going to be the eternal hallelujah chorus.

Well, the preeminence of Christ then is the reason for salvation and so verse 30 concludes, that whoever God predestined in the first place, he called, and whoever called he justified, declared righteous by the merits of Christ, and whoever he justified these he also, what? Glorified. Nobody falls through the cracks, folks. That's why Jesus in John 6 says, "All the Father gives me will come to me and I'll lose none of them. I'll raise them up on the last day." I don't know why anybody wouldn't want to believe this since it's in the Bible. It's so clear. I'm always happy to tell Armenians, that's a theological term for people who don't believe their salvation is secure, that I know it's secure and God knows it secure and it's pretty silly for them not to. If you're going to worry about something worry about a reality not a fantasy.

I mean how can you get around verse 30? Whoever he predestined, whoever he purposed, whoever was in his original purpose was in his original purpose to be conformed to the image of his Son so that forever his Son would be given the preeminence by those very people. And if God determined in eternity past in his counsel, unaffected and unfluenced, God determined that he was going to save a humanity, wrote their names in the Lambs Book of Life before the foundation of the world, if God determined to do that and his purpose of his doing that was to bring them to glory where they would forever give Christ the preeminence then believe me that's what he's going to do. And when time comes he will call those people whom he has predestined, he will justify them and finally he will glorify them because that's his purpose and whatever is the end result was the original intention because God's plans don't change. He said, "I am the Lord and I change not. No one can thwart my purpose."

Now do you feel a little more secure? You're not secure because you're somehow not managing your life in such a way as to sustain some merit before God, which keeps you safe. You couldn't anymore keep yourself safe than you could save yourself. You can live your whole Christian life for suppose fifty, sixty, seventy years if you want and you will have acquired zero merit to contribute toward your glorification.

So if you think there's some way that you even hold on to your salvation you've got something coming. You couldn't get it and you can't keep it. But then again you don't need to because it is in the attention of God by his purpose to save you and sustain you. That doesn't mean you don't get involved. Let's go back to what we said last week. The people who are the predestined, the called and the justified and the glorified are those who love God. That's what happened in our hearts when the Spirit of God came and awakened us. He gave to us a love for God. We don't love him the way we should, but we love him. That's not the perfection of our lives, but it's the direction of our lives. And so this amazing and wonderful account of salvation God foreknew it says in verse 29, somebody says, wow, there's the key, he looked down in history and he foreknew what was going to happen, he saw what was going to happen. That's not what that means. You mean God looked down and saw all these people acting independently? No. That's not what that means. It means he determined beforehand is what it means.

Let me tell you about the word know. In the Old Testament it says Cain knew his wife and she had a son. What kind of knowing is that? Doesn't mean he knew who she was. He knew his wife. It's the most intimate relationship in human existence. He knew his wife and she had a son. And the shock was that Mary was pregnant and Joseph had never known her. In Amos 3:2 God says, "Israel only have I known." Does he mean that they're the only people he knows anything about? No. The word know has something completely different than that in its significance. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them." What do you mean? It's an intimacy of the relationship. God predetermined intimacy. That's foreknowing. On the basis of that he predestined people to be called, to be justified, to be glorified and he works it out.

There's no way that God could look down through history and just see who was going to believe. Do you know who would believe? Nobody. No one. Why? Because no one has the ability. You're dead. You're blind. So if God was just looking down to see who was going to believe there wouldn't be anybody believing. Couldn't be anybody, so he predetermined a love relationship upon which he predestined a pattern, moved into history, called, justified, and someday he will glorify. And all of this is not so much about you. It really isn't. I'll tell you what. It's about Jesus, isn't it? But I'm so glad to be in on it. It's about us forever gathering around him and giving to him the absolute preeminence. The Lord set out to do this plan, beloved, he'll do it. Nothing will change it. So if he's called you and justified you, you tell me will he glorify you? Absolutely. So in personal sense we're secure. Now next week I want to bounce out of this and just take you through verses 32 to 39 for a last look at this eminence section of Scripture on if God is for us who can be against us.

Thank you Lord for a wonderful day in your presence, a wonderful of fellowship and joy and rejoicing. Singing your praise, wonderful instruction from your precious word. How profoundly rich we are to know these great truths and we confess that we are utterly unworthy. Since we have been called and justified achieved no worthiness and shall never and that is why Peter said, "Fix your hope on the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Because not only was our justification by

grace and our sanctification by grace, but our glorification will be all of grace. What a wonder that is that you have chosen us and that you keep us. You are the one who is able to keep us from falling and to present us one day before your throne. And we rejoice in Christ's name. Amen.

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