

**ROMANS SERIES SEVENTEEN
HOW DOES GOD LOVE ME?**

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Romans 8:28-30; Ps. 139:13-14; Jer. 1:4-5; John 8:10-11

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified (Romans 8:28-30).

Romans 8:28-30 spans not just all the New Testament, it spans all eternity. The passage begs for multiple sermons to explore the various dimensions detailed here. However, since we will spend only one Sunday here, I have decided to imagine that you are my son or daughter—and share with you the most important things I would like for you to know from this passage. Of all the possible truths to examine, I want you to get a sense of God’s plan for your life that spans all eternity.

FOREKNOWLEDGE: God knew each of us intimately long before we were born.

“Know” implies intimate understanding of the core of one’s being.

Foreknowledge means to fix one’s love upon—or elect.

The controversy: God arbitrarily chose beforehand who would go to Heaven (1 Peter 1:2), versus “Whosoever will” may come” (John 3:16).

Henry Ward Beecher: “The elect are the whosoever wills and the non-elect are the whosoever won’ts.”

Romans 8:29 may well mean that God has set His special or saving love upon a select group of people called “Christians” who are all predestined to be conformed into the image of Christ.

PREDESTINATION: God predestined from the very foundation of the cosmos that each everyone would one day be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ.

God loves Jesus so much that He is determined to have many more people like him; therefore, has a Christ-like destiny for all.

“All things work together for good” is causative and means that God is working all things to result in our conformity in to the image of Christ—there are no accidents.

CALLING: God calls us to enter into His eternal plan for our lives.

This is where we get into the act. Up to this point, the passage has been concerned with God’s mind and purpose, but now we suddenly become involved in the picture. Those whom God has foreknown and predestined, He now calls.

God gives an open invitation for all persons to enter into His plan by faith of repenting of sin, turning to the Lord Jesus Christ, and being reborn into the family of God.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

JUSTIFICATION: God bestows the gift of worth to those who receive Christ.

Justification is the result of our choosing to receive the gift of worth without any merit on our part.

Those who are justified are valuable to God. They are forgiven, cleansed, loved, accepted, and wanted. They are placed in a position so impeccable, so immaculate, so pure and spotless that no power in earth or hell or heaven can bring any accusation against them.

GLORIFICATION: The “good work” of salvation that God began in us before the foundation of the cosmos will one day culminate in our Christlikeness.

APPENDIX:

The Five Points of Calvinism

1. Total Inability or Total Depravity: Man is totally corrupt and cannot on his own choose Christ. He is in bondage to evil.
2. Unconditional Election: God chose certain individuals unto salvation and to go to Heaven before the foundation of the world.
3. Limited Atonement: Christ’s redeeming work was to save only the Elect.
4. The Efficacious Call: The Holy Spirit irresistibly calls the Elect to Christ. They could not resist coming to Christ even if they wanted.
5. Perseverance of the Saints: “Once saved always saved.” All who are chosen by God are eternally secure. They couldn’t fall away even if they wanted.

The Five Points of Arminianism

1. Free Will or Human Ability: Although man was damaged greatly in the Fall, he is not in a state of spiritual helplessness. He is free to choose Christ if he so desires.
2. Conditional Election: Men and women are free to choose Christ—or not. However, God looked into the future and foreknew those who would receive Christ. These He chose and elected to salvation.
3. Universal Redemption or General Atonement: Christ’s redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved by faith in Christ; but, only those who believe in Him are saved.
4. The Holy Spirit Can Be Effectually Resisted: Man’s free will gives him complete freedom of choice; he can successfully resist the Spirit’s entreaties if he so desires.
5. Falling From Grace: Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to keep their faith (Not all Arminians believe this).