

Biblical Predestination to Glory
vs. Calvinist Predestination to Faith
Romans 9, John 6, Ephesians 1

BIBLICAL PREDESTINATION TO GLORY

vs. CALVINIST PREDESTINATION TO FAITH

**ROMANS 9, JOHN 6,
EPHESIANS 1**

God foreknew everyone who is "in Messiah," so he ensured their future sanctification and glorification by writing their names in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Biblical predestination isn't about the horrors of Calvinistic reprobation, but about the joy of guaranteed holiness and eternal security. Predestination is to glory, not to faith! Irresistible grace is after faith!

WAYNE O'DONNELL

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vs. Calvinist Predestination to Faith
Romans 9, John 6, Ephesians 1

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to defend the gospel and the character of God: 1) by showing Calvinist predestination is unbiblical, 2) by showing Biblical predestination is the joyful certainty of sanctification and glorification, and, 3) by providing better expositions of the three main Bible passages that cause good men to think they have to believe in Calvinism: Romans 9, John 6, and Ephesians 1.

I wrote this book in response to some mentions during the teaching of Pastor Jim Murphy, of First Baptist Church of Johnson City, NY, about the potential difficulty of reconciling the inestimable value and responsibility of every human being with the sovereignty of God. I thought the resolution would be quick and easy using, 1) Moses to show not all things are predestined (Rm. 9:15-16), and 2) Pharaoh to show predestined things can be accomplished in more than one way (Rm. 9:17-18), thus giving man genuine, limited, free choice.

Instead, it turned into a complete rewrite of my previous book, "Predestination is to Glory, Not to Faith," last published April 2020. In turn, that book was written in response to a passing comment about predestination to glory by my Systematic Theology professor at Veritas Evangelical Seminary in 2017.

My passion to promote the certainty of sanctification and glorification came from reading D. M. Lloyd-Jones' commentaries on Romans 5-8 while living in Honolulu in 1980. And my passion to defend the pure gospel message that "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life" (Jn. 3:36), came from my salvation experience after hearing Bobby Muir preach on that verse at a Word of Life church basketball tournament outreach in Danville, PA. in 1972.

In this book I used the KJV with my own replacements of antiquated words, replaced "Christ" with "Messiah" throughout, and transliterated Greek using the modern Greek pronunciation (no aspirated 'h'). Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from Kindle.

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BIBLICAL VS. CALVINIST PREDESTINATION

Biblical Predestination in a Nutshell

God foreknew everyone who is "in Messiah," so he ensured their future sanctification and glorification by writing their names in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Biblical predestination isn't about the horrors of Calvinistic reprobation, but about the joy of guaranteed holiness and eternal security. Predestination is to glory, not faith! Irresistible grace is to glory, after faith!

Calvinist Predestination to Faith

Calvinism gets the 'to' wrong. You won't find even ONE verse in the Bible that says any of the following:

"predestined to believe"
"predestined to faith"
"ordained to believe"
"ordained to faith"
"elected to believe"
"elected to faith"
"chosen to believe"
"chosen to faith"
"called to believe"
"called to faith"

Yet EVERY Calvinist teaches predestination to faith, directly or indirectly, because that's the heart of Calvinism, what defines it, and sets it apart from all other beliefs. If God chose who gets saved and who doesn't, which Calvinists think is God's purpose in predestination, he would also have to control who believes and who doesn't. (When I use the word "predestination" in a general sense, I'm also including election/choosing and calling.)

Augustine. "Elected to believe. ... Called ... that we may believe."

Barrett. "God had chosen these very Gentiles to believe."

Calvin. "We were ... ordained to faith in Christ."

Chafer. "Election is to faith. ... Predestined ... to belief."

Baptist Conf. "The elect ... are effectually called to faith."

Gill. "Men ... are called that they might believe. Chosen to faith."

Lloyd-Jones. "Whom he predestined, he ... called to believe."

Luther. "It was foreordained who should ... disbelieve."

MacArthur. "Foreknowing ... those ... effectually called ... to saving faith."

Piper. "'His people" are those ordained to believe, ...choosing them for this."

Sproul. "We are elected to faith."

Von Staupitz. "Decreed ... elected and predestined ... to faith."

Ware. "All those whom he calls heed the call to believe."

Westminster Conf. "[Those] elected ... are ... effectually called to faith."

Zwingli. "The elect ... are called to faith."

Augustine, On Predestination, 90239, 154526. Barrett, Reclaiming Monergism, 3756. Calvin, Concerning Eternal Predestination, 66. Chafer, Soteriology, 404. Baptist Confession, 3:5. Gill, Doctrinal Divinity, Book 3, Chapter 2, 2b5c, 2b7. Lloyd-Jones, Romans, 243. Luther, Commentary on Romans, in Boettner, Predestination, 251-252. MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 4454. Piper, Providence, 565. Sproul, Reformed Theology, 170. Von Staupitz, Eternal Predestination, in Oberman, Forerunners, 125. Ware, Still Sovereign, 224. Westminster Confession, Chapter 3, #6. Zwingli, Selected Works, 3687.

Biblical Predestination to Sanctification and Glorification

But the Bible never says we're predestined to faith, so God can choose who is saved; but to sanctification and glorification, to ensure us a holy walk and eternal security. As you read each of the following verses, you can rejoice, because whatever God predestines always comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

To Sanctification

Chosen to Sanctification

Eph. 1:4. "He has chosen [ἐκλέγω] us in him, ... that we would be holy."

Col. 3:12-14. "Put on ... as the elect [ἐκλεκτός] of God, holy and beloved, ... love."

1 Pet. 2:9. "You are a chosen [ἐκλεκτός] generation, ... a holy nation."

Predestined to Sanctification

Eph. 2:10. "Before ordained [προετοιμάζω] that we would walk in [good works]."

Called to Sanctification

Rm. 1:7. "Called [κλητός] to be saints."

1 Cor. 1:2. "Paul, to them that are sanctified, ... called [κλητός] to be saints."

Eph. 4:1. "Walk worthy of the calling [κλησίς] to which you are called [καλέω]."

1 Thess. 4:7. "God has ... called [καλέω] us ... to holiness."

1 Thess. 5:23. "God ... sanctify you; he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."

2 Tim. 1:8-9. "God ... called [καλέω] us with a holy calling [κλησίς]."

1 Pet. 1:15. "As he which called [καλέω] you is holy, so you be holy."

1 Pet. 3:8-9. "Love as brethren, ... knowing that you are thereto called [καλέω]."

2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to ... virtue."

To Glorification

Chosen to Glorification

2 Pet. 1:10-11. "Election [ἐκλογή] ... to the ... [future] kingdom."

2 Tim. 2:10. "The elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... obtain ... salvation ... with eternal glory."

Predestined To Glorification

Rm. 8:29. "Predestined [προορίζω] ... to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], ... them he also glorified."

Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy, ... before ordained [προετοιμάζω] to glory."

1 Cor. 2:7. "Predestined [προορίζω] before the world to our glory."

Eph. 1:11. "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestined [προορίζω]."

Called To Glorification

Rm. 8:30. "Whom he called [αἰρέω], ... them he also glorified."

Eph. 1:18. "The hope of his calling [κλήσις], ... the glory of his inheritance."

1 Thess. 5:23. "Preserved ... to the coming, he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."

2 Thess. 1:10-11. "He will come to be glorified in his saints, ... this calling [κλήσις]."

1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called [καλέω] you to his [future] kingdom and glory."

2 Thess. 2:14. "He called [καλέω] you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."

Heb. 2:10; 3:1. "Many sons to glory, ... the heavenly calling [κλήσις]."

Heb. 9:15. "They who are called [καλέω] will receive the ... eternal inheritance."

1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called [καλέω] us to his eternal glory."

2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to glory."

In the section "New Testament Predestination Verses," on page 101, I list all the NT predestination verses I know of that relate to all Christians (so excluding verses like Paul being chosen to be an apostle, etc.). The following table shows a summary of what we're predestined to (not faith). There are a few verses about being predestined to justification, but remember, justification is also after faith, just as sanctification and glorification are.

Table 1: Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses

| Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses - Predestined to Glory, Not to Faith | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Total (88) | Faith (0) | Justification (12) | Sanctification (32) | Glorification (44) |
| Chosen/Elected (27) | 0 | 3 | 6 | 14 |
| Predestined (13) | 0 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| Called (48) | 0 | 6 | 21 | 21 |

The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30

The Golden Chain of Romans 8 has five links of predestined salvation:

"Whom he [#1] foreknew, ... he also [#2] predestined, ... he also [#3] called, ... he also [#4] justified, ... he also [#5] glorified" (Rm. 8:29-30). Every link is the monergistic work of the Father - the same one that foreknew is the same that will glorify. And every link is effectual - the same ones that are foreknown are the same ones that will be glorified.

Since most Calvinists believe God predestines and calls to faith, even though the Bible never specifically says that, most Calvinists place faith after calling in the Golden Chain. And since we're justified by faith, they place it before justification in the Golden Chain.

Calvinist Calling > Faith > Justification

Piper (Calvinist). Between the act of [#2] predestination and [#4] justification, there is the act of [#3] calling. Since [#4] justification is only by faith, the [#3] calling in view must be [using logic, not scripture] the act of God whereby he [#3] calls faith into being. ... So the calling of verse 30 is the sovereign work of God which brings a person to faith by which he is justified.¹

But faith has no place in the Golden Chain because it's not the predestined, monergistic work of the Father. It's the monergistic work of man, as even these Calvinists say.

Murray (Calvinist). Faith is not the act of God; it is not God who believes in Christ for salvation, it is the sinner. ... Faith is an activity on the part of the person and of him alone. ... We alone believe.²

Frame (Calvinist). Election, effectual calling, and regeneration are things that God does. Faith and repentance are things that we do.³

Calvinist: Calling > Regeneration > Faith > Justification

So other Calvinists, recognizing the Bible doesn't say anyone is called to believe, say we're called to regeneration, and then that produces faith.

1 Piper, Five Points, 56.

2 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 111.

3 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 28.

MacArthur (Calvinist). God's effectual call to regeneration. ... Saving faith is the first and foremost result of regeneration, as the divine light shines into the sinner's heart, opening his spiritual eyes to the repulsiveness of sin and the loveliness of Christ. ... The effectual call of regeneration creates the very life that it commands.⁴

However, the Bible never says we're chosen, predestined, or called to regeneration or new birth either.

Calvinist: Calling > Union > Regeneration > Faith > Justification

So other Calvinists say God calls us into union in Messiah, which the Bible does say in 1 Cor. 1:9, which then causes us to be regenerated, which then causes us to believe.

1 Cor. 1:9. God is faithful, by whom you were called to the fellowship [κοινωνία, koinonia, union] of his Son.

Murray (Calvinist). Calling ... is ... that act of God by which we are actually united to Christ (1 Cor. 1:9). ... God's call ... carries with it the operative grace whereby the person called is enabled to answer the call, ... the grace of regeneration. ... Regeneration ... immediately registers itself in the conscious activity of the person concerned in the exercises of faith and repentance.⁵

Frame (Calvinist). Effectual calling ... is the work of ... the Father summoning you to the fellowship of his Son, ... to ... union with Christ; 1 Cor. 1:9. ... When God calls us to fellowship with Christ, ... regeneration is the first effect.⁶

But being called to union with his Son, doesn't mean union takes place right after calling in the Golden Chain; just like being called to glory, doesn't mean glorification takes place right after calling in the Golden Chain.

1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called you to his [future] kingdom and glory."

2 Thess. 2:14. "He called you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."

1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called us to his eternal glory."

2 Pet. 1:3. "[He] has called us to glory."

4 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 935, 938-9, 946, 1074.

5 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 96, 100, 108.

6 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 2254-4653.

Biblical: Calling > Justification/Union/Regeneration

Union and regeneration are acts of God, but they fit into the Golden Chain at the point of justification, not between calling and justification. By union into Jesus' death we're justified, and then because of that union into Jesus' death, we're also resurrected with him and regenerated.

Rm. 4:25. Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses [i.e. justification via his death], and was raised again for our righteous living [regeneration and sanctification via his life, δικαίωσις, dikaiosis, KJV has "justification", see Rm. 5:18 on page 50].

Rm. 5:10. If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son [justification via his death] , much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

Rm. 6:3-4. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death [justification via his death]. Therefore we are [also] buried with him by baptism-into-death, so that like Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also will walk in newness of life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

So union into Messiah and regeneration are both included within justification in the Golden Chain.

Table 2: The Golden Chain of Romans 8:29-30

| The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30 | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Man | The Father | The Spirit |
| | The Son | |
| | Death | Resurrection |
| | #5 Glorification | |
| Works > | | Sanctification |
| Faith > | #4 Justification/Union > | Union/Regeneration |
| The Gospel | #3 Calling | |
| | #2 Predestination | |
| | #1 Foreknowledge | |

God isn't free to do the following four things for us until after the legal problem of our sin is solved via justification.

- 1) Indwelling: Give us his indwelling Spirit. ["He will be in you," Jn. 14:17.]
- 2) Baptism: Into union with Messiah. ["By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12:13.]
- 3) Regeneration: By his Spirit into new birth. ["Born of ... the Spirit," Jn. 3:5.]
- 4) Sanctification: By his Spirit into a holy walk. ["The spirit of holiness," Rm. 1:4.]

Rm. 5:5-6. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us [indwelling, baptism, regeneration, sanctification], because ... being now justified by his blood [justification].

Faith isn't in the Golden Chain because it's not predestined. It's 100% the monergistic choice of man, enabled by hearing the supernatural word of God, "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). God doesn't cause our faith in any way, even indirectly by regenerating us or by putting us into union with Messiah. Because of his own righteousness, God can't legally give us indwelling, baptism, regeneration, or sanctification by the Spirit until the legal problem of our sin is removed by justification.

Calvinism Says Regeneration Precedes Faith

Sproul (Calvinist). When speaking of the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*), Reformed theology always and everywhere insists that regeneration precedes faith.⁷

Grudem (Calvinist). The idea that regeneration comes before saving faith is not always understood by evangelicals today. Sometimes people will even say something like, "If you believe in Christ as your Savior, then (after you believe) you will be born again." But Scripture itself never says anything like that.⁸

Never says "anything like that," Wayne Grudem; that "if you believe in Christ as your Savior ... you will be born again?" The youngest believer, untouched by the 'higher knowledge' of Calvinism, knows scripture repeatedly says that by the plain reading according to the normal meaning of language. Here are 23 verses from the Gospel of

7 Sproul, *Reformed Theology*, 226.

8 Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 703.

John alone that say faith precedes regeneration, and what they would say if a Calvinist God had written them.

Jn. 1:12. As many as received ... become the sons, even ... them that believe.
Calvinist. As many as become the sons believe, even them that receive.

2) Jn. 3:14-15. Whoever believes in him will ... have eternal life.
Calvinist. Whoever has eternal life will believe in him.

3) Jn. 3:16. Whoever believes in him will ... have everlasting life.
Calvinist. Whoever has everlasting life will believe in him.

4) Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.
Calvinist. He that has everlasting life believes on the Son.

5) Jn. 3:36. He that doesn't believe the Son will not see life.
Calvinist. He that doesn't see life will not believe the Son.

5) Jn. 5:24. He that ... believes ... has ... life.
Calvinist. He that has life believes.

6) Jn. 6:35. He that believes on me will never thirst.
Calvinist. He that never thirsts will believe on me.

7) Jn. 6:40. Everyone which ... believes, ... will have everlasting life.
Calvinist. Every one which has everlasting life will believe.

8) Jn. 6:47. He that believes on me has everlasting life.
Calvinist. He that has everlasting life believes on me.

9) Jn. 6:57. He that eats me, even he will live by me.
Calvinist. He that lives by me, even he will eat me.

10) Jn. 6:58. He that eats of this bread will live for ever.
Calvinist. He that lives for ever will eat of this bread.

11) Jn. 7:37-38. He that believes, ... out of [him] will flow ... living water.
Calvinist. He that out of him flows living water, will believe on me.

12) Jn. 7:39. The Spirit, which they that believe on him, will receive.
Calvinist. The Spirit, which they that have received, will believe on him.

13) Jn. 8:23-24. If you don't believe, you will die in your sins.
Calvinist. If you are dead in your sins, you won't believe.

14) Jn. 9:38. He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

16 - Predestination to Glory, Not Faith. Irresistible Grace to Glory, After Faith.

Calvinist. He worshiped him. And he said, "Lord, I believe."

15) Jn. 10:38. Though you don't believe, ... believe [so] you may know.

Calvinist. Though you don't know, know so that you may believe.

16) Jn. 11:25. He that believes in me ... will ... live.

Calvinist. He that lives will believe in me.

17) Jn. 11:26. Whoever ... believes, will never die. Do you believe this?

Calvinist. Whoever never dies, will believe in me. Are you alive?

18) Jn. 12:36. Believe in the light so that you may be the children.

Calvinist. Be the children so that you may believe in the light.

19) Jn. 12:46. Whoever believes on me won't abide in darkness.

Calvinist. Whoever doesn't abide in darkness will believe on me.

20) Jn. 14:11-12. He that believes on me, [will do] the works that I do.

Calvinist. He that does the works that I do, will believe on me.

21) Jn. 16:27. The Father ... loves you because you ... have believed.

Calvinist. You have believed because the Father loves you.

22) Jn. 17:20-21. Them ... which will believe ... [are] one.

Calvinist. Them which will be one believe.

23) Jn. 20:31. You may believe, ... so that believing you may have life.

Calvinist. You may have life, so that having life, you may believe.

Why didn't God write those verses the Calvinist way? Because God isn't a Calvinist God. God can't give regeneration to sinners until after their sins are forgiven at justification, because God's love for sinners is limited by his righteousness.

Calvinism Says Men Can't Believe

Calvinism claims men can't believe, but the Bible never specifically says that. It says unsaved men sometimes "won't believe," "don't believe," "didn't believe," "would have believed," and "how can you believe;" but never "can't believe," as Calvinism claims.

Jn. 4:48. Unless you see signs and wonders, you won't believe.

Jn. 20:25. Unless I ... see ... the print of the nails, ... I won't believe.

Jn. 3:12. I have told you earthly things, and you don't believe.

Jn. 5:38. Whom he has sent, him you don't believe.
Jn. 5:47. If you don't believe [Moses], how shall you believe my words?
Jn. 6:36. You also have seen me, and don't believe.
Jn. 6:64. There are some of you that don't believe.
Jn. 8:45. Because I tell you the truth, you don't believe me.
Jn. 8:46. If I say the truth, why don't you believe me?
Jn. 10:26. You don't believe, because you're not of my sheep.
Jn. 10:38. Though you don't believe me, believe the works.
Jn. 16:8-9. He will reprove the world, ... because they don't believe.
Jn. 6:64. Jesus knew from the beginning who ... didn't believe.
Jn. 7:5. For also his brethren didn't believe in him.
Jn. 10:25. I told you, and you didn't believe.
Jn. 12:37. Though he had done ... miracles, yet they didn't believe.
Jn. 3:12. How shall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?
Jn. 5:44. How can you believe, which receive honor one of another.
Jn. 5:46. Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me.
Jn. 5:47. If you don't believe [Moses], how shall you believe my words?

The Bible does say unsaved men can't "receive," and can't "come," but they aren't synonyms to "believe." The Bible never says unsaved men can't "believe."

Jn. 3:27. A man can't receive, ... unless it be given him from heaven.
Jn. 3:32. He testifies; and no man receives his testimony.
Jn. 3:20. Every one ... hates the light, neither comes to the light.
Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me, unless the Father ... draw him.
Jn. 6:45. [Only] every man ... that ... has learned of the Father, comes to me.
Jn. 6:65. No man can come to me, unless it were given to him of my Father.

In fact, the Bible specifically says unsaved men "can believe."

Jn. 10:38. Believe the works, so that you can know and believe.
Jn. 11:42. Because of the people ... I said it, so that they can believe.
Jn. 19:35. He that saw it bare record, ... so that you can believe.
Jn. 20:31. These are written, so that you can believe..

There is one verse in the Bible that says unsaved men "can't believe," but it's only talking about a specific group of unsaved men, for a specific period of time, and it's not talking about believing on the Son for eternal life.

Jn. 12:39-40. Therefore they couldn't believe, because Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I would heal them" [Is. 6:9-10].

John is quoting Isaiah 6:9-10, which wasn't about preventing the Jewish people of Isaiah's time from being saved spiritually, but from being healed as a nation. Isaiah starts out, "Ah, sinful nation, ... from the sole of the foot even to the head, ... wounds, and bruises. ... Your cities are burned with fire" (Is. 1:4-7). God told Isaiah, "Go, ... make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, ... until the cities be wasted without inhabitant" (Is. 6:9-11).

Isaiah 6:9-10 is such an important passage, it's quoted in all four gospels, ends the book of Acts, and the concept is expounded in Romans 11. (Mt. 13:10-15; Mk. 4:11-12; Lu. 8:10; Jn. 12:39-40; Rm. 11:7-25; Acts 28:25-28.) After the nation of Israel rejected Jesus as the Messiah in Matthew 11-12, he began teaching them in parables in Matthew 13, so they couldn't understand. "Without a parable he didn't speak to them, and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples," Mk. 4:34. He wasn't blinding individuals to prevent them from believing in himself as Savior, but was blinding the nation to prevent them from accepting himself as Messiah. If this had been about preventing saving faith, which it's not, that alone would prove men CAN believe, or it wouldn't have been necessary to blind a subset of men to keep them from believing.

Calvinism Says Faith is a Gift

Eph. 2:5-9. By grace you are saved. ... For [1] by grace [χάρις, charis, feminine noun] you are saved [σωτηρία, sotyria, feminine when in noun form] [2] through faith [πίστις, pistis, feminine noun], and that [τοῦτο, touto, neuter pronoun] [3] not of yourselves; it [not in the Greek] is the [4] gift of God, [5] not of works, lest any man should boast.

The meaning here is that salvation is: 1) by grace, 2) through faith, 3) not of yourselves, 4) the gift of God, 5) not of works. The "that," which is both not of yourselves and a gift, is a neuter pronoun, and so can't refer back to faith, which is a feminine noun. "By grace you are saved" is repeated twice. "Being saved" is the gift, by grace, through faith, not of yourselves, and not works. "The gift of God is eternal life" (Rm. 6:23), not faith.

Calvin (Calvinist). Instead of what he had said, that their salvation is of grace, he now affirms, that "it [salvation] is the

gift of God.” ... And here we must advert to a very common error in the interpretation of this passage. Many persons restrict the word gift to faith alone. But Paul[’s] ... meaning is, not that faith is the gift of God, but that salvation is given to us by God.⁹

Calvin is right it can't mean faith is the gift of God. He still gets it wrong though because he includes faith as part of salvation. But if faith is part of salvation, then you can't receive salvation by faith, or it would be iterative. But at least it would be a great relief if Calvinists heeded Calvin and stopped saying Eph. 2:8 says "faith is the gift of God." See "Eph. 2:8-9, Saved by Faith, the Gift of God" on page 109.

Calvinists say if faith were our own faith, it would be a work, and thus couldn't save us; but that gifted faith isn't a work, so it can save us. This is so unbiblical. In the Bible, grace and faith are always contrasted with law and works. "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," Rm. 3:28. If Calvinism were true the Bible would make it clear that "a man is justified by gifted faith, without the deeds of the law," Calvinist Rm. 3:28. "The gospel ... is the power of God to salvation to every one that giftedly believes," Calvinist Rm. 1:17. You can't take one misinterpreted proof text, like Eph. 2:8-9, to change the plain meaning of all the other references to faith in the Bible.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist). The phrase “thy faith” is found eleven times in Scripture, while “your faith” is found twenty-four times. Individuals are given credit that the faith is their own. Never is there any indication that ... the faith was a gift from God as Calvinism insists it must be. ... Christ said “thy faith hath made thee whole” to the woman who was healed by touching the hem of His garment (Mt. 9:22; Mk. 5:34; Lu. 8:48), to the blind man outside Jericho (Mk. 10:52), and to the Samaritan healed of leprosy (Lu. 17:19). Christ said, “Thy faith hath saved thee,” to the sinful woman who washed His feet with her tears (Lu. 7:50) and to the blind man outside Jericho (Lu. 18:42). “Great is thy faith,” He said to the Canaanite woman who desired just a “crumb” of blessing (Mt. 15:28). ... Each of these statements is made to the unregenerate.¹⁰

9 Calvin, Complete Commentaries, 531623-531653.

10 Hunt, What Love, 4266-4276.

What Non-Calvinists Get Wrong

Why Non-Calvinists Fight Against Calvinism

Non-Calvinists fight against Calvinism because 1) its doctrine of reprobation (that God picks a few to be saved and leaves the rest to be lost), is morally offensive; 2) because Calvinism contradicts the normal meaning of language when the Bible says things like God loves people, and people have personal choice and responsibility. Even Calvinists are naturally offended by the implications of reprobation.

Calvin (Calvinist). The decree [of reprobation], I admit, is dreadful.¹¹

The Groups Not Individuals Fallacy

Some non-Calvinists fight against Calvinism by claiming God chose groups, like the "in Messiah" group, not individuals; and that individuals have free choice whether or not to join those groups. Like if a ship was scheduled to go to London, then when you get on the ship, you become London-bound. God has predestined some groups, like Israel, for some things; but Calvinism is right that God predestined specific individuals to salvation from the foundation of the world.

Rev. 17:8. Whose names were ... written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

The Not Irresistible Fallacy

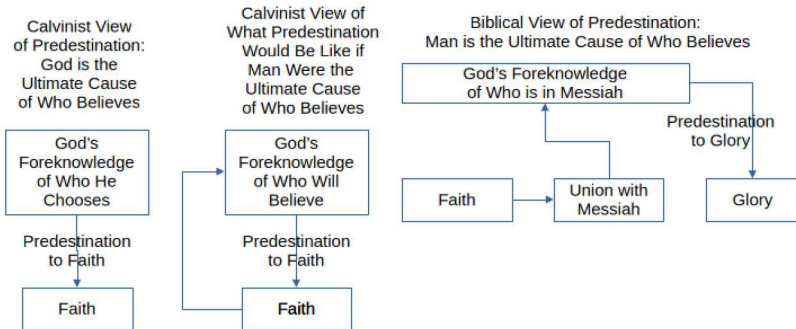
Non-Calvinists also fight against the doctrine of reprobation by claiming God's grace isn't irresistible because men have genuine free choice whether or not to believe the gospel. Men do have genuine free choice whether or not to believe the gospel, but Calvinism is right that grace is irresistible. It's irresistible after faith. "Having been justified by faith, ... we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand," Rm. 5:1-2. Irresistible grace is the joy of sanctification and glory, not the horror of reprobation.

The Foreknowledge of Who Will Believe Fallacy

Non-Calvinists also fight against the doctrine of reprobation by claiming God looked forward through the corridors of time to see who would believe, and then predestined them to believe. But this would be circular reasoning.

Anthony Badger (Non-Calvinist). The problems with the Arminian view might be as follows: ... What would be the point of actively electing some and not others [to believe] if God simply knew [who would believe]? Why wouldn't God just wait and let the chips fall where they may, so to speak? ... Why not just say that God knew who would freely believe? ... The idea that election [to faith] is conditioned upon what [faith] God foresees is simply no election at all.¹²

However, because biblical predestination is to glory, not to faith, there's no circular reasoning.



Underestimating the Implications of Predestination to Glory

Thankfully, many non-Calvinists realize predestination isn't to faith, though they don't give this point the importance it should have.

Arminius. "Is it election to faith? By no means; ... to righteousness."

Godet. "Not a predestination to faith, but a predestination to glory."

Pinnock/Wagner. "What ... to? ... They are not predestined to faith."

Flowers. "Predestined to become holy; ... never ... to believe in Christ."

Arminius, Complete Works, 23713. Godet, Romans, 9185. Pinnock/Wagner, Grace for All, 81. Flowers, Potter's Promise, 1089.

Calvinist TULIPS

Calvinism is often described using the acrostic TULIPS. All 6 points really say the same thing: God chose who would believe.

[T]otal Depravity - Men are too depraved to be able to choose to believe.

[U]nconditional Election - God chose who would believe.

[L]imited Atonement - God only paid the redemption price for those he chose to believe.

[I]rresistible Grace - The people God chose have no choice but to believe.

[P]erseverance of the Saints - The people God chose have no choice but to continue believing.

The [S]overeignty of God - God chose everything; men can't choose anything.

Table 3: TULIPS

| Calvinism & TULIPS | God is [S]overeign | |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Men | God |
| [T]otal Depravity | Men can't choose to believe | |
| [U]nconditional Election [L]imited Atonement | | God chose who will believe |
| [I]rresistible Grace [P]erseverance of the Saints | Men can't choose not to believe | |

But Biblically, predestination and election aren't about believing or not believing at all.

Predestination to Glory, Not to Faith, De-Calvinizes TULIPS

1) "Predestination to Glory" means God predestines our sure and certain glorification and sanctification through irresistible grace after justifying faith.

2) "Not to Faith" means God doesn't predestine anyone's faith, directly or indirectly, and thus unsaved men have to be the cause of their own faith, which means unsaved men can believe.

These two points de-Calvinize all 6 points of Calvinism.

[T]otal Depravity. Calvinism says unsaved men are so totally depraved they can't believe the gospel. But since God doesn't predestine or cause anyone's faith, it means men are the cause of their own faith. Thus, unsaved men can believe, and biblical total depravity doesn't include an inability to believe the gospel.

Rm. 10:17. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

[U]nconditional Election. Calvinism says, since unsaved men can't believe, God unconditionally elects some to believe. Now, the same members are in the justified by faith group as in the predestined to glory group. So either Calvinism is right that God predestines to faith those who are also in the predestined to glory group; or Calvinism is wrong because God predestines to glory those who are in the justified by faith group. We know God never predestines to faith, only to glory, so it has to be that God predestines to glory those who are in Messiah through justification by their own faith. Biblical election is to glory, not faith. The logical (not chronological) order is:

Man's Faith > Justification & Union in Messiah > God's Foreknowledge From the Foundation of the World of Everyone in Messiah > Predestination to Glorification.

Rm. 8:29. Whom he foreknew [in Messiah], he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son [glorification].

Eph. 1:4. He chose us in him [not, 'to be in him'] before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy [sanctification]

[L]imited Atonement. Calvinism says God only paid the redemption price for those he predestined to believe, but that's impossible since he doesn't predestine anyone to believe. Also, God can't look forward in time to see who will believe, and then pay the redemption price only for them, because men can't believe unless they have the gospel promise of provided redemption to believe. The only way men can be

the determinants of who believes and who doesn't (which they are) is if the gospel promise of redemption is provided for all. So biblical atonement is provided for all but applied only to those who believe.

Rm. 3:23-25. All have sinned, ... being justified freely ... through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

1 Jn. 2:2. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

[I]rrresistible Grace. Calvinism says, since men can't believe, God causes some to believe through irresistible grace. But since predestination isn't to faith, God doesn't cause anyone to believe. Biblical irresistible grace is to sanctification and glorification AFTER faith.

Rm. 5:1-2. Having been justified by faith, ... we have had our access ... into this grace wherein we stand.

[P]erseverance of the Saints. Both Calvinists and non-Calvinists believe faith and good works after justification are evidence a person has genuinely believed. "Though a man claims he has faith, and has not works, can [that kind of] faith save him?" Jas. 2:14. But Calvinists also believe faith and good works after justification are necessary to hold onto one's salvation and to merit eternal life in the final judgment when "God will render to everyone according to his deeds, ... eternal life ... [or] tribulation," (Rm. 2:5-12).

But ensuring our glorification is the whole point of predestination. Predestination to glory guarantees 1) all who have been justified will be glorified, 2) once saved always saved, and 3) eternal security. But all three are different from Calvinist 'Perseverance of the Saints.'

Pink (Calvinist). We have no sympathy whatever with the bald and unqualified declaration 'Once saved always saved.' ... Though the saint be "kept by the power of God" yet he himself has to fight every step of the way. ... In Scripture 'eternal life' is presented both as a 'gift' and as a 'reward' - the reward of perseverance.¹³

Calvin (Calvinist). God will render to everyone according to his

deeds, ... eternal life ... [or] tribulation. [Rm. 2:5-12]. Christ enumerates the works for which he bestows heaven as a recompense. ... Augustine is wont to give the name of grace to eternal life, because, while it is the recompense of works, it is bestowed by the gratuitous gifts of God.¹⁴

No, Calvin, eternal life is not the recompense of works, not even of gifted works. Predestination to sanctification includes love, good works, and post-justification faith as a gift of the Spirit. But we're "justified by faith," not by sanctification. So we can neither hold onto nor lose our justification based on our sanctification, including our sanctification faith.

Gal. 5:22. The fruit of the Spirit is ... [sanctification] faith.

Rm. 3:28. A man is justified by faith without ... deeds.

Jesus already went through the judgment for us, and there's no double jeopardy. God renders a 'not guilty' verdict at the moment of our justification, and that verdict is final. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies," Rm. 8:33. Only unsaved people will be present at the last judgment (Rev. 20:5-15). We don't have to wait until the last judgment to receive "eternal life" (Rm. 2:5) because we receive it the moment we're justified. And eternal life isn't eternal if it can be lost. Biblical perseverance is guaranteed by predestination to glorification to all who have been justified.

[S]overeignty of God. Calvinism says the sovereignty of God means God determines all things, even the thoughts and choices of sinners when they sin. But since predestination isn't to faith, God doesn't determine saving faith, and thus biblical sovereignty doesn't mean God determines all things.

I currently believe that whether God unconditionally elected a small number of people to faith, per Calvinism; or whether he foreknew all those in Messiah whom they entered into via their own faith, per the Bible; the same number of people will be in hell, because "wide is the gate ... that leads to destruction, and many there are which go in by it" (Mt. 7:13). But the difference is whether God 'arbitrarily' puts them there, per Calvinism; or whether they'll be there because of their own choices, per the Bible. (I don't think God will allow our evangelistic

14 Calvin, Institutes, Feaster 2021, 948-953.

failures to result in anyone going to hell even under free choice.) But we don't have to understand everything to know Calvinism is false, because the Bible simply and clearly says predestination is to glory, not to faith. So Calvinism's whole foundation of predestination to faith crumbles.

Many Good Men Think They Have to Believe in Calvinism

Why do Calvinists teach predestination, election, and calling to faith, when the Bible never specifically says that? Because if God created some men for the purpose of tormenting them, then God must control who believes. Romans 9:21-22 is the heart of Calvinist reprobation, and causes many good men to think they have to believe in Calvinism.

Rm. 9:21-22 CEB. Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, to make ... pots made for wrath, ... designed for destruction, ... to show his wrath and to make his power known? [I don't really think it would show God to be powerful to throw a peon man in hell. It would be more like a man in woman's boxing.]

R. C. Sproul didn't want to believe in Calvinism, but thought he had to, because he thought the Bible teaches it. I wish he had had this book.

Sproul (Calvinist). Predestination. I did not like it. I did not like it at all. I fought against it tooth and nail all the way through college. ... I resisted for well over a year. My final surrender came in stages. Painful stages. ... I wrote a note to myself that I kept on my desk. ... YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BELIEVE, ... AND TO TEACH WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS IS TRUE, NOT WHAT YOU WANT THE BIBLE TO SAY [caps in original quote]. ... The ninth chapter of Romans was the clincher. I simply could find no way to avoid the Apostle's teaching in that chapter. Reluctantly, I sighed and surrendered, but with my head, not my heart. "OK, I believe this stuff, but I don't have to like it!" ... I began to like the doctrine little by little, until it burst upon my soul that the doctrine revealed the depth and the riches of the mercy of God. I no longer feared the demons of fatalism or the ugly thought that I was being reduced to a puppet.¹⁵

Wayne Grudem doesn't want to believe in Calvinism, but thinks he has to, because he thinks the Bible teaches it. If you know him, please give him a copy of this book.

Grudem (Calvinist). [Reprobation] is something that we would not want to believe, and would not believe, unless Scripture clearly taught it.¹⁶

Luther was offended by Calvinism, but thought he had to believe it, because he thought the Bible teaches it. If only he had had a copy of this book.

Luther (Calvinist). It is this [reprobation] that seems to give the greatest offense to common sense or natural reason - that the God, who is set forth as being so full of mercy and goodness, should, of His mere will, leave men, harden them, and damn them, as though He delighted in the sins, and in the great and eternal torments of the miserable. To think thus of God, seems iniquitous, cruel, intolerable; and it is this that has given offense to so many and great men of so many ages. And who would not be offended? I myself have been offended more than once, even unto the deepest abyss of desperation; nay, so far, as even to wish that I had never been born a man.¹⁷

Edwin Palmer said Calvinism is illogical and foolish, but said we have to believe it anyway, because he thought the Bible teaches it. I wish I could have written this book sooner.

Palmer (Calvinist). The Calvinist ... realizes that what he advocates is ridiculous. ... To say on the one hand that God has made certain all that ever happens, and yet to say that man is responsible for what he does? Nonsense! ... To say that God foreordains the sin of Judas, and yet Judas is to blame? Foolishness! ... The Calvinist freely admits that his position is illogical, ridiculous, nonsensical, and foolish. ... In the face of all logic, the Calvinist says that if man does anything good, God gets all the glory; and if man does anything bad, man gets all the blame. ... So the Calvinist has to make up his mind: what is his authority? His own human reason or the Word of God?¹⁸

I urge every reader, to do what Palmer said, and "make up his mind: what is his authority? His own human reason [which is what Calvinist predestination to faith is] or the Word of God?"

16 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 685.

17 Luther, Bondage of the Will, 162.

18 Palmer, Five Points, 102)

What the Word "Glory" Means in the Bible

Since biblical predestination is to glory, we should know that the word "glory" in the KJV usually means "brightness," not "renown." The 1928 Webster's dictionary defined "glory" as "1. Brightness; luster; splendor." The shekinah glory was called that because "the glory [fiery brightness] of the Lord appeared in the cloud" (Ex. 16:10). Paul said, "there is one glory [brightness] of the sun, and another glory [brightness] of the moon, and another glory [brightness] of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory [brightness]" (1 Cor. 15:41).

As stars differ in brightness, so our bodies will one day be glorified to different degrees based on the amount of our good works and sufferings. "Our light [in comparison] affliction, ... produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17. Likewise, for the Old Testament saints, "[the bodies of] many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, ... and they that are wise will shine ... as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:2-3).

Peter, James, and John saw a preview of Jesus' glorified body on the mountain, when he "was transfigured before them, and his face shone as the sun" (Mt. 17:2). Paul saw Jesus' glorified body on the road to Damascus and "could not see for the glory [brightness] of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me," Acts 22:11. John saw Jesus' glorified body while writing the book of Revelation, and said his "face was as the sun shining in full strength" (Rev. 1:16). And when Jesus returns for his church at the rapture, he "will change our vile body, so that it will be fashioned like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

We've been predestined to ensure our future glorification. (Listen to Lloyd-Jones sermon on Rm. 5:2 at <https://mljtrust.org/sermons/book-of-romans/glory-begun-below>.)

JN. 6 - I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY, JN. 6:44

White (Calvinist). There is no [known] meaningful non-Reformed exegesis of [John 6:37-45] available. As numerous as the attempts of Arminian exegetes to find some way around the testimony of these verses has been, not even a plausible solution has been offered that does not require the complete dismantling of the text, redefinition of words, or the insertion of utterly foreign concepts.¹⁹

Hopefully, now there is. But if I knew of one that was already available, I would have directed your attention to it instead of writing this one.

The message of John's gospel is: 1) None can receive. 2) All can believe and receive. 3) All who believe will continue to believe.

Chapter 1. Believe to Receive

Jn. 1:10-11. The world didn't know him. ... 11 His own didn't receive him. 12 But as many as received him, to them he gave authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, 13 which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The world (the Gentiles) + his own (the Jews) = everybody. Nobody can know or receive him; but anyone can believe and then they receive. Who are these who can't receive him, who do receive him? "Even ... them that believe on his name, " Jn. 1:11.

No unsaved person can be born of God by deciding, through "the will of the flesh" (Jn. 1:13) to be born of God; but anyone can believe and then they're given "authority to become the sons of God" (Jn. 1:12). Who are these that can't be born of God who do become born of God? "Even ... them that believe on his name" (Jn. 1:11).

Chapter 2. The Wedding at Cana & The Cleansing of the Temple

19 White, Potter's Freedom, 153-154.

The Wedding at Cana

Flesh is like water sitting at the bottom of "six pots of stone after the manner of the [outward] purifying of the Jews" (Jn. 2:6). The Spirit is like "water that was made wine" (Jn. 2:9) that gets inside you and affects your behavior.

The Cleansing of the Temple

Flesh is like the failing efforts of external worship "in the temple [with] those that sold oxen and sheep" (Jn. 2:14). But the Spirit gives inward "zeal ... [that] has eaten me up" (Jn. 2:17).

Chapter 3-4a. Nicodemus & the Samaritan Woman

Nicodemus

Nicodemus ... came to Jesus" (Jn. 3:1-2) physically, but couldn't come to him spiritually. Flesh "born of water" (Jn. 3:5) can't enter the kingdom. No one can "ascend up to heaven" (Jn. 3:13). But everyone can believe. The Son of man will be "lifted up" (Jn. 3:14) on the cross "so that whoever believes in him" (Jn. 3:15), will be lifted up with "the Son of man which is [always] in heaven" (Jn. 3:13).

No one can "come to the light" (Jn. 3:20) because our "deeds are evil" (Jn. 3:19). The word "come" is used 118 times in the Gospel of John, more than in any other book except Isaiah and Jeremiah. Men can't come to Jesus spiritually by trying to come to him, like by changing religions, or joining a seeker-friendly church, or graduating from a Bible School, etc. But all can believe. And "he that believes on him is not condemned" (Jn. 3:18), and then he will "come to the light" (Jn. 3:21).

The Samaritan Woman

The efforts of the flesh are like water at the bottom of a well, and "the well is deep" (Jn. 4:11). But the Spirit "within [is] a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). All can believe when they hear the word. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rm. 10:17. Many believed on him "because of the saying of the

woman ... and many more believed because of his own word" (Jn. 4:41). Jesus will say in chapter 6, "The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life," Jn. 6:63.

Chapter 4b-5. The Nobleman & the Weak Man

The Nobleman

A nobleman's "son was sick at Capernaum" (Jn. 4:46), so he couldn't come to Jesus. So the nobleman went to Jesus "and begged him that he would come down, and heal his son" (Jn. 4:47). But like the Father sent his word, the Son, into the world to heal from afar; Jesus healed the nobleman's son physically from afar with his word by saying, "Your son lives" (Jn. 4:40).

But Jesus couldn't heal the nobleman, standing right there in front of him, spiritually with his word, like by saying, "You now believe." All he could do was to help him humble himself, and overcome his obstacles to faith, and encourage him to believe by saying, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you won't believe," Jn. 4:48.

Jesus didn't regenerate or change the nobleman in any way to enable him to believe. ALL THE CHANGE WAS IN THE NOBLEMAN'S SON WHO WAS FAR AWAY. Yet the nobleman "believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him" (Jn. 4:50), before he saw any sign or wonder, before "he went his way" (Jn. 4:50) and saw that his son had been healed. And when he got back, "his whole household" (Jn. 4:53) believed.

The Weak Man

Jesus Can Force Physical But Not Spiritual Healing

There was a pool in Jerusalem where the first person who stepped in after an angel stirred the water would be healed. And there was a weak man laying there who was so weak he couldn't come into the pool. So Jesus came to him and asked him if he wanted to be healed. His answer was ambivalent. JESUS HEALED THE MAN PHYSICALLY ANYWAY AGAINST HIS WILL, BUT COULDN'T HEAL HIM SPIRITUALLY AGAINST HIS WILL. The man reported Jesus to the

authorities, and "therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to slay him" (Jn. 5:16).

The Jewish leaders accepted the weak man's defense that Jesus was the one that made him carry his bed on the Sabbath, but they didn't accept Jesus' defense that the Father made him do what he did. "Jesus answered, ... "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do; for whatever things he does, these also the Son does likewise," Jn. 5:19. Anyone who can only and also everything God does, is God. "As the Father raises up the dead [bodies], and gives them life; even so the Son gives [physical] life to whomever he will," Jn. 5:21.

Jesus Can Force Physical But Not Spiritual Resurrection

Someday Jesus will force the physical resurrection of everyone, but he can't make anyone genuinely believe. If you drug a man, you can get him to want to do some things, but it's still not his genuine choice. And if Jesus can't do it, neither can the Father, because Jesus does everything the Father does. Even God can't do everything. "God ... can't lie," Titus 1:2.

Jn. 5:22-29. The hour is coming and is now, when the [physically] dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear will live [physically, most will be unsaved]. ... The hour is coming, in which all [the bodies] that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth.

The hour that "is coming" (Jn. 5:22), is the future physical resurrection of all. The hour that "is now" (Jn. 5:22), is the physical resurrection of Lazarus a few chapters later.

Why Some People Believe and Some Don't

Calvinists think some people believe and others don't, because God forces some to believe and not others.

Sproul (Calvinist). We believers must ask ourselves why we have come to faith while many of our friends have not. Did we exercise faith in Christ because we are more intelligent than they are? ... Are we better or more virtuous than our friends?²⁰

Piper (Calvinist). I rarely meet Christians who want to take credit for their conversion. ... If I ask ... "Why did you believe ... when you heard the gospel, but your friends didn't," ... very few believers answer that question by saying: "Because I was wiser or smarter or more spiritual or better trained or more humble."²¹

Jesus gave two reasons here why some people believe and some don't, and neither reason was that it's God's choice. First, the weak man, who may have been more intelligent and talented than other people, had been isolated from Jewish society "thirty-eight years" (Jn. 5:5), because of his infirmity, and he wasn't about to ruin his relationship with the Jewish authorities the very day he was finally able to start participating in society and the synagogue (in contrast to the man born blind we'll see in chapter 9).

And the Jewish leaders weren't about to go against their peers and their culture that provided so much of their identity and status. Jesus said, "How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God alone?" Jn. 5:44. He didn't say, "You can't believe," as Calvinists teach, but "How can you believe" (Jn. 5:44) while your goal is for people to like you? Some people spend their money on immediate gratification, while others save for the future. But at any time the wasteful person can choose thrift, or the thrifty person choose immediate pleasure.

Every unsaved person has a different mix of obstacles that makes faith more difficult, but not impossible. Nicodemus had to realize being a Jewish religious leader was no advantage; the Samaritan woman had to realize not being a Jewish religious leader was no disadvantage. The nobleman had status, but was able to believe because he humbled himself; the weak man was destitute, but he couldn't believe because he craved status. We are free to choose. "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. 11:24-25.

Second, "had you believed Moses, you would have believed me" (Jn. 5:46). Their whole lives, the rabbis had been in the habit of rejecting Moses law for the sake of the so-called 'oral law' (later written down in the Talmud), that God supposedly gave Moses along with the written

21 Piper, Five Points, 249-252.

law on Mount Sinai. For example, instead of writing scriptures on their doorposts where they could read them everyday as Moses commanded, they wrote them on tiny scrolls and put them in little boxes, and nailed them to their doorposts as the rabbis commanded.

And instead of acknowledging the visible part of God who had eaten with Abraham, wrestled with Jacob, and was speaking with them face to face at that moment, they edited the portions about the visible part of God out of their Targum Bibles, written in the vernacular of the people. Over the years they had already made repeated decisions to reject God. That's why more young people accept the gospel than older people. It's not impossible for them to believe, but it's more difficult. "How can you believe" (Jn. 5:44), not "You can't believe."

Chapter 6. Feeding the 5000 & the Disciples on the Sea

Narrative About Feeding the 5000

Because the weak man had betrayed Jesus to the authorities, Jesus had to observe Passover on a desert mountain. He "saw a great company come to him" (Jn. 6:5) physically, and Jesus fed them physically. Jesus even knew exactly how much each person would eat so there would be exactly "twelve baskets" (Jn. 6:13) of food left over, one for each of his twelve disciples, to strengthen their faith for what was coming. Like the manna after the Exodus, "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (Ex. 16:18). But Jesus couldn't feed the crowd spiritually. After they finished eating, they planned to "come and take him by force to make him a king" (Jn. 6:15).

Narrative About the Disciples on the Sea

Jesus sent the disciples away by ship. Then he slipped away to join them. A strong wind had prevented the disciples from making progress towards their destination. Jesus came to them, walking on the water, and when he entered the ship, it was instantly teleported to their destination.

Discourse About Feeding the 5000

Men Can't Come But They Can Believe

When the crowd realized Jesus was gone, they camped overnight on the mountain, and then hired boats to go look for him. When they found him in the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus told them that, though they had done a LOT of work to seek him, more than most people (they were even willing to risk rebellion with Rome to make him king), it's just not possible to come to him spiritually.

Jn. 6:28. They said to him, "What shall we do so that we can work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered, ... "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent."

The ONLY spiritual work unsaved men can do, is to believe on him, but they CAN do that.

"Come" Isn't Synonymous With "Believe"

Jn. 6:33-35 The bread of God is he which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world. ... He that comes to me will never hunger, and he that believes on me will never thirst.

The parallelism between "he that comes" and "he that believes" in verse 35 doesn't mean they're synonyms. It's like the parallelism in John 1:10-12. "The world knew him not, ... his own received him not, but as many as many as received him [which no one can do], to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name [which everyone can do]." It's not that receiving and believing are synonymous. No one can receive, but everyone can believe, and then they receive. Here, no one can come, but everyone can believe, and then they come.

Remember, no one can "come to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn. 3:20), but "he that believes on him is not condemned" (Jn. 3:18), and then he "comes to the light" (Jn. 3:21). No one can come to Jesus by coming. The gulf between flesh and Spirit is too great. "Between us ... there is a great gulf fixed," Lu. 16:26. The Father needs to "draw" us across that gulf to the Son. So believing and coming aren't synonymous; you have to "believe" before you can "come."

On the other hand, we know "eating" and "believing" are synonymous in John 6, because they both mention "eternal life" in their chains, meaning believing to receive eternal life. Believing, or eating, is something man alone does and isn't predestined.

The Believing Chains - Believe and Eat

Jn. 6:40. Every one which sees the Son and believes on him [has] eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jn. 6:54. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Whereas, we know "coming" is synonymous with "being given," and "drawn," monergistically accomplished by the Father. Predestined things are things God does, so their chains don't mention receiving eternal life by faith, and instead skip to glorification.

The Predestination Chains - Given, Drawn, and Come

Jn. 6:39. Of all which he has given me I will lose nothing, but will raise it up again at the last day.

Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me, unless the Father which has sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Faith Determines Predestination; Not Visa Versa

And we know it's the non-predestined eating/believing group, that determines who is in the predestined given/drawn/coming group, because eating joins us into union with Messiah, by which we are foreknown by the Father, and then predestined to glory.

Faith > Union > Foreknowledge > Given > Drawn > Come > Taught

| |
|---|
| <p><u>Jn. 6:56-57.</u> He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood, <u>dwells in me and I in him</u> [union in Messiah]. 57 As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he will live by me."</p> |
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Predestination in John's Writings

John uses different terminology than the other apostles, but has the

same predestination to holiness and glory message.

Eats=Faith

Dwells=Union/Foreknowledge

Chosen=Election (Foreknowledge & Predestination)

Given=Predestined

Drawn=Called

Come=Justification

Taught=Regeneration

Resurrection=Glorification

Election (or Choosing) = Foreknowledge + Predestination

The choosing in election isn't choosing 'who' but choosing 'to.' The Father has no choice about choosing 'who.' His righteousness won't allow him to predestine anyone to holiness or glory that won't eventually be justified. And he can't predestine anyone to be justified that won't eventually believe. Not that he looks forward through the corridors of time to see who will believe (though John 6 does say "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn't believe," Jn. 6:64). But he already intimately knows from the beginning everyone that will ever be in Messiah, since Messiah is eternal and part of the godhead.

If it seems to be a strange way of 'choosing' to choose only and all of those who are in Messiah via their own faith, remember that likewise Jesus 'chose' only and all of those the Father gave him. "I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world, they were yours, and you gave them to me," Jn. 17:6. "You haven't chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit will remain," Jn. 15:16. Predestination isn't about choosing 'who' but choosing 'to.' So in John, "chosen" includes foreknowledge and predestination, but "given" is predestination alone.

Here is a sample of predestination verses in the Gospel of John. None of them are "to faith." There are few more from John in the "New Testament Predestination Verses" on page 101.

Predestined to Justification

Jn. 6:37. "All that the Father gives [predestines to] me will come to me."

Called to Justification

Jn. 6:44. "No man can come to me [be justified], unless the Father ... draw [call] him."

To Sanctification

Chosen to Sanctification

Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you, ... that you would ... bring forth fruit."

Predestined to Sanctification

Jn. 15:16. "I have ... ordained [τίθημι] you, that you would ... bring forth fruit."

To Glorification

Chosen to Glorification

Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you ... that your fruit would remain."

Predestined To Glorification

Jn. 6:39. "All which he gave [predestined to] me, I will ... raise it up ... the last day."

Called To Glorification

Jn. 6:44. "The Father ... draw [call] him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Table 4: The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30 with John 6 Added

| The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30 with John 6 Added | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Man | The Father | The Spirit |
| | The Son | |
| | Death | Resurrection |
| | #5 Glorification | |
| Works > | | Sanctification |
| Faith/ Eat > | #4 Justification/ Come /Union > | Union/Regeneration/ Taught |
| The Gospel | #3 Calling/ Drawn | |
| | #2 Predestination/ Given | |
| | #1 Foreknowledge | |

All That Believe Will Always Believe

Jn. 6:45. It's written in the prophets, "And they will be all taught of God." Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes to me.

John's message is not only 1) None can receive, and 2) All that believe, receive, but also 3) All that believe will always believe. Union in Messiah gives the indwelling Spirit; so once a person believes, he believes forever, is always taught of God, forever comes, and can't

leave. "The anointing [of the Holy Spirit] which you received of him abides in you, and you don't need that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, ... and even as it has taught you, you will abide in him," 1 Jn. 2:27. Whereas, "the natural man doesn't receive the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14).

Discourse About the Disciples on the Sea

All That Believe Will Attain Glorification

Jn. 6:59-63. He said these things in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Therefore many of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said to them, "Does this scandalize you? 63 It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life."

The crowds couldn't receive what Jesus taught, because they hadn't been born again, because they hadn't believed.

Jn. 6:64-65. "But there are some of you that don't believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn't believe, and who would betray him. 65 And he said, "Therefore I said to you that no man can come to me unless it was given to him of my Father."

Notice Jesus said they can't accept his words because they "don't believe" (Jn. 6:64), not because they "can't believe," as Calvinism teaches. They had wanted to be Jesus followers; but you can't get saved by being a Jesus follower. This is the tragedy of modern-day, seeker-friendly churches whose goal is to make "More and Better Jesus Followers," instead of more believers, and more mature believers.

We can't come to Jesus. We can't follow Jesus. And we can't stay with Jesus. He is from above, we are from below. But everyone can believe on Jesus, and then they will be miraculously and effectively drawn by the Father, and come, and follow, and they won't be able to stop following. Predestination isn't about God picking some people for heaven and some for hell, as Calvin taught. It's about the joyous certainty of predestined holiness and eternal security.

Jn. 6:66-69. From that time many of his disciples went back, and no longer walked with him. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also go away?" 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

The twelve didn't fully understand at that time what Jesus was talking about, eating his body, but they still followed him, and couldn't leave him. They remained because they were guaranteed to persevere and reach their destination, despite the storms, like when they were teleported in their ship the day before.

Judas: The Result Was Predestined, Not the Means

Jn. 6:70-71. Jesus answered them, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for it was he that would betray him, being one of the twelve.

God didn't control Judas' choices. Even this warning from Jesus was an opportunity for him to change direction. But if that were going to happen, God, in his foreknowledge and providence, would have predestined someone else to have been there to be able to betray the Son. The betrayal of Jesus was predestined, "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23), but not every detail of that betrayal was predestined.

Lu. 22:2-6. The chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then ... Judas ... communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him to them. ... And he ... sought opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of the multitude.

There was plenty of room for free will. It's not as Calvinists teach, that predestination is some great, illogical mystery where man's choices and God's predestination are about the same thing, like different sides of the same coin. There's no contradiction between predestination and free will because they're about different events: predestined to glory, but whosoever will may believe.

John 6 Never Once Says What Calvinists Say It Says

Not once does John 6 specifically say any of the things Calvinists say it says. If Calvinism were true, you would think at least once John would have said, "No man can believe on me unless my Father draw him," or "no man can believe on me unless it was given to him of my Father," etc., especially since the word believe is used nine times in the chapter.

Jn. 6:37. All that the Father gives me will come to me.

Calvinist Version. All that the Father gives me will believe on me.

Jn. 6:39. Of all which he has given me I will lose nothing.

Calvinist Version. All which he has given me will believe on me.

Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me unless the Father ... draw him.

Calvinist Version. No man can believe on me unless the Father ... draw him.

Jn. 6:45. Every man ... that ... has learned of the Father comes to me.

Calvinist Version. Every man ... that ... has learned of the Father believes on me.

Jn. 6:65. No man can come to me unless it were given to him of my Father.

Calvinist Version. No man can believe on me unless it were given to him of my Father.

Chapter 9-10. The Man Born Blind & the Good Shepherd

The Man Born Blind

Jesus healed "a man which was blind from his birth" (Jn. 9:1). Afterwards, the man defended Jesus against the religious authorities, in contrast to the weak man whom Jesus could only heal physically. So they excommunicated the man out of the synagogue. Jesus found the man and asked him if he believed. The man said, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him" (Jn. 9:38).

The Good Shepherd

The Man Born Blind Was Already Saved

The man born blind was already saved under the Old Covenant before

Jesus healed his physical blindness. He defended Jesus against the religious leaders and tried to convert them. "Will you also be his disciples?" (Jn. 10:27). All he needed was to hear the new part of the message, that Jesus is the Messiah, for him to accept it.

Jn. 10:38. Jesus heard that they had cast him out [of the synagogue]; and when he had found him, he said to him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen him, and it's he that talks with you." And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshipped him.

Then Jesus told the man who had been born blind, in the hearing of the religious leaders, that the religious leaders were illegitimate shepherds, and that if he had been kicked out of the synagogue, it was because Jesus had gone before and led him out. "The shepherd of the sheep ... leads them out, and when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them," Jn. 10:2-4.

The Elect vs. Jesus' Sheep

People that are elect, are elect before they believe; but Jesus' sheep aren't his sheep before they believe. The elect don't live like they're elect before they believe, but Jesus' sheep always live like Jesus sheep. "The sheep follow him, for they know his voice," Jn. 10:4. Paul wasn't one of Jesus' sheep when he was persecuting Jesus, because that's not how Jesus' sheep act. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Acts 9:4.

Jesus' sheep follow the shepherd out of the sheepfold every morning for pasture, and back into the sheepfold every night for safety. The good shepherd parable isn't about becoming saved, because then it would be about a person continually losing and regaining his salvation as he "goes in and out and finds pasture" (Jn. 10:9). There is one verse about a person getting saved, but it's a man that goes through the door and becomes a sheep, not a sheep that gets saved. "I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he will be saved, and [then after that and from then on] will go in and out, and find pasture," Jn. 10:9.

The Parable of the Good Shepherd Isn't About Getting Saved

So this passage isn't talking about who will initially believe for justification, but about John's 3rd point: All who believe will continue

to believe. All Jesus' sheep will always continue to act like Jesus' sheep. Since there's no exceptions to that, if you see someone who doesn't believe, you know for sure they're not Jesus' sheep. That's how Jesus knew the religious leaders weren't his sheep.

Jn. 10:26. But you don't believe, because you're not of my sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, 28 and I give to them eternal life, and they will never perish.

Notice he said they "don't" believe, not "can't believe," as Calvinism teaches. Almost certainly, some of those very men Jesus was speaking to then, later believed. "Among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they didn't confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue," Jn. 12:42. "There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed," Acts 15:5.

John's Gospel vs. John's Epistle

John said the purpose of his gospel is to show that all who believe will receive eternal life. "These are written so that you can believe, ... so that ... you will have life," Jn. 20:31. But he said the purpose of his epistle is to show evidence of who has already believed and been born again. "These things I have written ... so that you can know that you [already] have eternal life," 1 Jn. 5:13.

John's gospel was written so we can know how to pass "from death to life" (Jn. 5:24). Whereas 1 John was written so we can "know that we have [already] passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 Jn. 3:14.

John's epistle says there's three proofs a person has been born again: faith, obedience, and love. But faith is unique in that it both gives entry into justification, and then also forever after is part of our sanctification and proof we've already been justified. "The fruit of the Spirit is ... [sanctification] faith," Gal. 5:22.

The Other Sheep Were Already Saved

Jn. 10:16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice; and there will be one fold, and one shepherd.

The other sheep that would eventually be brought into the fold were the already-saved diaspora Jews; and the already-saved, God-fearing, synagogue-attending Gentiles, that met with them. Many people were already justified before Jesus was born. "There was a [Jewish] man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him," Lu. 2:25. Also, Cornelius, a Gentile, "one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people" (Acts 10:1).

The evangelistic preaching of the early church wasn't so astoundingly successful because "these all continued with one accord in prayer" (Acts 1:14), or something like that, but because so many they preached to were already saved. The already-saved didn't lose their salvation when Jesus came, but only needed to hear the new gospel message about Jesus the Messiah to unfailingly accept it. "They will [without fail] hear my voice," Jn. 10:16.

That's one reason Paul always preached in the synagogues first in every city. "They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, as his manner was, went in to them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, ... that this Jesus, whom I preach to you, is Messiah. And some of them believed, ... and of the devout Greeks a great multitude," Acts 17:1-4. (The other reason is that, in God's eyes even today, "the gospel ... is ... to the Jew first" (Rm. 1:16).)

When God opened Lydia's heart to accept the new message the first time she heard it, it was because she was already a believer, already a sheep, and already "taught of God" (Jn. 6:45), under the old covenant, before Paul ever reached her. He found her at the regular prayer meeting. "On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, ... and a certain woman named Lydia, ... which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened ... to the things which were spoken of Paul," Acts 16:13-14.

Chapter 11. The Raising of Lazarus

Lazarus Was Already Saved

Jesus proved he could force people to be resurrected physically by raising Lazarus in fulfillment of his prophecy about "the hour is coming, and is now" (Jn. 5:25). We saw back in chapter 5 that both the Father and Jesus, could only forcibly resurrect men, like the weak man, physically, but not spiritually. The raising of Lazarus is an example of Jesus resurrecting a saved man, not a picture of God regenerating an unsaved man.

Lazarus and his two sisters were already saved. They were Jesus' best friends. Lazarus was described as "he whom you love" (Jn. 11:3) three times in this one chapter, as many times as John, the author of the gospel, was so described in the whole book. If Lazarus was in a tomb because he was unsaved, why weren't the other unsaved people there also in tombs. "Some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done," Jn. 11:46.

Lazarus was sick before he died. Are unsaved men merely spiritually sick before they become spiritually dead? Jesus told the disciples he was "glad for your sakes that I wasn't there, to the intent you may believe" (Jn. 11:15), because they would soon be facing the possibility of death. Would Jesus be glad when a spiritually sick man became spiritually dead?

Jesus told Martha, "Didn't I tell you, that, if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?" (Jn. 11:40). Can our faith count for someone else so they can become justified by our faith? After Lazarus died, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (Jn. 11:11). It's only the bodies of the saved that 'sleep,' the unsaved die.

Physical Resurrection Is an Important Topic

Ryle (Calvinist). It seems most unlikely that these words were meant to be confined to the rising of men's bodies, and were fulfilled by such miracles as that of raising Lazarus from the grave. It appears far more probable that what our Lord had in view was the quickening of souls, the resurrection of conversion.²²

Ryle is so wrong to minimize the importance of physical death and resurrection. Our own impending death, and the deaths of loved ones,

22 Ryle, Gospel of John, 1388-3395.

are some of the greatest challenges we will ever face. The disciples needed encouragement to face the possibility of death in a few days. "His disciples said to him, 'Master, the Jews of late sought to stone you, and are you going there again?' ... Then said Thomas ... 'Let us also go, that we may die with him,'" Jn. 11:8-16. Believing in the certainty of physical resurrection helps us face possible death. "If ... I have fought with beasts [in the arena] at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me, if the dead don't rise?" 1 Cor. 15:32. By misinterpreting the raising of Lazarus as a picture of spiritual resurrection, Calvinists miss the comfort this chapter was actually written to provide.

Jesus also needed encouragement to face death and burial in a few days. He would soon be wrapped in grave clothes and lying on the other side of the stone that sealed a tomb. Joseph of Arimathaea placed Jesus' body in a "tomb ... hewn out in the rock, and he rolled a great stone to the door," Mt. 27:60.

You Can't Rely on Gifted Faith To Be Saved

Kristian Stanfill's upbeat song "Glorious Day" with the lyrics, "you called my name, and I ran out of that grave," is widely sung in all kinds of churches, but it's doctrinally wrong. Lazarus was already a saved man. His resurrection wasn't a picture of God forcing someone to believe. We saw that the Bible never says God predestines, chooses, or calls anyone "to faith." You'll have to provide your own faith in the gospel message yourself, or you can't be saved.

Though the bodies of men who are physically dead can do nothing, the spirits of men who are spiritually dead do many things. To unsaved scribes, Jesus said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" Mt. 9:4. Even after unsaved men die physically, their spirits still do things. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment, ... and he cried, ... 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me,'" Lu. 16:23-24. And the spiritually dead spirits, of physically alive men, can believe when they hear "the gospel, ... the power of God to salvation" (Rm. 1:16).

RM. 9- ISRAEL MY ELECT, IS. 45:4. ISRAEL MY GLORY, IS. 46:13

Rm. 1-4. Justification

Rm. 1:1. The Gospel

Rm. 1:1. Paul, ... separated unto the gospel of God.

The "gospel [εὐαγγέλιον, euaggelion, good news] of God" (Rm. 1:1), is the topic of the book of Romans. But if God created the vast majority of men for the purpose of tormenting them for ever to manifest his power, per Calvinism, that would be the worst possible news ever, even if you weren't in that group, but were compassionate.

Rm. 1:2. Structure: All Men, Then Israel

Rm. 1:2-3. Which he had promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures, 3 concerning his Son Jesus Messiah our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

The whole structure of Romans is based on the concept that the gospel confirms, not contradicts, the Old Testament. Every major section of Romans is dealt with first from the perspective of the gospel and all men; and then from the perspective of the Old Testament and Israel.

Table 5: Romans Outline

| Romans Topics & Chapters | The Gospel & All Men | The OT & Israel |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Justification | | |
| Condemnation | 1b-2a | 2b-3a |
| Justification | 3b | 4 |
| Justification Guarantees | | |
| Sanctification & Glorification | 5a | 5b |
| Sanctification | 6 | 7-8a |
| Glorification | 8b | 9-11 |

Rm. 1:16-17. Message: Guaranteed Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 1:16-17. I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Messiah, because it's the power of God to salvation [all of salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification] to every one that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, 17 because therein is the righteousness of God [i.e. justification] revealed.

The main message of Romans is that the gospel is "the power of God to [all of] salvation because" (Rm. 1:16) it's the power of God to just the first part of salvation, justification, i.e. receiving "the righteousness of God" (Rm. 1:17). As we'll see in Rm. 5:1-2, salvation is comprised of three parts: justification (past), sanctification (present), and glorification (future). The gospel is the power of God to all three parts of salvation, because justification by faith is the doorway into salvation as a whole, including sanctification and glorification.

So the main message of Romans is the certainty of sanctification and glorification. Stating the main message in other ways:

**Justification always results
in sanctification and glorification.**

**All who have been justified,
are being sanctified,
and will be glorified.**

Irresistible Grace Is After Faith

Rm. 5. Justification Guarantees Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 5:1-2. The Three Tenses of Our Salvation

Rm. 5:1-2. Therefore having been justified by faith [justification], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Messiah, 2 by whom also we had our access by faith into this grace in which we stand [sanctification], and rejoice in hope of the glory of God [glorification].

Table 6: The Three Tenses of Our Salvation

| The Three Tenses of Our Salvation | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Past Spiritual Event | Present Spiritual Process | Future Physical Event |
| Justification | Sanctification | Glorification |

Salvation Past: The "peace" mentioned in Rm. 5:1 isn't talking about feeling peace in our hearts. It's saying "the wrath of God ... against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rm. 1:18), was appeased by "propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rm. 3:25) when we were justified, so now we are at peace with God. The wrath of God is the biggest problem anyone can ever have in their life.

Salvation Present: Justification always results in sanctification because justification gave us "access by faith into this grace in which we stand" (Rm. 5:2), and in which therefore, we never fall. Notice justification by faith gave us our access into grace; not access into grace gave us faith as Calvinism teaches. Faith > Grace, not Grace > Faith, per Rm. 5:2.

Salvation Future: Justification always results in glorification, or it would be presumptuous of us to "rejoice [καυχάομαι, kauchaomai, boast] in hope" (Rm. 5:2).

Rm. 5:3-10. Justification Frees God's Love for Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 5:5. Hope doesn't disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.

God loves unsaved men (Jn. 3:16; Mk. 10:21-22). But his love to them is limited by his justice. Only after the legal problem is removed by justification, is God free to love a person without measure, and "shed abroad" (Rm. 5:5) his love in them, primarily by giving them his indwelling "Holy Spirit" (Rm. 5:5).

Rm. 5:6-9. ... because ... 8 while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by his blood, we will be saved from [future] wrath [guaranteed glorification] through him, ... [and] much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [guaranteed sanctification].

The only thing God's justice allows his love to do for sinners is to send Messiah to die for them. But that's the 'hardest' thing a holy God could possibly do! "Messiah also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, so that he could bring us to God," 1 Pet. 3:18. Since God did that for us then, and now that he's free to love us without limit, he much more certainly will ensure our future glorification, even against our will. Blessed irresistible grace!

Rm. 5:11-21. Union in Messiah Ensures Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 5:18-19. As by the offense of one [man] judgment came on all men to sinful living [κατά-κριμα, kata-krima, the result of condemnation vs. KJV 'condemnation']; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came on all men to righteous living [δικαίωσις ζωή, dikaiosis zoy, vs. KJV 'justification of life']. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made into men that sin [καθίστημι ἁμαρτωλός, kathistymi amartolos, KJV 'made sinners'], so by the obedience of one will many be made into men that do righteousness [καθίστημι δίκαιος, kathistymi dikaios, KJV 'made righteous'].

Just as our original union in Adam caused us to be born as sinners, people who sin; even more certainly our union into Messiah causes us to be made into people who walk in righteousness. In Rm. 5:18, the KJV says "justification of life," but the Greek word used there, "dikaiosis," means "righteous living." It's only used one other time in the Bible, in the last verse of Romans 4. "Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our righteous living (dikaiosis, KJV has 'justification')," Rm. 4:24-25. The concept is that it's faith in Jesus' death that justifies us, putting us into union with Jesus in his death; but it's union in Jesus' life that sanctifies us. "Much more, having been reconciled [via his death], we will be saved by his life [guaranteed sanctification]," Rm. 5:10.

Union in Messiah also provides glorification, i.e. eternal security, because we can't go in and out of Messiah at will. It took someone outside ourselves to provide redemption as a way for us to go into Messiah, and it would take another action outside ourselves to enable us to go out of Messiah.

Rm. 5:20-21. Where sin abounded, grace much more abounded, so

that as sin has reigned to death, even so grace will reign through righteousness [sanctification] to eternal life [glorification] by Jesus Messiah our Lord.

Grace now reigns over us "as sin has reigned" (Rm. 5:21) over us. How did sin reign over us? With unavoidable, inescapable results. It didn't cause us to sin every moment, but it did guarantee we would live a sinful life in general.

Likewise, grace doesn't make us take every step in righteousness. We still make our own decisions, but there's no way we can avoid a righteous walk because of grace's powerful influence. Grace reigning over us is like a wind so powerful a sailboat can't tack against it. The fact of our sanctification is guaranteed, but the amount of our sanctification, our level of fruitfulness and maturity, is determined by our own efforts, "some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Mt. 13:8).

Rm. 6-8a. Sanctification

Rm. 6. Under a New Master: the Father

So justification guarantees our sanctification and glorification because of the way in which we were justified, by union into Messiah's death, which freed us from our old master; and resurrection with him put us under new management. "Being now emancipated from sin, and having become servants to God, you have your fruit to holiness (sanctification), and the end everlasting life (glorification)," Rm. 6:22. Romans chapters 5-8a don't say we 'ought' to live a holy life; they say we 'will' live a holy life, because we have a new master.

Rm. 7. Under a New Husband: the Son

Our Jewish brethren are also delivered from their husband, the law; and their new husband, Messiah, guarantees them a walk in the Spirit. "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit to death; but now we are delivered from the law, having died to that wherein we were held, so that we will serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rm. 7:5.

Rm. 8:1-13. Under a New Power: the Spirit

Rm. 8:1, 9. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Messiah Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin. ... You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his.

This isn't saying there's a subset of Christians in Messiah who walk after the Spirit and that they're not under condemnation, but describing all Christians. By dying to take away our condemnation via justification, Jesus freed God to give us his Spirit, and so now all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and are thus "in the Spirit." By this means, our justification ensured our sanctification.

Rm. 8:4-5. So that the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh think about the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Since all Christians are indwelt by the Spirit, and are thus in the Spirit; all Christians also think spiritually, and therefore walk after the Spirit. Guaranteed sanctification! And guaranteed resurrection.

Rm. 8:11. And if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Messiah from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

Rm. 8b-11. Glorification

Rm. 8b. The Individual Glorification of Believers

Rm. 8:14-27. Sonship Ensures Individual Glorification

Rm. 8:14-23. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ... And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. And [we] which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, ... groan within ourselves, waiting for the

adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Calvinists say they're confident they'll be glorified because they didn't make the decision to believe on Messiah in the first place, so they can't decide to stop believing either. That reason isn't found in the Bible. The Bible teaches our confidence is based on the certainty of our sanctification and glorification, because God's love was freed and we were united into Messiah through our justification, and we are under new management, and have the indwelling Spirit, - and because we were predestined to glory per Romans 8!

Rm. 8:28-39. Predestination Ensures Individual Glorification

Romans 8:28 - Them That Love God and Are Called

Rm. 8:28. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, ...

The first half of this verse goes with the first half of this chapter about how the sons of God walk, synergistically influenced by the indwelling Holy Spirit. God doesn't predestine our sufferings, but he does cause "all things to work together for good" (Rm. 8:28) for us. He is big enough to handle all the free choices of his creatures. He doesn't need to play both sides of the chessboard to win.

Rm. 8:28. ... to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The second half of this verse goes with the second half of this chapter about God's monergistic work in us. "Them that are the called" (Rm. 8:28) will one day be "glorified" (Rm. 8:30) because nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rm. 8:39) towards us.

God predestines specific things like our glorification, which means not everything is predestined. And the experience of man in the present, meets that which was predestined by God in the past, at the time of calling; they are "the called according to his purpose" (Rm. 8:28).

Romans 8:29-30 - The Golden Chain of Salvation

Rm. 8:29-30. For whom he foreknew [#1 foreknowledge], he also

predestined [#2 predestination] to be conformed to the image of his Son [#5 glorification], so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestine, them he also called [#3 calling]: and whom he called, them he also justified [#4 justification]: and whom he justified, them he also glorified [#5 glorification].

Romans 8:29-30 is often referred to as the Golden Chain of Salvation. It's comprised of five unbreakable links of God's monergistic works in our salvation: #1) foreknowledge, #2) predestination, #3) calling, #4) justification, and #5) glorification. Notice faith isn't one of them!

In Rm. 8:29 we see who, what, to, why, and how.

Foreknowledge

Who? Rm. 8:29. For whom he foreknew [#1 foreknowledge] ...

The "who" is "whom he foreknew" (Rm. 8:29). It's an 'inconvenient truth' for Calvinists, that the Golden Chain of Salvation in Rm. 8:29-30 begins with foreknowledge. Predestination wasn't based on arbitrary choice, as Calvinism teaches. It was based on those whom the Father already intimately knew from the foundation of the world, because they were in Messiah ("in Christ"), a favorite phrase of Paul, Rm. 6:1, Rm. 16:7, etc.), because Messiah is eternal.

And so God wrote their names in the "book of life from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:8) to ensure their future glorification, not their faith. "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord," (Rm. 16:13), not "chosen to be in the Lord." "He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4), not "chosen us to be in him."

God's foreknowledge didn't cause anything, or it would be identical to predestination. If foreknowledge was determinate, the word 'determinate' would not need to have been added in Acts 2:23, "delivered by the determinate [ὁρίζω, oridzo] counsel and foreknowledge [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God." Peter gave the churches foreknowledge that false teachers would arise, but that didn't cause them to arise. "There will come in the last days scoffers. ... Seeing you foreknow [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] these things, beware," 2 Pet. 3:3, 17. Also, the Jews knew Paul's background, but they didn't

cause it. "My manner of life from my youth ... all the Jews know, which foreknew [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] me from the beginning," Acts 26:4-5.

Predestination to Glorification

What? Rm. 8:29. He also predestined [#2 predestination] ...

Foreknowledge determines who is chosen, and predestination speaks their future glorification into existence by writing specific names into the Lamb's book of life, like Isaac was spoken into existence by the word of God. "For this is the word of promise, 'At this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son,'" Rm. 9:9. Think of that! Your name was known and written down thousands of years before you were born. Perhaps each entry includes the time of birth in nanoseconds, or some other way to avoid duplicates.

As mentioned in the section on John 6 on page 37, election is foreknowledge plus predestination, links 1 and 2. Calling and election thus equals the first three links in the Golden Chain. "Brethren, give diligence to make your calling [#3] and election [#1 foreknowledge + #2 predestination] sure," 1 Pet. 1:10. Also, Acts 2:23, "delivered by the determinate counsel [#2] and foreknowledge [#1] of God."

To? Rm. 8:29. ... to be conformed to the image [εἰκών, eikon] of his Son [#5 glorification], ...

The "to" is "to be conformed to the image [εἰκών, eikon] of his Son" (Rm. 8:29). The Greek word translated "image" here is the same as in Matthew 22. "They brought to him a penny, and he said, ... 'Whose is this image [εἰκών, eikon]?' ... They said, ... 'Caesar's,'" Mt. 22:19-20. Currently, the image, the appearance, of Jesus' physical body is shining brightly like when Peter, James, and John saw him on the mountain, when he "was transfigured before them, and his face shone as the sun," Mt. 17:1. And like when Paul saw him on the road to Damascus, when Paul "could not see for the glory [KJV for "brightness"] of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me," Acts 22:11. And as John saw him in Revelation when "his face was as the sun shining in its strength" (Rev. 1:16).

So the ultimate goal of predestination is the physical glorification of the

saints in Messiah, the last link in the Golden Chain. We're predestined with all certainty for our physical bodies to be made immortal and shining brightly like his glorified body, not to believe.

Why? Rm. 8:29. ... so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren.

The "why" is "so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rm. 8:29). This is the ultimate purpose of God. "Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance [glorification], being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that we would be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Messiah," Eph. 1:9-12. All creation will marvel at his glory (brightness) he puts on our bodies. And God has spoken the certainty of that into future existence for each of the elect personally from the foundation of the world. Hallelujah!

Calling

How? Rm. 8:30. Moreover whom he predestined, them he also called [#3 calling] ...

The how is: "He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus," 2 Thess. 2:14. "The hope of his calling ... [is] the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Eph. 1:18. The call is by the gospel, but it's not to faith; it's to glory. "He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory" (2 Thess. 2:14). If the call were to faith, everyone who was called would believe, and God's choice would determine who is saved. But the call, even though "by the gospel" (2 Thess. 2:14), isn't to faith, but to glory.

As for faith, "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts 28:24). And since God's calling doesn't determine who believes, faith is man's choice alone, and man determines the "who" that is saved. Which means all the "whosoever will" offers of salvation to men in the Bible are genuine offers according to the normal meaning of language (which people use until they're taught Calvinism).

Besides glorification, God also 100% effectively calls to sanctification, not to faith. "To them that are sanctified in Messiah Jesus, called to be saints [ἅγιος, agios, holy, sacred, set apart]," 1 Cor. 1:2.

Justification

Rm. 8:30. And whom he called, them he also justified [#4 justification], ...

You might think, "Ah, here we have faith mentioned at last, because justification is by faith." But faith isn't actually mentioned, is it? Like we saw in the Gospel of John, there are many things men can't do because they take a miraculous action of God, like to be born again, to come to the light, etc. But what John emphasizes over and over is that the one thing unsaved men can do, is believe. And then God does the predestined, miraculous part, and justifies, joins with Messiah, and regenerates.

Faith is 100% the choice of man enabled by hearing the gospel, that results in justification which is 100% the miraculous work of God. No one can directly justify himself, enter into union with Messiah, or regenerate himself; but all can believe, and then God will simultaneously do his work in them. Justification is predestined because God foreknows all who are in Messiah and makes sure they're born, and don't die of an accident or disease before they hear the gospel, etc., but he doesn't cause their faith.

Justification and regeneration are two parts of the same act of union in Messiah - justification via his death; and then regeneration, logically subsequent to justification, via his resurrection; though chronologically simultaneous. Union in Messiah and regeneration aren't included in the Golden Chain because they're included in justification.

Rm. 4:25. Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses [i.e. justification via his death], and was raised again for our righteous living [regeneration and sanctification via his life, δικαίωσις, dikaiosis, KJV has "justification", as we saw regarding Rm. 5:18 on page 50].

Rm. 5:10. If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son [justification via his death] , much more,

having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

Rm. 6:3-4. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death [justification via his death]. Therefore we are [also] buried with him by baptism-into-death, so that as Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also will walk in newness of life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

Table 7: The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30

| The Golden Chain of Rm. 8:29-30 | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Man | The Father | The Spirit |
| | The Son | |
| | Death | Resurrection |
| | #5 Glorification | |
| Works > | | Sanctification |
| Faith > | #4 Justification/Union > | Union/Regeneration |
| The Gospel | #3 Calling | |
| | #2 Predestination | |
| | #1 Foreknowledge | |

God isn't free to do the following four things for us until after the legal problem of our sin is solved via justification, because they all require the Holy Spirit.

- 1) Give us his indwelling Spirit. ["He will be in you," Jn. 14:17.]
- 2) Baptize us by his Spirit into union with Messiah. [By one Spirit ... baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12:13.]
- 3) Regenerate us by his Spirit into new birth. ["Born of ... the Spirit," Jn. 3:5.]
- 4) Sanctify us by his Spirit into a holy walk. ["The spirit of holiness," Rm. 1:4.]

And the Holy Spirit can't be given until our legal obstacle is removed via justification.

Rm. 5:5-6. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us, because ... Messiah died for the ungodly, ... [we] being now justified by his blood.

Glorification

Rm. 8:30. And whom he justified them he also glorified [#5 glorification].

So Paul brings us back to the same ultimate goal he taught in verse 29. "Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son [#5 glorification]," Rm. 8:29. This is the final link in the Golden Chain, the ultimate purpose of every link in the chain, and the ultimate purpose of the plan of God. "So that [his Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren," Rm. 8:29. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," Heb. 2:10.

Calvinists Add Faith Where God Doesn't

Even though Paul is careful not to mention 'faith' or 'believe' even once in all of Romans 8, Calvinists wrongly put it in anyways, because Calvinism is predestination to faith.

Zwingli (Calvinist). [#4] Justification which is of faith closely follows [#3] calling. ... They who have faith are [#3] called, elected, and [#1] foreordained. But why is salvation attributed to faith above the others? Why does Paul use this link out of the chain? I reply, because that is best known to us.²³

Lloyd-Jones (Calvinist). So the meaning [of Rm. 8:29] can be stated, ... "Whom he predestinated, them he also called to believe."²⁴

J. M. Boice (Calvinist). Why does [#3] calling come between [#1 & #2] foreknowledge and predestination, ... and [#4 & #5] justification and glorification? ... It is the [#3] call of God that brings forth spiritual life, of which faith is the first true evidence. ... After [#2] predestination, the very next thing is our [#3] calling, out of which comes faith which leads to [#4] justification. God has ... [#3] called us to faith.²⁵

23 Zwingli, Selected Works, 3565-3861.

24 Lloyd-Jones, Romans, 243-244.

25 A Golden Chain Of Five Links, <https://www.monergism.com/golden-chain-five-links>, accessed 3/15/26.

Rm. 9-11. The National Glorification of Israel

Rm. 9:1-29. Predestination Ensures Ethnic Israel's Inheritance

Rm. 9:1-5. Why Doesn't Israel Accept Jesus as Messiah?

Romans 9-11 Is About Ethnic Israel

Finally, we're ready to look at Romans 9. Remember the structure of Romans is that every topic is first presented from the perspective of "All Men" and then from the perspective of "Israel." Romans 8 was about the predestination to glory of individuals in the church. Romans 9-11 is about the predestination to glory of the nation of Israel. The future glorification of the nation of Israel is just as certain as the future glorification of every individual in the church. Or stated another way, if Israel can fail to be glorified, so can individuals in the church - but neither can.

Table 8: Romans 9 Within the Romans Outline

| Topics & Chapters | The Gospel & All Men | The OT & Israel |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|
| Justification | | |
| Condemnation | 1b-2a | 2b-3a |
| Justification | 3b | 4 |
| Justification Guarantees | | |
| Sanctification & Glorification | 5a | 5b |
| Sanctification | 6 | 7-8a |
| Glorification | 8b | 9-11 |

Ethnic Israel Is Still Special

Rm. 9:1-4. I say the truth in Messiah, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites.

Paul says the topic of Rm. 9-11 is Israel in the first verses of each chapter: "Israelites" (Rm. 9:4), "Israel" (Rm. 10:1), "Israelite" (Rm.

11:1). Romans 9-11 is about ethnic Jews, Paul's "kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rm. 9:3). Paul had to keep insisting he wasn't lying about the special sorrow he had for ethnic Israel because, even back then, as he was writing this letter to the church of Rome from Corinth at the end of his Aegean ministry, the large number of Gentiles coming into the church was overwhelming and marginalizing the smaller number of Jewish believers.

In numbers, Gentiles will dominate in the church, but God wants the Jewishness of the smaller group to have the same influence as the Gentileness of the larger group; like Wyoming and California both have two senators despite their difference in population (1 million vs. 49 million). "Remember that you ... Gentiles ... were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, ... and without God in the world, who has made BOTH one, ... to make in himself of TWO one new man ... in one body," Eph. 1:11-16. The two halves of the church body had been prophesied since the time of Moses by the "TWO wave loaves ... baked with leaven [the only sacrifice having leaven, which symbolizes having sin]" (Lev. 21:17) offered every Pentecost. Pentecost was fulfilled when God created the church, when "by one Spirit we [were] all baptized into one body, whether ... Jews or Gentiles" (1 Cor. 12:13), though the Gentiles weren't actually added until Acts 10.

In contrast to Paul, the Bible, and God; Reformed Theologians, Calvinists, and their forerunner Augustine, give no special place to Israel today, which is why they can't possibly interpret Romans 9-11 correctly. "You are all the children of God by faith in Messiah Jesus. ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, ... male nor female, ... in Messiah Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28). Yes, in Messiah, to become children of God by faith, there's no Jew or Gentile, male or female; but in the physical realm, there still is, or homosexuality wouldn't be a sin.

Eight Things Still Special About Ethnic Israel

The following eight things "pertain" (Rm. 9:4), present tense, to ethnic Israel, even during this present time:

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|---|
| Rm. 9:4-5. To whom <u>pertains</u> [present tense], [1] the adoption, and [2] the glory, and [3] the covenants, and the giving of [4] the law, and [5] the service of God, and [6] the promises; 5 whose are [7] the fathers, |
|---|

and of whom as concerning the flesh [8] Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

- 1) The adoption = national adoption of Israel at the Exodus
- 2) The glory = the Shekinah glory
- 3) The covenants = Abrahamic (Gen. 12), Land (Deut. 28),
Davidic (2 Sam. 7), and New (Jer. 31)
- 4) The law = the Mosaic Law
- 5) The service of God = the temple service
- 6) The promises = a land, a nation, a blessing (Gen. 12:1-2)
- 7) The fathers = Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, & his twelve sons
- 8) And as concerning the flesh, Messiah

Israel accepted the first seven things, but doesn't accept Jesus as Messiah. And Messiah is the climax of what Israel is supposed to inherit. Does this mean God is done with Israel? That Israel has lost its inheritance?

Rm. 9:6. Has the Word of God Failed?

Rm. 9:6. Not as though the word of God has failed.

Why Ask This Question?

Calvinists approach Romans 9 as though it looks like the word of God failed because not all Jewish people are saved, and then they proceed to say that's because God only chose to save some.

Sproul. Although [Paul's] kinsman had been given the ... promises, they had missed out on the redemption brought to them by Messiah, ... the promises of salvation. ... The majority of professing evangelicals ... deny the doctrine of unconditional election. ... [But] unless the Holy Spirit opens our eyes and ears, we will never believe in or choose Jesus.²⁶

But Israel didn't "miss out on ... salvation." The same number of Jewish people were saved and unsaved before and after Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah. The reason it looks like the word of God has failed is because Israel, as a whole, accepted the first seven of the eight things listed above that pertain to Israel, even while being mostly unsaved; but

Israel, as a whole, didn't rejected Jesus as Messiah, even while being mostly unsaved.

Previously, God made sure even unsaved Israel eventually accepted his prophets, usually after a previous generation killed them. "[You] say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we wouldn't have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses to yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets,'" Mt. 23:30-31. But when it came to Messiah, God didn't allow the unbelieving majority, and thus Israel as a whole, to accept Jesus as a prophet, or as Messiah, and just add him to their Talmudic, rabbinic culture, without also accepting him as spiritual Savior.

Not Every Jew a Part of the Israel that Inherits the Promises

Rm. 9:6. For they are not all Israel, which are [descended] from Israel [i.e., Jacob].

They weren't all Israel that were descended from Abraham, because Isaac was, but Ishmael and Abraham's other seven sons and their descendants became the Arab nations. And Isaac's son Jacob was, but his twin brother Esau and his descendants became the nation of Edom. But when you get to Jacob, all his descendants are Israel. God said, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel [יִשְׂרָאֵל, 'he will rule as God']; for as a prince you have power with God and with men," Gen. 32:28.

The word of God hasn't failed, even though the nation as a whole rejected Jesus as the Messiah, because the division between those that will inherit the Abrahamic promises, and those who won't, continued even after Jacob. Ethnic Israel will without fail inherit the promises, but not every Jew will be a part of the Israel that inherits the promises. This concept was well known among the rabbis of Paul's day, but they thought the continuing division was based on works.

Talmud. All Israel has a portion in the world to come, for it says, "Your people, all of them righteous, shall possess the land for ever" ... (Isaiah 60:21). ... And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come: He who maintains that resurrection is not a biblical doctrine, that the Torah was not divinely revealed, and a heretic. ... Also one who pronounces the divine name as it is spelled. ... The generation of the wilderness have no

share in the world. [And many other things, like insulting someone in public.]²⁷

The Three Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

It's important to note that the Israel that will inherit the promises includes no Gentiles. Gentiles aren't mentioned until verse 24. You may mistakenly think of yourself as a spiritual Israelite, because Abraham is, by his example, "the father of all them that believe" (Rm. 4:11), but do you also say, as Paul will say after a few more verses, "Isaac our father" (Rm. 9:10)?

There are three promises in the Abrahamic Covenant: the Land, the Nation, and the Blessing. Gentiles will only share in the Blessing promise: receiving the indwelling Holy Spirit, being "in Messiah," etc., but they won't share in the land or nation promises.

Table 9: The Three Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

| The Abrahamic Covenant | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Promise | Genesis 12:1-3 | Heirs of the Promise |
| LAND | "Get out of your country ... to a <u>land</u> that I will show you" | Ethnic Jews |
| NATION | "and I will make of you a great <u>nation</u> " | Ethnic Jews |
| BLESSING | "and I will bless you, ... and in you will <u>all families</u> of the earth be <u>blessed</u> " | Ethnic Jews & Gentiles |

The Antisemitic Doctrine of New Covenant Theology

I'll warn you here about a little-known antisemitic doctrine, New Covenant Theology, that began in the 1970's by men like Tom Wells of West Chester, Ohio, in case you ever come across it. It says even though it looked like, and everyone thought for thousands of years that, God had made the promises to Israel, he actually made them only to Jesus, per Galatians 5:16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not ... seeds, as of many, but as of one, ... which is Messiah."

²⁷ Mishnah Sanhedrin 10. Nezikin, Bava Metzia 58b.

But the word "seed," even in Hebrew, can be singular or plural, and you can only tell which by the context. Like we might say, "a seed [singular] fell out of the bag of seed [plural]." Paul was referring to Gen. 22:17-18, the only time the word is singular about the promises. "Your seed [singular in context] will possess the gate of his [singular] enemies, and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed." So, yes, in Messiah, the Gentiles share in the Blessings promise along with all the families of the earth. But usually "seed" is plural (or ambiguous) in context. "I will give ... to your seed [plural in context] ... all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their [plural] God," Gen. 17:8. Gentiles won't share in the land or nation promises.

Rm. 9:7-9. Isaac: Called to Inherit

Now Paul will give an allegory to identify who is in the part of Israel that will inherit, and who is in the part that won't. In the allegory, Isaac and Jacob will represent the saved minority within Israel that will inherit the promises, and Ishmael and Esau will represent the unsaved majority within Israel that won't inherit the promises.

Rm. 9:7-9. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, "In Isaac your seed will be called." 8 That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these aren't the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, "At this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son."

Both Isaac and Ishmael were the seed of Abraham, but only Isaac was "counted for the seed" (Rm. 9:8). Isaac was, in a sense, a direct child of God, miraculously born of God, through God's word, "Sarah will have a son" (Rm. 9:9); while Ishmael was the product of a natural birth in which Abraham and Sarah tried to help God out in providing the heir God had promised many years before.

The allegory shows the division within Israel through the generations after Jacob was between the supernaturally born-again children of God, versus those born only of flesh. The children of God start their lives as children of the flesh, but without fail eventually become children of God, and will never revert back to being children of the flesh.

Isaac was "called" (Rm. 9:7) to inherit the covenant, not to believe.

"As for Ishmael, ... I'll make him a great nation; but my covenant I'll establish with Isaac," Gen. 17:18-21. Not, "As for Ishmael, I won't give him faith; but faith I'll give to Isaac." Likewise the supernaturally born children of God within Israel are the heirs of the Abrahamic covenant. As usual, Calvinists get the 'to' wrong, thinking Isaac and the children of God within Israel were called to believe and be saved.

Isaac was called to inherit the Abrahamic covenant before he was even conceived, so God's choice of him wasn't based on works. This made his inheritance certain and sure because there was nothing he could do to lose it. Likewise for the children of God within Israel. The word of God hasn't failed, and won't ever fail, because the born-again Jews do acknowledge Jesus as Messiah, and will assuredly inherit all the promises, including present sanctification and future glorification.

Rm. 9:10-13. Jacob: Not by Works

Jacob & Esau

Rm. 9:10-13. And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, so that the purpose of God according to election [choosing] would stand, not of works, but of him that calls, ... 12 it was said to her, "The elder will serve the younger." 13. As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

The continued allegory shows the division within Israel after Jacob isn't based on works, as the rabbis thought it was, since Jacob was chosen even before his birth, and even though he was the younger twin. And since receiving the inheritance isn't based on works, but on election and calling, it's sure and certain, because there's nothing that can be done to lose it. The word of God hasn't failed, because the elect Jews inherit the promises without fail, including having Jesus as their Messiah, along with the other seven things that pertain to Israel, and including present sanctification and future glorification.

As usual, Calvinism gets the 'to' wrong. Esau could believe, and his individual descendants among us today can believe, and inherit the blessings promise, along with "all the [Gentile] families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3). And the children of the flesh within Israel can believe and become children of God. The passage isn't about God picking some to

believe and be saved, and passing over others; but about the elect within Israel being chosen to inherit the promises with all certainty.

Israel & Edom

The prophecy Paul quoted from Genesis, is about Israel and Edom, not Jacob and Esau. "The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two manners of people ..., and the one people will be stronger than the other people, and the elder will serve the younger," Gen. 25:23. Jacob never served Esau, but Edom eventually served Israel. The prophecy means Israel will not merely be in the Messianic Kingdom but will be head over all the other nations there. The resurrected David will be King (Jer. 30:9) ruling over Israel from Jerusalem, but he will only be a prince (Ez. 44:3; 45:7, 16-17, 22; 46:2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 16-18, 21; 48:22) to the King of Kings who will rule over all the kings of the world, also from Jerusalem.

In the part of the allegory about Isaac and Ishmael, Ishmael wasn't even mentioned by name, but here Esau is mentioned by name. Paul's quotation from Malachi "I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau" goes on to say, ... "the people against whom the LORD has indignation forever" (Mal. 1:2-4). Not only was Edom not chosen to be the head over all the nations in the Messianic Kingdom like Israel, but Edom was chosen to not even be in the Messianic Kingdom. The land of Edom will be a place of burning pitch, an object lesson, for the entire thousand-year Kingdom. "For my sword ... will come down on Edom, and on the people of my curse. ... And the land of it will become burning pitch; ... the smoke of it will go up for ever. From generation to generation, ... none will pass through it for ever and ever," Is. 34:5-10.

Israel Would Be Temporarily Cast Out of the Land

Like Edom, Israel was about to be cast out of the land via the 70 AD destruction and the 132 AD diaspora. But in 66 AD, when the Roman general Cestius Gallus temporarily abandoned his siege of Jerusalem, the saved Jewish remnant fled across the Jordan river to Pella per Jesus' words "when you will see Jerusalem surrounded with armies, ... then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains" (Lu. 20:21).

That God would treat the nation of Israel like Edom is a hard message. "Then the lord of the vineyard said, ... 'I will send my beloved son.' ...

But ... the husbandmen ... killed him. Therefore what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard [temporarily] to others. And when they heard it, they said, 'God forbid!'" Lu. 20:13-14.

Individual Edomites have suffered physically because of what has happened to Edom over the years, and individual Jews have suffered physically because of what has happened to Israel during their 1900 year sojourn among the nations: crusades, the inquisition, pogroms, the holocaust; and even after the regathering and statehood in 1948, frequent wars of survival. As Tevye, the protagonist in the musical "Fiddler on the Roof," said to God, "I know we are your chosen people. But once in a while, can't you choose someone else?"

Rm. 9:14. Is God Unrighteous Not to Reward by Works?

This Passage Isn't About Who Will Believe

Rm. 9:14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!

R. C. Sproul says this is one of the main verses that convinced him Calvinism is true.

Sproul. 2:30. Many people ... look at it this way, that from all eternity God looks down through the corridors of time and ... 3:02. those whom he knows will meet the condition of salvation, that is, of expressing faith or belief in Christ, ... on that basis then he elects to save them. ... 11:24. Now one of the things that persuaded me that the Reformers had it right with respect to election was contemplating this very question [Rm. 9:14], because I thought like this: if ... a person's election is based upon that person meeting some kind of condition ... who would raise any objection about that being unfair?²⁸

But Paul is careful not to mention faith even once in this passage, so that no future Calvinists would think it's about how anyone comes to believe. :) Romans 9 isn't addressing the problem Calvinists think it is, about how people are saved; and the interlocutor of verse 14 isn't asking about the thing Calvinists think he's asking about, God

28 Sproul, Video "Unconditional Election: What is Reformed Theology," youtube.com/watch?v=mg42ZdLOdyI, accessed 3/31/26.

arbitrarily choosing who gets saved.

When Would God Be Unrighteous Not to Reward By Works?

If God chose who would believe and be justified, as Calvinism teaches, there would be unrighteousness with God. Romans 2 says "the judgment of God is according to truth" (Rm. 2:2), because he will "render to every man according to his deeds, ... eternal life ... and wrath" (Rm. 2:6-8). That's why God couldn't just forgive our sins without Messiah going through the judgment for us "so that [God] would be just [while still being] the justifier of him which believes in Jesus," Rm. 3:26.

But even God doesn't have the authority to appoint a representative for anyone without their permission. Like the apostles in Acts 1 didn't have the authority to appoint Matthias as a representative for Jesus, and Jesus later chose Paul. God can't righteously appoint Jesus as our substitutionary representative, and put us into union with Messiah, if we choose to stand on our own self-righteousness.

When Would God Be Righteous Not to Reward By Works?

There are two relevant cases in which it is righteous of God to not reward according to works. First, in respect to inheritance. Resurrection is based on eternal life, but glorification is grace on top of that, going beyond having eternal life, to being in Messiah and sharing in his own glory. "In Him the tribes of Adam boast, more blessings than their father lost," Jesus Shall Reign, Isaac Watts, 1719 AD.

Second, in respect to nations in the physical realm. Individual Edomites prospered or suffered along with their nation without regards to their individual works; and individual Israelites prospered or suffered along with their nation without regard to their individual works; but all will be taken into account and made right in the last judgment.

Paul will now give another allegory where Moses will represent the saved minority within Israel, and Pharaoh will represent the unsaved majority within Israel.

Rm. 9:15-16. Moses: Grace

God Gave Moses a Foretaste of Glorification

Rm. 9:15-16. For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 16 So then it's not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.

After Aaron and the Jewish people sinned regarding the golden calf, God told Moses he wanted to destroy the people. "Let me alone, so that my wrath may wax hot against them, and so that I may consume them, and I will make of you a great nation," Ex. 32:10. But Moses interceded for the people. "Moses besought the Lord his God, ... and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do to his people. ... And the Lord said to Moses, 'I will do this thing also that you have spoken, for you have found grace in my sight, and I know you by name.'" Ex. 32:11; 33:17. Then, summoning up all his Jewish chutzpah, Moses went further and asked to see God's glory.

Ex. 32:18-19. And [Moses] said, 'I beg you, show me your glory.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, ... and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.'

And God gave Moses a foretaste of our future glorification. "The skin of his face shone, and ... Moses ... put a vail on his face," Ex. 34:30-33. God wasn't obligated to forgive Israel's sin; he could have killed them physically and restarted the nation from Moses. And he wasn't obligated to give Moses a foretaste of glorification.

Jesus' parable of the householder in Matthew 20, shows it's "lawful for me to do what I will with mine own" (Mt. 20:15). As long as everyone got paid at least the agreed upon amount, it wasn't unjust of the householder to give some workers more money than the agreed upon amount. That's the nature of grace. God can give any blessings beyond eternal life that he wishes. After justification, he gives the Holy Spirit, sanctification, and ultimately glorification.

Not Everything is Predestined

Additionally, the example of Moses shows that not everything is predestined, and therefore men have simple, genuine free choice in the things that aren't predestined. There's no need to appeal to some logically contradictory, mysterious 'compatibilism' where God controls and man freely chooses about the same thing.

Moses was predestined to succeed at bringing the Jewish people out of Egypt to Canaan because that's what he was called to do. "I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt," Ex. 3:10. Moses had no choice about that because God's prophets always accomplish the purpose God calls them to. Moses was obligated to intercede for Israel, and God was obligated to make him succeed in his ministry. But Moses' request to see God's glory was something optional, something beyond what was prophesied, promised, or predestined; yet graciously granted.

Man Has Genuine Free Will in Things Not Predestined

The free will of both God and man are free to act within boundaries. Even God can't do everything. He can't lie - not because anything he could say would then redefine truth, but because he is holy and doesn't sin. Once God makes a promise, he has to keep it, for his name's sake, because he is righteous by nature. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that can't lie, promised before the world began," Titus 1:2. And man has genuine choice in the things that aren't predestined. God can handle all the possible outcomes of every choice men might make, so that what he promises will still come to pass.

God's grace to Moses shows it's not unrighteous of God to force the elect Jews to inherit all God has for them, including having Jesus as their Messiah. But why didn't the unsaved majority of Israel go along with them about accepting Jesus as the Messiah, like they went along with accepting the other seven things that pertain to Israel?

Rm. 9:17-18. Pharaoh: Hardening

Pharaoh Wasn't Hardened About Faith

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| Rm. 9:17-18. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I have [1] raised you up, so that I can [2] show my power in you, and so that [3] my name will be declared throughout all the |
|---|

earth." 18 Therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens.

Calvinists get the 'to' wrong about Pharaoh's hardening. God hardened Pharaoh's heart to stop him from giving in about letting the people go, so God could perform all ten plagues, so God's name would be "declared throughout all the earth" (Ex. 9:16, Rm. 9:17), not to stop him from believing. (Besides, if Calvin's view of total depravity were true, God wouldn't need to harden anyone's heart to stop them from believing.)

Because Sproul wrongly thinks God hardens people to keep them from believing and being saved, he also has to try to defend God by saying God didn't actively harden Pharaoh. Sproul, "In the act of passive hardening, God makes a decision to remove the restraints; the wicked part of the process is done by Pharaoh himself. God does no violence to Pharaoh's will, ... he merely gives Pharaoh more freedom."²⁹ But it's obvious from the verses below that God actively hardened Pharaoh's heart, not to faith, but to letting the people go.

As a side note, the word "hardened" in the KJV is translated from three different Hebrew words: כָּזַק, chazaq, strengthened; קָשָׁה, kashah, stubborned; and כָּבַד, kavad, hardened, which I've distinguished in the verses.

Ex. 4:21. I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] his heart, so that he will not let the people go.

Ex. 7:2-4. Speak to Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden [kashah, stubborn] Pharaoh's heart, ... so that I may lay my hand on Egypt, and bring ... my people ... out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.

Ex. 7:13-14. And he hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, ... and ... said, ... "Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuses to let the people go."

Ex. 8:32. And Pharaoh hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

Ex. 9:7. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened [kavad,

hardened], and he did not let the people go.

Ex. 9:12-16 KJV. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not to them. ... "Stand before Pharaoh, and say, ... 'Let my people go, so that they may serve me. For I will at this time send ALL my plagues ... so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. ... For now I will stretch out my hand, so that I may smite you and your people with pestilence; and you will be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause I have raised you up, to show in you my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

The NIV interprets the end of this passage a little differently: Ex. 9:15-16. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have spared you for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Ex. 9:34-35. Pharaoh ... hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened [chazaq, strengthened], neither would he let the children of Israel go.

Ex. 10:1-3. I have hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart, and the heart of his servants, so that I might show these my signs before him, and so that ... you may know how that I am the LORD. And Moses ... came in to Pharaoh, and said to him ..., "Let my people go."

Ex. 10:20. But the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

Ex. 10:27. But the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

Ex. 11:10. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

The first time Moses asked Pharaoh to let the people go, Pharaoh gave a genuine heartfelt denial, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I don't know the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Ex. 5:1-2). And Pharaoh never changed his opinion about that, though he was always free to do so. Nevertheless, multiple times Pharaoh

would have changed his mind about letting the people, and logically so, in order to avoid pain. Before the eighth plague of locusts Pharaoh's advisors told him, "Let the men go so that they may serve the Lord their God. Don't you know yet that Egypt is destroyed?" (Ex. 10:7).

God not only hardened Pharaoh's heart, but also the hearts of all the Egyptians, not to keep anyone from believing, but so they would pursue after the Israelites - an illogical thing for them to do after Egypt was destroyed, and after every house had lost its firstborn son. Pharaoh and the Egyptians back then could still believe, and people of Egyptian descent today can still believe, and inherit the Abrahamic blessings promise along with all the families of the earth.

Ex. 14:4. And I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] Pharaoh's heart, so that he will follow after them; and I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host, so that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.

Ex. 14:8. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel.

Ex. 14:17. I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow them, and I will get myself honor on Pharaoh and on all his army.

God made the Egyptian army, the most powerful on earth at the time, pursue after Israel so they would be destroyed in the sea, so the Canaanites and other surrounding peoples would hear about it. When Rahab hid Israel's spies forty years later, she said, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and your terror is fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when you came out of Egypt" (Josh. 2:9-10). Over 400 years after that, the "Philistines were afraid, for they said, ... 'Woe to us! Who will deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues,'" 1 Sam. 4:7-9.

Predestined Things Can be Fulfilled in More than One Way

Additionally, Pharaoh shows that things that are predestined can be fulfilled in more than one way, and that men have simple, genuine free choice as to how things that are predestined can be accomplished.

There were three limited things Pharaoh was predestined to per Ex. 9:16. 1) To become Pharaoh, "for this cause I have raised you up," 2) to manifest God's power, "to show my power in you," and 3) to manifest God's name in the whole world, "that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." He wasn't chosen 'not to believe,' as Calvinism teaches, or to be hardened about letting the people go, or to be plagued, or to be destroyed in the Sea. Pharaoh could have made different choices which would have accomplished what was predestined in an alternative way.

What should Pharaoh have done when Moses first revealed the one true God to him and validated his message with miracles? He should have humbled himself and asked Moses to teach him about God. Then he should have used his army to escort Israel to Canaan, like Joseph's Pharaoh sent his army to escort Jacob's bones to Hebron. This would have accomplished God's purpose that his name would have been declared throughout the whole earth.

Gen. 50:7-13. Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, ... and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ... and ... both chariots and horsemen, ... a very great company. ... And ... they mourned with a great ... lamentation. ... And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning, ... they said, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians."

But instead God's power and name was proclaimed via Egypt's destruction rather than via Pharaoh's submission. (For a more complete consideration of the contest between Moses and Pharaoh see "The Exodus You Almost Passed Over," by Rabbi David Fohrman.)

Israel Could Have Accepted the Kingdom in Jesus' Day

The generation of Israel to which Jesus offered the Messianic Kingdom had a genuine choice. Even though "Elijah must come first" (Mt. 17:10) before the Messianic Kingdom, per Malachi 4:5. Jesus said, "if you will receive it [i.e. would have received it], this [John the Baptist] is [i.e. would have been] Elijah, which was to come," Mt. 11:14.

If Israel had accepted Jesus as Messiah, the Romans would have come and crucified him as a rival, and he would have risen and ascended to heaven; and instead of Titus, it would have been the Antichrist that

destroyed Jerusalem, and then Jesus would have returned and set up the kingdom, as prophesied in Zech. 14, and then we would have been born during the Messianic Kingdom, when birth rates will be increased.

So the predestined establishment of the Messianic Kingdom could have been accomplished during that generation, if Israel chose to accept Jesus; or, as it will be, during a future generation of Israel, since that generation of Israel chose to reject Jesus. What God predestines he always accomplishes, and yet he allows the free will of men to determine via what means his purposes are accomplished.

God's Sovereignty Doesn't Require Detailed Determinism

God is sovereign enough to give up some of his sovereignty. Or stated another way, he is still sovereign when he gives men limited free choice within boundaries. Like a man who puts fish in a pond is still sovereign over them even though he doesn't control every gill movement. "The LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, [Job] is in your hand; but save his life'" Job 2:7. God wouldn't have had to limit Satan's choices if God was actually making all Satan's choices for him anyway.

This is just common sense, and the normal understanding of language, and of God's actions per scripture throughout the centuries, until Calvin popularized Augustine's stoic Greek philosophy of determinism. Which version of God is more powerful and more sovereign; the one who needs to play both sides of the chessboard to win, or the one that can handle all the free will choices of men and still accomplish his purposes?

Some Ways God Hardens Israel

Like Pharaoh genuinely and freely refused to let Israel go, before God hardened him and the Egyptians; so also Israel's rulers freely rejected Jesus' ministry in Matthew 11 and 12, before Jesus started speaking to them in parables to hide the truth from them in Mathew 13. If God had let them, Israel could have accepted the Messiah, just adding him to their cultural heritage, while still being mostly unsaved, like the Gentile, so-called "Christian," nations today.

God prevents that from occurring because of obstacles he's allowed to develop over the years. One obstacle is the doctrine of the trinity, which

is found throughout the Old Testament, beginning in Genesis 1:1-2, "In the beginning God [the Father] created the heavens and the earth, ... and the Spirit of God [the Spirit] moved on the face of the water, and God said [the Son, the Word]." But the rabbis have suppressed that doctrine.

And another obstacle is the "Christian-in-name-only" persecution of Jewish people through the centuries, during the crusades, the inquisition, the pogroms, the holocaust, etc. But if Israel had added the Messiah to their Judaism, that would have been an obstacle to the Gentiles being able to hear and accept the gospel as Gentiles.

Israel Makes God's Name & Power Known Throughout the Earth

Like Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Israel is being used today by God to make his name and power known throughout the earth. Because of the Jewish diaspora, all the world knows, and must come to an opinion about, the story of the Jews, the people of God; and about their book, the Bible. (Even all the books of the New Testament were written by Jews. Luke wasn't a Gentile. "Unto [the Jewish people] were committed the oracles of God," Rm. 3:2.)

Rm. 9:19. Why Does God Find Fault for What He Determines?

The Spiritual vs. the Physical Realm

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|---|
| Rm. 9:19. You will say to me then, "Why does he yet find fault? For who has resisted his will?" |
|---|

In the spiritual realm, where there's no ability, there's no responsibility. God doesn't find fault with anyone, or reward anyone, for anything he himself causes or prevents. Paul said he won't receive any reward for preaching the gospel through the grace given to him in his apostleship, so he preached for free so he would get a reward for his own choices and actions.

1 Cor. 9:16-18. For though I preach the gospel, ... necessity is laid on me; yes, woe is to me if I don't preach the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me [i.e., I'll still

preach the gospel even if against my will, because God's prophets and apostles never fail to accomplish the tasks God appoints them to do, like Jonah] 18 What is my reward then? Truly that, when I preach the gospel, I may [at my option] make the gospel of Messiah without charge.

Adam and Our Inherited Total Depravity

God had to make a choice after Adam and Eve sinned. He could have 1) killed them for their disobedience and started over fresh with a new couple; or 2) he could have let Adam and Eve live and have children that are slaves to sin, and provide redemption for them and their children. But it would have been unrighteous of God to have allowed Adam and Eve's children to be born with no way to avoid being sinful, and also no way to accept salvation, as Calvinism teaches. God chose to allow Adam and Eve's race to continue, in a world of sin and suffering, so he could provide salvation to Adam and Eve along with their descendants, and raise all who accept it, to a higher place "in Messiah" than could ever have been achieved through the mere obedience of Adam and Eve.

But even in the physical realm, why did God destroy Pharaoh in the Red Sea for pursuing after Israel, after hardening Pharaoh's heart to pursue after Israel? And why did God bring the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem that Jesus prophesied in Mt. 24:2 and Lu. 23:28, and the worldwide diaspora, on Israel for rejecting him as Messiah, while also hardening Israel so they won't accept him as Messiah?

In Paul's final allegory here, the vessel for honorable use represents the saved minority within Israel, and the vessel for dishonorable use represents the unsaved majority within Israel.

Rm. 9:20-21. The Vessel to Honor vs. the Vessel to Dishonor

The Saved Remnant and the Unsaved Majority in Israel

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|--|
| <p>Rm. 9:20-21. No, but O man, who are you that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, "Why have you made me this way?" 21 Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?</p> |
|--|

The "same lump" (Rm. 9:21) refers to Israel; the Gentiles aren't mentioned until verse 24. Only two vessels are specifically mentioned here, "one [ö, o] vessel to honor and one [ö, o] to dishonor" (Rm. 9:21). The vessel to honor is the saved Jewish remnant God has called to share in the glory Moses previewed. The vessel to dishonor is the unsaved Jewish majority that is used of God to make his power and name known throughout the world. Individuals that comprise the vessel to dishonor can move to being part of the vessel to honor, but not visa versa.

Nations and Inequalities in the Physical Realm

God can only deal with groups of people, like people in nations, in the physical realm. An unsaved person in Israel during times of blessing received undeserved benefits, and a saved person in Israel during times of defeat by other nations received undeserved suffering. But in the spiritual realm, it would be unrighteous of God to choose, say, everyone in Israel to receive eternal salvation, and everyone in the United States to receive eternal damnation. And though a potter may certainly make inanimate clay discs for target practice if he wishes, it would be just as unrighteous of God to create some men for the purpose of tormenting them, as Calvinism teaches, as it would be for a man to raise animals for the purpose of abusing them.

The Results of Suffering & Works in the Spiritual Realm

In the physical realm, some children are born with debilitating diseases, while others are born healthy; some men are born poor, some rich. But all things will be made right in eternity. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator [and Potter]," 1 Pet. 4:19.

The inequalities in the physical realm will be taken into account at the final judgment. "He that knew not, and committed things worthy of stripes, will be beaten with few stripes, for to whomever much is given, of him will be much required," Lu. 12:48.

Those who are justified will receive only good rewards: 1) an increase of rewards for good deeds and suffering, and 2) a reduction of rewards for bad deeds. Those who are unjustified will receive only punishments: 1) a reduction in punishment for good deeds and

suffering, and 2) an increase in punishment for bad deeds.

Table 10: The Results of Suffering & Doing Good and Evil

| THE RESULTS OF SUFFERING & DOING GOOD AND EVIL | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | The Saved (After Salvation) | The Lost |
| Good Deeds & Suffering | More Rewards | Less Punishment |
| Evil Deeds | Less Rewards | More Punishment |

So it's always beneficial to do good, and it's always beneficial to avoid doing evil, whether saved or unsaved. And God can temporarily punish for hardness he causes in the physical realm, because all will be taken into account in eternity.

Rm. 9:22-29. What if God Is Calling the Gentiles?

Vessels of Wrath

Rm. 9:22. What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

The vessels [plural] of wrath are the unsaved Jewish individuals in the vessel of dishonor, the unsaved Jewish majority. The potter designed the vessel [singular] to honor and the vessel [singular] to dishonor for the very purposes they were created for, and so they have to fulfill that purpose. But he didn't create the Jewish vessels of wrath for the purpose of wrath. He just "endured with much longsuffering" (Rm. 9:22), to use them for his purposes.

In "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," 1) "fitted" is from the verb "καταρτίζω, katartidzo" meaning "equipped," or "adjusted," having to do with the later stages of a thing; and 2) it's in the perfect tense, focusing on the present condition. Thus they weren't predestined to wrath from the foundation of the earth.

Earthly potters can remake vessels as long as the clay hasn't gotten too hard, and God can remake vessels at any time. "It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the

kingdom of God, ... but with God all things are possible," Mt. 19:24-26. Even Jews who were predestined to glory, like Paul, were vessels of wrath, accumulating differing amounts of wrath in their vessels, based on their own efforts and works, until they experienced the "propitiation [of God's wrath] through faith in his blood" (Rm. 3:25).

Rm. 2:4-5. Do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But after your hard and impenitent heart you treasure up to yourself wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

All the Jewish elect are vessels of wrath until they become vessels of mercy. Just like all the elect are not Jesus' sheep until they become Jesus' sheep. And just like all the elect are "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3) until they become children of God.

Eph. 2:1-7. He has quickened you, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked ... according to the ... spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, ... and were by nature the children of wrath, like everyone else. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ... made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, so that in the ages to come he could show the exceeding riches of his grace [glorification] in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus.

And the change occurs at the time of calling.

Vessels of Mercy

Rm. 9:23-24. And so that he would make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory, 24 even us, whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Finally, the Gentiles are brought in, though Calvinists, ignoring the context and details of scripture because of Calvinism, teach Romans 9:1-22 as though God had been talking about all men, including the Gentiles, all along. Now in verse 24, God is making known "the riches of his glory" (Rm. 9:23) on all the vessels of mercy, which include both elect Jews and Gentiles, during their journey towards their future glorification.

Eph. 1:16-20. Making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Messiah, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he worked in Messiah, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

Eph. 3:14-19. I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah, ... that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; ... that you being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Messiah, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Regarding the "vessels of mercy which he had before prepared to glory," 1) "before prepared" is the verb "προ-ετοιμάζω, pro-etoimadzo" which points back to the past (προ, pro, before), like in the word predestination (προ-ορίζω, pro-oridzo) does. And 2) "before prepared" ("προ-ετοιμάζω, pro-etoimadzo") is in the aorist tense, also pointing back to the past, like in "the kingdom prepared ["ετοιμάζω, etoimadzo"] ... from the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34). So the vessels of mercy were pre-destined to glory, even though they start off in their experience as vessels of wrath.

Once they become vessels of mercy, they accumulate differing amounts of glory in their vessels based on their efforts to produce good works and to "let patience have her perfect work" (Jas. 1:4) during suffering. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, [proportionally] produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17. The more suffering now, the more future glory (physical brightness) proportionally later. "Joint heirs with Messiah, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together," Rm. 8:17. "If we suffer, we will also reign with him," 2 Tim. 2:12.

The vessels of mercy aren't only predestined to glorification in the future, but also to good works now. "We are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus to good works, which God has before ordained ["προ-

ετοιμάζω, pro-etoimadzo, prepared beforehand"] that we would walk in them" Eph. 2:10. This is the double joy of predestination: the certainty of present sanctification and future glorification!

Saved Ethnic Jews Belong to Both Israel and the Church

Rm. 9:25-27. As he says also in Hosea, "I will call them my people, which were not my people [saved Gentiles]." ... 27 Isaiah also cries concerning Israel, "Though the number of the children of Israel [including unsaved Jews] be as the sand of the sea, [only] a remnant [saved Jews] will be saved."

We see three basic groups here: saved Gentiles, saved Jews (the remnant of Israel), and unsaved Jews (the non-remnant part of Israel). Saved Jews have a dual identity. They are part of both the church spiritually, along with saved Gentiles; and also part of Israel physically, along with unsaved Jews. The following verse mentions a fourth basic group, unsaved Gentiles. "Give no offense, neither to the Jews [unsaved Jews], nor to the Gentiles [unsaved Gentiles], nor to the church of God [saved Jews and Gentiles]," 1 Cor. 10:32.

The question the early church struggled with wasn't, "do ethnic Jews still matter;" but "do Gentiles matter?" Gentiles didn't enter the church until Acts 10, and in Acts 15 the church was still wrestling with the question of whether or not they could enter 'as Gentiles.' "My sentence is, that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God," Acts 15:19. As Paul said in Romans, "to the Jew first; and also to the Gentile," (Rm. 1:16; 2:9-10). So the complete picture during this present time is:

Table 11: Saved Ethnic Jews Belong to Both Israel and the Church

| Saved Ethnic Jews Belong to Both Israel and the Church | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Church | Non-Christians |
| Israel | Saved Jews (Remnant) | Unsaved Jews |
| Gentiles | Saved Gentiles | Unsaved Gentiles |

In Israel, the rabbis look derogatorily towards Messianic Jews, ethnic Jews who believe Jesus is the Messiah. But ironically, they are the only thing preserving the nation of Israel from destruction. "Thus says the

Lord, 'As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, 'Destroy it not because a blessing is in it,' so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains, and my elect [Jews] will inherit it, and my servants will dwell there,'" Is. 65:8-9.

Rm. 9:30-10:21. Justification by Faith, Not by Predestination

God Doesn't Mix Predestination and Faith

Rm. 9:30. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

Finally faith is mentioned, though Calvinists, ignoring the context and details of scripture because of Calvinism, teach Romans 9:1-29 as though God had been talking about who will and who won't believe all along.

God never mixes predestination and faith as Calvinism does. Rm. 9a (vs. 1 -29) is about predestination and doesn't mention faith even once. Rm. 9b-10 is about faith and doesn't mention predestination even once. (It does mention "call upon" three times about us calling on God in faith, but not God "calling" us to anything.) And then Rm. 11 will again be about predestination and doesn't mention faith (except to explain the group event of temporarily grafting Gentiles into Israel's tree.)

Table 12: God Doesn't Mix Predestination & Faith

| God Doesn't Mix Predestination & Faith | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Rm. 9a | Rm. 9b-10 | Rm. 11:20-23 & 11:30-32 | The Rest of Rm. 11 |
| Topic | Predestination to Glory | Justification by Faith | A One-Time Event | Predestination to Glory |
| Foreknowledge | | | | 1 |
| Election | 1 | | | 3 |
| Calling | 5 | * | | 1 |
| Faith | | 4 | 1 | |
| Believe | | 8 | 6 | |

* "Call upon" (epi-kaleo, ἐπι-καλέω) is found 3 times in Rm. 10, but it's talking about us calling upon him in faith. It has nothing to do with him calling (kaleo, καλέω) us to something in predestination.

And therefore, from Rm. 9-11 we learn God predestines to glory those he foreknows who are in Messiah by faith, rather than predestining to faith those he elects. Because 1) Rm. 9b-10 about justification by faith makes no mention of election ('calling upon' isn't 'calling'); and Rm. 9a & 11 about predestination to glory, makes no mention of faith (except to explain the mass event change of actors on the world stage of evangelism in Rm. 11). And, 2) because justification by faith, which is never said to be predestined; precedes and results in sanctification and glorification, which are said to be predestined. So the logical, not chronological order, is Faith > Justification & Union > Foreknowledge > Predestination to Glory > Calling to Glory.

Jews Must Believe to Be Saved

Rm. 9:31-33. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hasn't attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling block, 33 as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling block and rock of offense: and whoever believes on him will not be ashamed."

As mentioned earlier, ethnic Israel is predestined with all absolute certainty to become head above all nations in the future Messianic Kingdom, but not every individual Jew is predestined to have a part in that. No one is predestined to believe. You have to do that on your own via the word, whether Jew or Calvinist (so it's important).

Calvinists Must Believe to Be Saved

Rm. 10:8-17. The word of faith, which we preach; 9 that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and will believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture says, "Whoever believes on him won't be ashamed [or, 'disappointed']". 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek [regarding this], for the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon him. 13 For whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. ... 14 How then will

they call on him in whom they have not believed? ... 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

"Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord [and only they] will be saved," Rm. 10:13. No one has ever been saved by gifted faith, because it doesn't exist. And you can't be saved by examining your life to try to figure out if you've been regenerated. "He that believes on the Son has eternal life," Jn. 3:36; not "he that is gifted faith on the Son has eternal life." YOU have to believe. And if you do, you can be sure, based on the truthfulness of God and his word, you have eternal life.

Rm. 11. Predestination Ensures Ethnic Israel's Glorification

Rm. 11:1-10. Is God Done With Ethnic Israel?

Rm. 11:1. I say then, 'Has God cast away his [ethnic] people?' God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Some Reformed expositors say the church is spiritual Israel. But Paul not only says, "I ... am an Israelite," but also "of the tribe of Benjamin" (Rm. 11:1). If you, as a Gentile, think you're part of a supposed 'spiritual Israel,' which tribe are you from? Some Reformed expositors say Paul is merely saying he is proof that Jews can still believe, just like all ethnicities can believe, but that would be saying nothing, just repeating what is found elsewhere; "the righteousness of God ... is by faith of Jesus Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rm. 3:22).

Instead, Paul is saying he is proof God isn't done with the special plans he has for ethnic Israel which he prophesied for them from the beginning. All the unconditional promises to Israel in the Old Testament were really to ethnic Israel, and God's righteousness requires him to keep his promises as he made them and to the people he made them to.

Rm. 11:2-6. God hasn't cast away his people which he foreknew. Don't you know what the scripture says of Elijah? ... 4 I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who haven't bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more

of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work.

Notice the repeated use of beloved Calvinist predestination terms being used about ethnic Israel to show that Israel's future national glorification is just as certain as our individual glorification: "foreknew," "election," "grace." Not elect to believe (faith was covered in chapter 10), but elect to inherit the glory of God in the future Messianic Kingdom. "Israel, my glory!" Is. 46:13.

The election here is that there will always be a saved Jewish remnant in each generation. And since it's an election by grace, there is nothing Israel can do to lose it. How does God ensure there will always be a saved Jewish remnant in every generation? Not by controlling who believes, but by foreknowing everyone who is in Messiah, and using his providence to determine who is born an ethnic Jew, and during which generation.

Rm. 11:7-8. What then? Israel [as a whole] hasn't obtained that which it seeks for; but the election [among ethnic Israel] has obtained it, and the rest were hardened [πωρόω, poroo], 8 according as it's written, "God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they would not see, and ears that they would not hear, unto this day."

The unsaved majority within Israel are hardened about the Messiahship of Jesus, not to justifying faith; like Pharaoh was hardened about letting the people go, not to faith. God isn't preventing any Jewish individuals from being saved. The fact that only a minority of Israel believes is nothing new. What's changed is that God doesn't allow the nation as a whole to take Jesus as physical Messiah, and merely add him to their external cultural heritage like the other Jewish things he's given them, while also rejecting him as spiritual Savior.

Rm. 11:11-24. Why Has Ethnic Israel Stumbled?

Rm. 9:11-15. I say then, "Have they stumbled so that they would fall?" God forbid! But rather through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke them [ethnic Jews] to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness? ... 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what will the

receiving of them be, but life from the dead [resurrection].

The salvation that "has come to the Gentiles" (Rm. 9:11) obviously doesn't mean that now all Gentiles are saved, but that salvation is easily accessible to them, and they can believe as Gentiles, without becoming synagogue-associated. The hardening and diminishing of Israel is temporary, and not for the purpose of destruction, but to help the Gentiles which will in turn help Israel. Israel's diminishing > brings salvation to the Gentiles > which brings salvation to Israel > which brings in the resurrection and the Messianic Kingdom for all men.

Table 13: The Temporary Diminishing of Israel

| The Temporary Diminishing of Israel | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Step | God's Actions | Rm. 9:11-15 |
| 1 | God diminished ethnic Israel | "they stumbled" "through their fall" "the fall of them" "the diminishing of them" "the casting away of them" |
| 2 | Salvation came to the Gentiles | "salvation has come to the Gentiles" "the riches of the world" "the riches of the Gentiles" "the reconciling of the world" |
| 3 | All ethnic Israel will believe | "to provoke them to jealousy" "their fullness" "the receiving of them" |
| 4 | The Messianic Kingdom | "life from the dead" |

The present "casting away of them" (Rm. 11:15) will be followed by a future "receiving of them" (Rm. 11:15), when Israel will nationally acknowledge Jesus as Messiah, which will result in the second coming. "You [ethnic Israel] will not see me henceforth, until you will say, 'Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord,' Mt. 23:39. And the second coming, when Israel does see him again, will result in Jesus resurrecting the tribulation and Old Testament saints (the church saints will already have been resurrected before the tribulation), and then setting up the Messianic Kingdom.

Calvinists have a hard time with this passage. Some Calvinists say Israel here is the church, but when did the church stumble, fall, be diminished, and be cast away? Some Calvinists say it just means all men, Jew and Gentile, can continue to believe; but this passage talks

about a diminishing followed by a fullness, not things just continuing as always. Some Calvinists say this passage shows there will be an increase of Jews saved at the end of the age, but we'll see in verse 26 it's more than an increase! ALL Jews living at the end of the age will believe.

Rm. 11:16-18. For if the [best] firstfruit [offering of ethnic Israel] is holy, the [rest of the dough] lump [the Gentiles] is also holy; and if the root [ethnic Israel] is holy, so are the [Gentile] branches. 17 And if some of the [Jewish] branches were broken off, and you [Gentiles], being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 boast not against the [Jewish] branches. But if you boast, you don't bear the root [Israel], but the root you.

Paul says Gentiles should humbly accept their role, and not diss the present and future importance of Israel, like Reformed Theologians and Calvinists do. "Some of the branches were broken off" (Rm. 11:17), refers to the unbelieving Jewish majority being broken off, leaving only the believing Jewish remnant. Being broken off didn't mean losing their salvation, because they never had it; they were on Israel's olive tree as unbelieving Israelites. And they weren't broken off one at a time, but all at once after Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah.

During Paul's first missionary journey to the Roman province of Galatia, God "opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27), 'as Gentiles.' Previous to that, Gentiles had to become Jewish proselytes, or God-fearers that aligned themselves with the Jewish people, like Cornelius, "a devout man, and one that feared God ... which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people" (Acts 10:2). In the synagogue at Antioch Pisidia, Paul addressed both the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles that regularly met with them in the synagogue, "Men of Israel, and you that fear God" (Acts 13:16), with the result that "many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas" (Acts 13:43). But the next sabbath, "almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:44). And by the time Paul wrote Romans, Gentile believers greatly outnumbered Jewish believers; and today God is using the Gentiles to evangelize the world, with their primary responsibility being to evangelize Israel - like by supporting OneForIsrael.com. "For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their [the Jews'] spiritual things, their [the Gentiles'] duty is also to minister to them in carnal things," Rm. 15:27.

Rm. 11:19-22. You [Gentiles] will say then, "The branches were broken off, so that I could be grafted in." 20 Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not you. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in his goodness; otherwise you will also be cut off.

Notice the criteria for the unbelieving Jewish majority to be broken off was unbelief, but the criteria for the believing Gentile branches to avoid being broken off is "if you continue in his usefulness [χρηστότης, chrystotys], otherwise you also will be cut off" (Rm. 11:22). And like the unbelieving Jewish branches, the believing Gentile branches being broken off doesn't mean a loss of salvation, and the breaking off won't be one branch at a time, but all the believing Gentiles at once, as God again puts Israel on center stage.

How can believing Gentiles lose their usefulness? By not being faithful to the purpose God chose them for. Remember, God's purpose in Israel's stumble was so the gospel could go out freely to the Gentiles. But his purpose in temporarily promoting the Gentiles, was to help win the Jews. "Have they stumbled so that they would fall? God forbid! But rather through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke them [ethnic Jews] to jealousy [so they'll be saved]," Rm. 9:11.

Gentiles are losing their usefulness more and more each day, by not giving the Jewish people priority in the gospel, "to the Jew first" (Rm. 1:16), by not maintaining the equality of influence between the Jewish and Gentile believers in the church ("to make in himself of two one new man," Eph. 2:15), by replacing the gospel with Catholicism, Calvinism, Charismaticism, Nicolaitanism (the clergy lording it over the laity), Egalitarianism, and social justice, for example. Jesus said at some point the whole doctrine of the church would become "leavened" (Mt. 13:33), and the time would come when even the church "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3).

Rm. 11:23-24. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more will these,

which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Does it sound like Paul believes there's no difference between Jews and Gentiles? Ethnic Jews, even unsaved ones, are still the natural branches, and it's still their olive tree. You don't think God can remove the Gentiles and put Israel back in the spotlight? He's already brought the Jewish people back to the land.

Amos 9:8-15. I will destroy [the sinful kingdom] from off the face of the earth, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob. ... I will sift the house of Israel among all nations. ... [But] in that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen, ... and I will build it as in the days of old, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Gentiles which are called by my name. ... And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they will build the waste cities, and inhabit them. ... And I will plant them on their land, and they will never again be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, says the Lord your God.

Israel will be fully grafted back in when Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation period. Two thousand years of Gentiles from creation to Abraham, two thousand years of Israel, two thousand years of the church, and then back to Israel for the 1000-year Sabbath of the Messianic Kingdom day of rest. "One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," 2 Pet. 3:8.

After the rapture, men will again be judged by their relationship to the Jewish people. This doesn't mean men will be saved by good works during the tribulation period, but that those who are saved by faith will be the ones willing to help the Jewish people who are being persecuted by the Antichrist.

Mt. 25:31-41. When the Son of man will come in his glory, ... then he will sit on the throne of his glory, and before him will be gathered all the Gentiles, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats, and he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to them on his right hand, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry, and you gave me food, ... I was a stranger, and you took me in, ... I was in prison, and you came to me. ... Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have

done it to one of the least of these my [Jewish] brethren, you have done it to me." Then he will say also to them on the left hand, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. ... Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me." And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Rm. 11:25. For I wish not, [Gentile] brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that hardness in part [PARTIAL] is happened to Israel, until [TEMPORARY] the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

Oh, the "wisdom in your own conceits" (Rm. 11:25) of the Gentile Reformed theologians who say God has "cast away his [ethnic] people [Israel] whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the scripture says?" (Rm. 11:2). Don't be "ignorant of this mystery ... that [Israel's national hardness is only partial] in part ... [and only temporary] "until" (Rm. 11:25). Only partial, because some Jews, like Paul, believe even during this present age of national hardness; and only temporary, until 100% of ALL ethnic Jews that survive to the end of the tribulation period will be saved.

Rm. 11:25-32. All Ethnic Israel Will Be Saved

Rm. 11:26-27. And so ALL Israel will be saved, as it is written, "There will come out of Zion the Deliverer, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 For this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins."

God won't force any Jews of the generation when Jesus returns to believe. Instead he will eliminate all that don't.

Zech. 13:8-9. It will come to pass, that in all the land [of Israel], ... two parts therein will be cut off and die; but the third will be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and ... I will say, 'It is my people,' and they will say, "The Lord is my God."

Calvinists almost never believe "all" means all. But when you combine Paul's use of the phrase "all Israel" with it's prophetic use in the Old Testament that talks about a time when every Jew will be a believer, it has to mean literally all Israel.

Ez. 20:34-44. I will ... gather you out of the countries [worldwide] in which you are scattered, ... and I will purge out from among you the rebels. ... I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, but they will not enter into the land of Israel. ... For in my holy mountain, ... there will ALL the house of Israel, ALL of them in the land, serve me. ... And you will know that I am the Lord when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways.

God will fulfill his promises to the ethnic nation of Israel for his name's sake, which means there's no sin ethnic Israel can possibly do that could cause their national predestination to glorification to fail.

Jer. 31:31-37. Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they will be my people. And they ... will ALL know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, ... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus says the LORD, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, ... if those ordinances depart from before me, ... then [and only then] the seed of Israel will also cease from being a nation before me for ever. ... If heaven above can be measured, ... I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.

Calvinists might think they are the new house of Israel, but are they the house of Judah too? And the last time I checked, the sun, moon, and stars were still there, and we don't yet have an accurate measurement of the entire created universe.

The "new covenant" of Jer. 31:31, was referred to by Jesus at the passover meal, when "he took the cup, ... saying, ... "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). But Jesus was only referring to his purchase of the spiritual blessings of the third promise of the Abrahamic Covenant, that all the families of the earth share in. The new covenant in its entirety will actually be made with the house of Israel and Judah in a future, organized assembly, as will be described below.

Rm. 11:28-29. As touching the election [of ethnic Israel], ... 29 the

gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

More predestination terms: election and calling. Israel's future national glorification is just as certain as our future individual glorification. If Israel's predestination to glory can fail, then so can ours; but neither can.

The Israel of 1948 Is the Israel of Prophecy

The second worldwide regathering of Israel will also be the last and final one, because it will be after Jesus returns and the Messianic Kingdom is set up.

Is. 11:6-11. The wolf also will dwell with the lamb, ... and the calf and the young lion. ... They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. ... And it will come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of his people, which will be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

The return from the 70-year Babylonian captivity wasn't a worldwide regathering, just to and from Babylon. Since the final and complete worldwide regathering after Jesus' return will be the SECOND one, per Is. 11:11; that means the 1948 worldwide regathering was the FIRST one, and there can't be another in between. Therefore, the present nation of Israel has to be the returned Israel of prophecy, that all the prophesied events will happen to. About one third of the Jewish people living in Israel now will endure to the end of the tribulation period and enter the Messianic Kingdom in their natural bodies.

The second worldwide regathering of Israel will take place on the Feast of Trumpets, sixty days after Jesus returns.³⁰ (See "Footsteps of the Messiah" by Arnold Fruchtenbaum for more information.) Jesus fulfilled the four spring feasts of Leviticus 23 during his first coming in 52 days exactly on the feast days. He died on Passover (Lev. 23:5); he was proven sinless while in the tomb for three days during the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6-8); he rose on Firstfruits

³⁰ Jesus returns 1260 days ("a time [1 year], times [2 years], and an half [a year]," Dan. 12:7) after the abomination of desolation, and the kingdom starts 75 days later (1335-1260 "blessed is he that waits and comes to the 1335 days," Dan. 12:12), and the Feast of Trumpets is 45 days before the Kingdom is set up on the Feast of Tabernacles.

(Lev. 23:10-14); and he created the church from two leavened (sinful) loaves, Jews and Gentiles, on Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-21).

And he will fulfill the three fall feasts of Leviticus 23 after his second coming in 15 days exactly on the feast days. He will regather Israel the second time on the feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:24-25); he will give Israel national forgiveness on the feast of Atonement (Lev. 23:27-32), and he will set up the Messianic Kingdom when everyone will spend the first week of it in tents, because of the multitudes, on the week long feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:34-36).

In more detail, Israel's second and final regathering will begin on the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashana) on the 1st of Tishrei.

Mt. 24:13, 29-31. He that will endure to the end [of the tribulation period], the same will be saved. ... Immediately after the tribulation of those days ... they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect [Israel, Rm. 11:5, 7, 28; Is. 45:4; 65:9, 22] from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Israel won't be teleported "in the air" (1 Thess. 4:17) "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52), after the tribulation, like the church will be at the rapture before the tribulation; but instead will be gathered on "ships" (Is. 60:9), "swift beasts" (Is. 66:20), carried by Gentiles (Is. 49:22), and with the help of the "angels" (Mt. 24:31) Jesus will send to find them (Jer. 16:16). ALL Jews who survive "to the end" (Mt. 24:13) of the tribulation period and the second regathering will be saved. There are many references to "ALL Israel" with this meaning in the Old Testament (like Ez. 20:34-44 I quoted above).

Ten days later, Israel will have an official, organized day of national repentance on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) on the 10th of Tishrei.

Zech. 12:9-13:1. It will come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the Gentile nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him. ... And the land will mourn, every family apart; the family

of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart, [etc.]. ... All the families that remain [to the end of the tribulation period], every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

And five days after that, the Messianic Kingdom will begin with the 7-day marriage feast of the Lamb, and everyone living in tents because there won't be enough hotel rooms in Jerusalem for the multitude of people, both saved Jews and Gentiles, gathered there from the whole world on the Feast of Tents (or Tabernacles, Sukkot) on the 15th of Tishrei.

EPH. 1 - THE GLORY OF HIS INHERITANCE, EPH. 1:18

Eph. 1 - Chosen in Messiah to Holiness & Glory

Eph. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Messiah.

A key phrase of Paul's is "in Messiah" (Eph. 1:3), referring to our union with him. We enter into union with him in his experience at the point of his death for us (Rm. 6:3, "baptized into his death"), and we enter into union with him in our experience when "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13) at the point of our faith in him.

Eph. 1:4. According as he has chosen [ἐξελέξατο, ekseleksato] us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without blame before him in love.

Whom did God choose? Everyone in Messiah, who entered into union with him via justification by faith. Everyone he "foreknew" (Rm. 8:29) "in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "He has chosen us in him" (Eph. 1:4); not "to be in him." "Rufus, chosen in the Lord" (Rm. 16:13), not "chosen to be in the Lord." "Chosen ... that we would be holy" (Eph. 1:4), not "chosen to believe."

It might seem a strange way of 'choosing,' for God to 'choose' all who are foreknown in Messiah. But similarly Jesus 'chose' all the Father gave him. "I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me," Jn. 17:6. So Jesus didn't really do any choosing as to "who." The important thing is what he chose them to. "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would go and bring forth fruit [sanctification, not faith], and that your fruit would remain [glorification, not faith]," Jn. 15:16. Likewise, what's important in Ephesians 1:4, is what God has chosen us to, "that we would be holy and without blame before him in love," not to believe.

Eph. 1:5-6. Having predestined [προορίσας, proorisas] us to the sonship by Jesus Messiah to himself, according to the good pleasure of

his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.

According to Romans 8, “the sonship” (Eph. 1:5) refers to our future glorification: “waiting for the sonship, that is, the redemption of our body” (Rm. 8:23). The “good pleasure of his will” (Eph. 1:5) is “the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he has given me I would lose nothing, but would raise it up again at the last day [glorification]” (Jn. 6:40). To be “accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6), ultimately means to be “conformed to the [resurrected and glorified] image of his Son” (Rm. 8:29) that we are predestined to in Messiah.

The climax of his grace, his ultimate goal for us, is our future glorification, the “glory of his grace” (Eph. 1:6). “[God] has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, [for the purpose] so that in the ages to come [during our future glorification] he could show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus,” Eph. 2:6-7.

Eph. 1:7-8. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

In the Bible, justifying faith is never a work, but instead is always associated with grace, and contrasted with works. Faith is to trust in the work of God, in which he provided “redemption through his blood ... according to ... his grace” (Eph. 1:7), rather than trusting in one's own works. The prodigal son had nothing to brag about in forsaking his own works, and returning and accepting the generosity of his father. “Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet,” Lu. 15:22.

Eph. 1:9-10. Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure [εὐδοκίαν, eudokian] which he has purposed before [προ-έθετο, pro-etheto] in himself; [not ‘that we would believe,’ but rather] that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah [glorification], both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

Rm. 8:18-23. [Regarding] the glory which will be revealed in

us, ... the earnest expectation of creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, ... because creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, ... waiting for the sonship, that is, the redemption of our body.

This is God's ultimate purpose for us and for the rest of creation.

Eph. 1:11-12. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined [προ-ορισθέντες, pro-oristhentes] according to the purpose [πρόθεσιν, prothesin] of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will; that we would be to the praise of his glory, who had hoped before in Messiah.

His purpose is that we who “trusted in Messiah” (Eph. 1:12) are predestined to our future “inheritance” (Eph. 1:11) of sharing in Messiah’s “glory” (Eph. 1:12). We aren’t predestined ‘to trust in Messiah.’

Eph. 1:13-14. In whom you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also after you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.

“After you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,” (Eph. 1:13). Calvinism teaches the Spirit regenerates us before we believe, so that we will believe. But Paul says it’s after we believe that we receive the Spirit, which is the down payment that guarantees “the purchased possession” (Eph. 1:14), the future glorification of our bodies. Our redemption is incomplete until our bodies are glorified.

Eph. 1:15-16. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

“Your faith” (Eph. 1:15), not “the faith God gave you” per Calvinism, results in justification, and justification always results in sanctification, “love to all the saints” (Eph. 1:15).

Eph. 1:17-18. That the God of our Lord Jesus Messiah, the Father of

glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling [κλήσεως, klyseos], and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

One of the most important things God and Paul want us to know as Christians, is that we are called to a certain and sure future "hope of his calling, ... the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18), not to faith. It's important to our present decision making, "wisdom ... knowledge ... understanding ... being enlightened" (Eph. 1:17), and to our fruitfulness.

Some Guarantees of Our Future Glorification in Ephesians 1

- 1) We're in Messiah. vss. 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
- 2) We're predestined to glory. vss. 5, 11 (Rm. 8:23)
- 3) It's God's purpose and will. vss. 5, 9-11
- 4) It's our inheritance. vss. 11, 14, 18
- 5) We're sealed with the Spirit. vs. 13
- 6) The Spirit is the down payment. vs. 14
- 7) We're called to glory. vs. 18
- 8) His power will ensure it. vss. 19-20

NEW TESTAMENT PREDESTINATION VERSES

Here's a list of 88 New Testament verses about Christians being predestined, elected, chosen, or called to something, excluding calls to specific service, like apostleship. They show we're only predestined to 'after-faith' things: justification, sanctification, and glorification. If predestination is to faith, as Calvinism teaches, why doesn't God say so?

These verses show biblical predestination isn't about God choosing some people to save and others to damn, as Calvinism teaches, but about ensuring the certainty of our sanctification and glorification! If you're convinced predestination isn't about God choosing who will believe and be saved, but you're still not sure if you believe in eternal security, then you still don't understand biblical predestination, because that's its whole purpose, and the reason why God did it.

As you read each of these verses, you can rejoice that God has predestined your current walk in holiness and your eternal security, because whatever God predestines comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

To Faith (0 Verses). Why is That?

Why are there so many verses about predestination to justification, sanctification, and glorification; but not a single verse about predestination to faith? Because God doesn't touch our faith, directly or indirectly. It's not in the chain of God's causation from foreknowledge, through predestination and calling, to justification, sanctification, and glorification.

To Justification (12 Verses)

Justification is still after faith. It's the part God does after we believe. Union in Messiah is part of justification.

Chosen to Justification (3 verses)

Rm. 11:5-7. "Remnant [per] election [ἐκλογή], ... election obtained it [Rm. 9:31]."

1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Your work of faith, ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."

1 Pet. 1:2. "Elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

Predestined to Justification (3 verses)

Jn. 6:37. "All that the Father gives [predestines to] me will come to me [be justified]."

Jn. 6:65. "No man can come to me [be justified], unless given [predestined] to him."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], them he also ... justified."

Called to Justification (6 Verses)

Jn. 6:44. "No man can come to me, unless the Father ... draw [i.e. call] him."
Rm. 1:5-6. For obedience to the faith, ... you are ... called [κλητός] of Jesus."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he called [καλέω], them he also justified."
1 Cor. 1:9. "Called [καλέω] to the fellowship [κοινωνία, koinonia, union] of his Son."
1 Cor. 1:26, 30. "You see your calling [κλησίς] ... in Messiah Jesus."
1 Cor. 7:18. "Called [καλέω] being circumcised? ... Called in uncircumcision?"

To Sanctification (32 Verses)

Chosen to Sanctification (6 Verses)

Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you, ... that you would ... bring forth fruit."
Jn. 15:19. "You are not of the world, ... I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you out of the world."
Eph. 1:4. "He has chosen [ἐκλέγω] us in him, ... that we would be holy."
Col. 3:12-14. "Put on ... as the elect [ἐκλεκτός] of God, holy and beloved, ... love."
1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Your ... labor of love, ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."
1 Pet. 2:9. "You are a chosen [ἐκλεκτός] generation, ... a holy nation."

Predestined to Sanctification (5)

Jn. 15:16. "I have ... ordained [τίθημι] you, that you would ... bring forth fruit."
Jn. 17:2. "Eternal life to ... [those] given [predestined to] him, ... [to] know ... God."
Jn. 17:6. "I have manifested your name to the men ... you gave [predestined to] me."
Jn. 17:11. "Keep ... those you have given [predestined to] me, that they be one."
Eph. 2:10. "Before ordained [προσποιοῦμαι] that we would walk in [good works]."

Called to Sanctification (21 Verses)

Acts 2:38-39. "The Holy Spirit ... is to ... as many as ... God will call [προσκαλέω]."
Rm. 1:7. "Called [κλητός] to be saints."
1 Cor. 1:2. "Paul, to them that are sanctified, ... called [κλητός] to be saints."
1 Cor. 1:26-30. Your calling [κλησίς], ... in Messiah, ... sanctification."
1 Cor. 7:15. "God has called [καλέω] us to peace."
Gal. 1:6. "Him [Paul] that called [καλέω] you into the grace of Messiah."
Gal. 5:13. "You have been called [καλέω] to liberty."
Eph. 4:1. "Walk worthy of the calling [κλησίς] to which you are called [καλέω]."
Phil. 3:14-15. "I press toward ... the high calling [κλησίς], ... be perfect."
Col. 3:15. "Peace of God ... to the which ... you are called [καλέω] in one body."
1 Thess. 2:12. "Walk worthy of God, who has called [καλέω] you."
1 Thess. 4:7. "God has ... called [καλέω] us ... to holiness."
1 Thess. 5:23. "God ... sanctify you; he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."
2 Thess. 1:11. "We pray ... God will count you worthy of this calling [κλησίς]."
2 Tim. 1:8-9. "God ... called [καλέω] us with a holy calling [κλησίς]."
1 Pet. 1:15. "As he which called [καλέω] you is holy, so you be holy."
1 Pet. 2:9. "He who has called [καλέω] you out of darkness to his ... light."
1 Pet. 2:21. "Suffer ... patiently, ... for even hereto you were called [καλέω]."
1 Pet. 3:8-9. "Love as brethren, ... knowing that you are thereto called [καλέω]."
2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to ... virtue."

Jude 1:1. "Jude, ... to them that are sanctified, ... and called [κλητός]."

To Glorification (44 Verses)

Salvation is comprised of justification, sanctification, and glorification, so I included verses about predestination to salvation if they seemed to emphasize the glorification part of salvation. Eternal life is both a kind of life, like John emphasizes; and a duration of life, like Paul emphasizes so some predestination to eternal life verses are included here. I also include the verse about predestination to adoption because Rm. 8:23, says we are "waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body," i.e. glorification. But in any case, they're not predestination to faith.

Predestined To Glorification (9 Verses)

Jn. 15:16. "I have ... ordained [τίθημι] you, ... that your fruit would remain."

Acts 13:46-48. "Eternal life, ... salvation, ... appointed [τάσσω] to eternal life."

Rm. 8:29. "Predestined [προορίζω] ... to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], ... them he also glorified."

Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy, ... before ordained [προετοιμάζω] to glory."

1 Cor. 2:7. "Predestined [προορίζω] before the world to our glory."

Eph. 1:5-6. "Predestined [προορίζω] us to the adoption of children ... to ... glory."

Eph. 1:11. "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestined [προορίζω]."

1 Thess. 5:9. "Not appointed [τίθημι] us to [future] wrath, but to [future] salvation."

Chosen To Glorification (14 Verses)

Jn. 6:37. "All that the Father gives me, ... I will in no wise cast out."

Jn. 6:39. "All which he has given me, I will ... raise it up ... the last day."

Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you ... that your fruit would remain."

Jn. 17:11. "Keep ... those whom you have given me."

Jn. 17:12. "Those that you gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost."

Jn. 17:24. "Whom you have given me, [will] be with me ... [to] behold my glory."

1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Patience of hope [of glory], ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."

2 Thess. 2:13-14. "God has ... chosen [αίρέω] you to salvation, ... to ... glory."

2 Tim. 2:10. "The elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... obtain ... salvation ... with eternal glory."

Titus 1:3. "God's elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... eternal life ... promised before the world began."

2 Pet. 1:10-11. "Election [ἐκλογή] ... to the ... [future] kingdom."

Jas. 2:5. "Hasn't God chosen [ἐκλέγω] the poor ... heirs of the kingdom."

Rev. 17:14. "They that are with him are ... chosen [ἐκλεκτός]."

Rev. 21:27. "Enter into it ... they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Called To Glorification (21 Verses)

Jn. 6:44. "The Father ... draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Rm. 8:28. "Called [κλητός] ... to the image of his Son."

Rm. 8:30. "Whom he called [αίρέω], ... them he also glorified."

Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy ... to glory, even us, whom he has called."

Eph. 1:18. "The hope of his calling [κλήσις], ... the glory of his inheritance."

Eph. 4:4. "Called [καλέω] in one hope of calling [κλήσις] [hope of glory Col. 1:27]"
1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called [καλέω] you to his [future] kingdom and glory."
1 Thess. 5:23. "Preserved ... to the coming, he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."
2 Thess. 1:10-11. "He will come to be glorified in his saints, ... this calling [κλήσις]."
2 Thess. 2:14. "He called [καλέω] you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."
1 Tim. 6:12. "Lay hold on [future] eternal life, to which you are also called [καλέω]."
2 Tim. 1:9. "Calling [κλήσις] ... in Messiah before the world began ... immortality."
Heb. 2:10; 3:1. "Many sons to glory, ... the heavenly calling [κλήσις]."
Heb. 9:15. "They who are called [καλέω] will receive the ... eternal inheritance."
Heb. 11:8. "Abraham ... was called [καλέω] to ... an inheritance."
1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called [καλέω] us to his eternal glory."
2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to glory."
2 Pet. 1:10-11. "Calling [κλήσις] ... to the ... [future] kingdom."
Jude 1:1. "Jude, ... to them that are ... preserved, ... and called [κλητός]."
Rev. 17:14. "They that are with him are called [κλητός]."
Rev. 19:9. "Blessed are they ... called [καλέω] to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Table 14: Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses

| Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses | | | | |
|---|-----------|--|--|---|
| Total Number of Verses (88) | Faith (0) | Justification (12) | Sanctification (32) | Glorification (44) |
| Chosen/ Elected (27) | 0 | <u>3 Verses</u> Rm. 11:5-7 1 Thess. 1:3-4 1 Pet. 1:2 | <u>6 Verses</u> Jn. 15:16 Jn. 15:19 Eph. 1:4 Eph. 2:10 Col. 3:12-14 1 Pet. 2:9 | <u>14 Verses</u> Jn. 6:37 Jn. 6:39 Jn. 15:16 Jn. 17:11 Jn. 17:12 Jn. 17:24 1 Thess. 1:3-4 2 Thess. 2:13-14 2 Tim. 2:10 Titus 1:3 Jas. 2:5 2 Pet. 1:10-11 Rev. 17:14 Rev. 21:27 |
| Predestined (13) | 0 | <u>3 Verses</u> Jn. 6:37 Jn. 6:65 Rm. 8:30 | <u>5 Verses</u> Jn. 15:16 Jn. 17:2 Jn. 17:6 Jn. 17:11 Eph. 2:10 | <u>9 Verses</u> Jn. 15:16 Acts 13:46-48 Rm. 8:29 Rm. 8:30 Rm. 9:23 1 Cor. 2:7 Eph. 1:5-6 Eph. 1:11 1 Thess. 5:9 |
| Called (48) | 0 | <u>6 Verses</u> Jn. 6:44 Rm. 1:5-6 Rm. 8:30 1 Cor. 1:9 1 Cor. 1:26, 30 1 Cor. 7:18 | <u>21 Verses</u> Acts 2:38-39 Rm. 1:7 1 Cor. 1:2 1 Cor. 1:26-30 1 Cor. 7:15 Gal. 1:6 Gal. 5:13 Eph. 4:1 Phil. 3:14-15 Col. 3:15 1 Thess. 2:12 1 Thess. 4:7 1 Thess. 5:23 2 Thess. 1:11 2 Tim. 1:8-9 1 Pet. 1:15 1 Pet. 2:9 1 Pet. 2:21 1 Pet. 3:8-9 2 Pet. 1:3 Jude 1:1 | <u>21 Verses</u> Jn. 6:44 Rm. 8:28 Rm. 8:30 Rm. 9:23 Eph. 1:18 Eph. 4:4 1 Thess. 2:12 1 Thess. 5:23 2 Thess. 1:10-11 2 Thess. 2:14 1 Tim. 6:12 2 Tim. 1:9 Heb. 2:10; 3:1 Heb. 9:15 Heb. 11:8 1 Pet. 5:10 2 Pet. 1:3 2 Pet. 1:10-11 Jude 1:1 Rev. 17:14 Rev. 19:9 |

POTENTIAL PROBLEM VERSES

Jn. 3:3. Unless a Man Be Born Again

Jn. 3:3. Jesus answered ... him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a man be born again, he can't see the kingdom of God. ... Unless a man be born ... of the Spirit, he can't enter into the kingdom of God."

This verse doesn't mention predestination, calling, or faith; but it's so frequently abused by Calvinists when talking about the order of salvation, I'll discuss it anyway. Jesus didn't ask Nicodemus, "Do you know how to go to heaven?" like we might ask today to begin witnessing to someone. He basically asked, "Do you know you're going to have a place in the future Messianic Kingdom."

The Jews hoped to enter the Messianic Kingdom in the age to come. "Many will come from the east and west, and will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven," Mt. 8:11. "Blessed is he that will eat bread in the kingdom of God," Lu. 14:15. "I say to you, I won't drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," Mt. 26:29.

The 'Kingdom of God' and the 'Kingdom of Heaven' are synonyms, both referring to the time when "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom" (Dan. 2:44). When the God of Heaven sets up a kingdom, the full name of the kingdom is, "The Kingdom of the God of Heaven," which can be shortened to "The Kingdom of God," or "The Kingdom of Heaven," or "The Kingdom."

Notice the same event is described in the following verses. After John was cast into prison, Jesus began preaching in Galilee. Matthew said he was announcing the Kingdom of Heaven. Luke said he was announcing the Kingdom of God. Two ways of referring to the same future Messianic Kingdom.

Mt. 4:12, 17. Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee. ... From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," ... preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Mk. 1:14-14. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came

into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ... "The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel."

Or it's just called "the kingdom."

Mt. 6:10. Thy kingdom come. [Why are you still praying for a spiritual kingdom to come if you think it's already here? Jesus was referring to a physical kingdom still future to us even today.]

The future Messianic Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom even though it will be physical, because it's source will be from God: like the manna was spiritual food (1 Cor. 10:3) even though it was physical enough to grind in mortars (Num. 11:8); and like Jesus' body is a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44) even though it's physical, not a spirit. His tomb was empty because his physical body left it (Jn. 20:7-8), and he still has physical flesh and bones, and can eat.

Lu. 24:39-43. Jesus himself stood in the midst of them. ... But they were terrified ... and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said to them, ... "Handle me, and see; for a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have. ... Do you have any food here? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.

(See also the chapter on "The Spirituality of the Kingdom", in "The Greatness of the Kingdom," by Alva McClain, available to borrow free online at the Internet Archive.)

Calvinists think Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom, present even when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, or maybe established at Jesus resurrection, or at Pentecost, or something. So they think you get born again first, and then you believe and enter the spiritual kingdom.

Murray. Surely seeing the kingdom of God is the act of faith and, if so, such faith is impossible without regeneration. ... When our Lord says that the supernatural birth spoken of is indispensable to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God he surely means by "seeing," the spiritual discernment of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 2:14, and by "entering into," he refers to that by which we become actual members of the kingdom of God.³¹ [When anyone says "surely" he probably means, "I don't have any proof for this, but maybe by saying "surely" you'll believe

31 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 87, 100.

me anyway."]

What Jesus was actually talking to Nicodemus was that unless he was born of the Spirit wouldn't have a place in the future Messianic Kingdom. We do become citizens of the kingdom now though, even though it's not yet established on earth. And Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about entering the realm of the Spirit right then through new birth so you could enter the Messianic Kingdom later.

As John went on to say in John 3, to enter into the spiritual realm you simply need to come to the light, which no man can do because our deeds are evil (Jn. 3:19); but everyone can believe and receive forgiveness of sins (Jn. 3:18), and then they instantly come to the light (Jn. 3:21). No one can be born again by deciding to be born again (Jn. 1:13), but everyone can believe, and then they can be, and are, born again (Jn. 1:12).

Acts 18:27. Apollo Helped Those Who Had Believed By Grace

Acts 18:27. [Apollo], when he came, helped them much which had believed, through grace.

Some would have the grace having gone to the Corinthians to enable them to become believers long before Apollo got there. Others would have the grace going to Apollo to help him help them while he was there. "God's kindness enabled him to help the believers a great deal," Acts 18:27, Names of God Bible. My opinion is that Apollo's help was God's grace to the Corinthians to reinforce them against the Jewish opposition after Paul left.

When Paul came to Corinth he faced such intense Jewish opposition that Jesus had to tell him in a vision to stay instead of fleeing like he had done at Thessalonica and Berea. "Don't be afraid, ... no man will set on you to hurt you. And he continued there a year and six months," Acts 18:9-11. At one point "the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat" (Acts 18:12), but he escaped harm. When Paul left Corinth, saying, "I must by all means keep this upcoming [Jewish] feast in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21), the believers left behind became vulnerable to the Jewish opposition. But while Paul was away, God graciously sent Apollos, who "mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Messiah," Acts 18:28. What a gracious provision for the

Corinthian believers after Paul left.

Acts 13:48. As Many As Were Ordained to Eternal Life Believed

Acts 13:48. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life [glorification] believed.

Not, "As many as were ordained to believe, believed." The two groups are the same, but this verse doesn't resolve the issue of which group is the cause of the other. 'Ordained' is listed first, not because it logically precedes 'believed,' but because it came first chronologically.

Eph. 2:8-9. Saved By Faith, the Gift of God

Eph. 2:5-9. By grace you are saved. ... For by grace [χάρις, charis, feminine noun] you are saved [σωτηρία, sotyria, feminine when in noun form] through faith [πίστις, pístis, feminine noun], and that [or 'this,' τοῦτο, touto, neuter pronoun] not of yourselves; it [not in the Greek] is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Stott (Calvinist). 'This' (touto) is neuter, whereas 'faith' is a feminine noun. We must therefore take 'this' as referring to the whole previous sentence: 'By God's grace you are people who have been saved through faith, and this whole event and experience is ... God's free gift to you.' ... Salvation is God's gift, lest any man should boast.³²

Bloomfield (Editor of Calvin Commentaries). It has been not a little debated, among both ancient and modern commentators, to what noun τοῦτο [this] should be referred. Some say, to πίστῶς [faith]; others, to χάριτι [grace]. ... The reference seems, however, to be neither to the one nor to the other, but to the subject of the foregoing clause, salvation by grace, through faith in Christ and his gospel; a view, I find, adopted by Dr. Chandler, Dean Tucker, Dr. Macknight, and Dr. A. Clarke. And to show that this interpretation is not a mere novelty, I need only refer the reader to Theophylact, who thus explains: ... 'He does not say that faith is the gift of God; but to be saved by faith, this is the gift of God.' Such also is the view adopted by Chrysostom and

32 Stott, Ephesians, 83.

Theodoret.³³

Hunt (Non-Calvinist) The Greek in Ephesians 2:8–10 makes it impossible for faith to be the gift. Such is the verdict of many Greek authorities, including Alford, [New Testament for English Readers, 3:216], F. F. Bruce, ... W. E. Vine, Scofield, ... [cited in Samuel Fisk, Divine Sovereignty, 32–36]. Vance notes that “A witness to the truth of Scripture against the Calvinist ‘faith-gift’ interpretation can be found in the Greek grammarians.” He lists W. Robertson Nicoll, [Expositor’s Greek Testament, 3:289], Kenneth S. Wuest, [Ephesians and Colossians, 69], Marvin R. Vincent [Word Studies, 3:376] and others [Vance, Other Side, 517.] ... The grammar ... [will not] “permit ‘faith’ to be the antecedent of ‘it.’” [MacDonald, Grace Unlimited, ed 87; quoted in Samuel Fisk, Calvinistic Paths Retraced, 22].³⁴

Phil. 1:29. To You It's Given to Believe and to Suffer

Phil. 1:29. For to you it is given for the sake of Messiah, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

God doesn't directly 'give' you suffering, but rather the responsibility to suffer. "Hereunto you were called, because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps," 1 Pet. 2:21. And the opportunity to suffer. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17). "If we suffer, we will also reign with him," 2 Tim. 2:12. Likewise, he doesn't give you faith, but only the responsibility and opportunity to believe. And God wouldn't give you faith, "for the sake of Messiah." The ISV translates, "For you have been given the privilege for the Messiah's sake not only to believe in him but also to suffer for him" (Phil. 1:29).

1 Thess. 1:3-4. Your Work of Faith, Knowing Your Election

1 Thess. 1:3-4. Remembering without ceasing your 1) work of faith [evidence of justification], and 2) labor of love [sanctification], and 3) patience of hope [glorification] in our Lord Jesus Messiah, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, ... as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake, ... having

³³ Bloomfield, in Calvin, Complete Commentaries, 651698-651725.

³⁴ Hunt, in Hunt & White, Debating Calvinism, 200-1.

received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.

Paul isn't saying justifying faith was given to the Thessalonians via their election, but that their after-justification works of faith, hope, and love; and how they had received the preaching by Paul, Silas, and Timothy, with joy despite affliction from opposition, are evidence they are truly saved and elect.

2 Thess. 1:10-11. Calling, and the Work of Faith With Power

2 Thess. 1:10-11. When he will come to be glorified in [not 'by'] his saints [glorification], and to be admired in [not 'by'] all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed, in that day. Wherefore, we also pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

The "calling" was to glorification at Jesus' return, not to faith. The "work of faith" refers to after-justification good works, like how "we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, ... that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which you also suffer" (2 Thess. 1:4-5).

2 Thess. 2:13-14. Chosen to Salvation Through Belief

2 Thess. 2:13-14. God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through [not, "to"] sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory [glorification] of our Lord Jesus Messiah.

We are "chosen ... to salvation," not "chosen to faith." We are "called by [the] gospel to ... glory," not "called by [the] gospel to ... belief,". If the call were to faith, everyone who was called would believe. But since the call is to glory, not faith, "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts 28:24).

Titus 1:1-2. For the Faith of God's Elect

Titus 1:1-2. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Messiah, for the faith of God's elect [justification], and the

acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness [sanctification]; in hope of eternal life [glorification], which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but has in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.

Paul is saying his ministry is to bring the gospel to the elect for their justification; and then to increase their knowledge about sanctification and glorification. He didn't say "for those who were elected to faith," or "for those who will believe because they're elect." All the elect will eventually believe, but this verse says nothing about whether they believe because they're elect, or if they're elect because God foreknew them in Messiah because of their eventual faith. Alternatively, he might be talking about ministering to their after justification faith; "Now abides faith [after justification], hope [glorification], and love [sanctification]" (1 Cor. 13:13).

Jas. 2:5. The Poor of This World Chosen to be Rich in Faith

Jas. 2:5. Hasn't God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith [justification], and heirs of the kingdom [glorification] which he has promised to them that love him [sanctification]?

If God had chosen the poor of this world to have faith, they would all have faith, but they don't. God's way of salvation, by faith, not works, is an obstacle to rich people because they're more tempted to be self-sufficient and proud. "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" Mk. 10:24. Poor people have less obstacles to humbling themselves, and thus a higher percentage of them are saved. And God in his divine providence chooses who is born poor and rich, but doesn't choose who believes.

Rev. 17:14. Those With Him Are Called, Chosen, and Faithful

Rev. 17:14. He is ... King of Kings, and they that are with him [glorification] are called, and chosen, and faithful [sanctification].

Not, "they that are with him are called and chosen to faith." Faithful can mean having faith or it can mean being trustworthy. If the order was "chosen and called and faithful," it might be more indicative of an

'ordo salutis,' but even then would probably indicate faithful "martyrs" (Rev. 17:6) in contrast to the evil mother of harlots who slew them, and the evil beast she rode on.

THE IMMORALITY OF CALVINISM

For the best book about the immorality of Calvinism see "What Love is This" by Dave Hunt.

Calvinism Dulls Compassion and Morality

Calvinism dulls the compassion of Calvinists because they rejoice they're saved, while being thereby hardened towards the majority of people whom God supposedly created for the purpose of eternally tormenting them. (Except that Calvinists can never be sure they're saved since it's supposedly God's choice, not theirs, and all they can do is look for evidence he has chosen them.) Calvinism also dulls the morality of Calvinists, because they think scripture obligates them to believe actions to be moral, which in any other context, would be obviously immoral.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist). We protest that this doctrine is an outrageous misrepresentation of God. The God-given conscience of every person, saved and unsaved, recoils at the thought of creating beings simply in order to predestine them to eternal torment [or in order to fail to predestine them to non-torment]! Tragically, Calvinism forces its adherents to reject the normal human compassion that is otherwise held in common with all mankind. ... Why would the God of love and truth plead with those whom He had already predestined to doom [or failed to predestine to non-doom] to repent and believe the gospel? Calvinism turns most of the Bible into a pretense, a mere charade.³⁵

C. S. Lewis (Non-Calvinist). If God's moral judgment differs from ours so that our 'black' may be his 'white,' we can mean nothing by calling him good.³⁶

Calvinism Dulls Evangelistic Fervor

Pink (Calvinist). We are bidden to preach the gospel to every creature. It is not for us to reason about the consistency between this and the fact that "few are chosen." It is for us to obey.³⁷

35 Hunt, What Love, 7727-7737, 12057-12059.

36 Lewis, Problem of Pain, 28 - 29.

37 Pink, Does God Love Everyone, 163-173.

Calvinists preach the gospel because God commands it. Yes, that's evangelism, but at what level of sacrifice and urgency? Contrast Pink's matter-of-fact preaching of the gospel with Paul's. "We are ambassadors for Messiah, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Messiah's stead, be reconciled to God. For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, so that we can be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5:20-21.

Pink (Calvinist). If it be true that I am powerless to reverse the tendency of my nature, what then can I do? ... If I cannot come to Messiah except the Father 'draws' me, then my responsibility is to beg the Father to 'draw' me.³⁸

Can you imagine an altar call in Pink's church? "Come and beg the Father to look forward from the beginning of creation to hear your prayer and predestine you to believe." But if God supposedly created most men so he can manifest his power and glory by punishing them forever, even though it's impossible for them to live a sinless life because they're born as sinners, and even though it's impossible for them to believe unless God chooses them to, you would be reducing the glory of God by wanting all men to be saved.

Paul is more loving than Calvinism's god. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they would be saved," Rm. 10:1. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could [were it possible] wish myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rm. 9:2-3. If Paul was willing to give up the salvation of his soul for unbelieving Jews (were it possible), he was certainly also willing to sacrifice all the physical things of this life to preach the gospel. Imagine how the church's outreach to the world would be revolutionized if it could free itself of Calvinism and Reformed Theology. Calvinism reduces the fervent preaching of the gospel.

Calvinism Slanders the Character and Glory of God

The God of the Bible is holy and righteous and loving. He doesn't eternally torment people he created for not doing what they can't do, nor for doing what they can't avoid doing. He doesn't eternally torment people for what he himself causes or fails to cause. He doesn't command us to love our enemies, and then not love the majority of

38 Pink, Gospel of John, 5808-5814.

people in the world. Calvinists often call their version of predestination "the doctrines of grace." But if something like nine out of every ten people were created to be damned, they should more accurately call their version of predestination "the doctrines of damnation."

Pink (Calvinist). It is true that a dead man cannot believe, yet he ought to. [?!] ... Let any unsaved one who reads these lines thoughtfully ponder this solemn word of the Lord Jesus: ... John 3:18, "But he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed."³⁹

To say God punishes men forever for something they can't do is like a heartbreaking crime that took place in Hawaii when I lived there many years ago. A father threw his little daughter repeatedly onto the kitchen floor in a sitting position until she died because she had wet the bed. His previous punishments certainly caused anxiety that hindered rather than helped her learn. Can you imagine her terror when she woke up that morning and found she had wet the bed, not knowing it would be her last day on earth because of the father that was supposed to love and protect her? But this evil father is more righteous than Calvinism's God, because at least the abuse of his daughter wasn't eternal. Calvinism portrays "the Father of glory" (Eph. 1:17) as a monster, slandering "the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:6), and is antithetical "to the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12, 14). So it's important and urgent to rid the church of it.

Even we who don't believe in Calvinism, can't escape having our view of God tainted by it, because so many good men mistakenly believe in it, and make it seem acceptable instead of obviously abhorrent. Like even we who abhor abortion, are not nearly as appalled by it as we ought to be, because the majority of our society normalizes it.

Calvinism Pollutes the Gospel

Calvinism is a successful attack by Satan on the purity of the gospel which Messiah provided at the cost of his own blood. Instead of telling the unsaved "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life" (Jn. 3:36), and allowing genuine faith alone that results in the receipt of the Holy Spirit to change lives, Calvinists have to mix in works saying, "He that believes and submits to the Lord has everlasting life." And they can't ever know for sure they themselves are saved because

they think they have to examine their lives to see if it looks like God chose them; whereas a non-Calvinist can simply know he believed on the Son, since it was his own choice, not God's. God's choice was to ensure the current fruitfulness and future glory of every believer he personally foreknew in Messiah by having written their names in the book of life.

We've shown throughout this book that God doesn't predestine to or give anyone faith. God has provided redemption, and the gospel to tell about it, but YOU will have to believe it in order for his provision to count for you. You can't be saved by thinking God predestined you to believe. It's up to YOU to believe. But thank God you can believe! The true gospel message is "whoever will" according to the normal meaning of those words. The Bible ends with these words (there are only 4 verses afterwards):

Rev. 22:17. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that hears say, "Come." And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

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| | Calvinist Quotations..... | |

Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

Rev. 22:17. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that hears say, "Come." And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Calvinist predestination is to faith, directly or indirectly, so God can choose who gets saved and who doesn't. That's the heart of Calvinism, what defines it, and sets it apart from all other beliefs. Augustine: "Elected to believe. ... Called ... that we may believe." Calvin: "We were ... ordained to faith in Christ." MacArthur: "Foreknowing ... those ... effectually called ... to saving faith." Piper: "'His people' are those ordained to believe, ...choosing them for this." Sproul: "We are elected to faith." Westminster Confession: "[Those] elected ... are ... effectually called to faith." Luther (Calvinist): That ... God ... should of His mere will, leave men ... and damn them, ... seems ... cruel, intolerable; and it is this that has given offense to so many and great men of so many ages. And who would not be offended? I myself have been offended more than once, even unto the deepest abyss of desperation; nay, so far, as even to wish that I had never been born a man.

But Biblical predestination is to sanctification and glorification, so God could ensure us a holy walk and eternal security. Whatever God predestines always comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

Chosen to Sanctification

Eph. 1:4. "He has chosen [ἐκλέγω] us in him, ... that we would be holy."

Predestined to Sanctification

Eph. 2:10. "Before ordained [προοιμάζω] that we would walk in [good works]."

Called to Sanctification

1 Cor. 1:2. "Paul, to them that are sanctified, ... called [κλητός] to be saints."

1 Thess. 4:7. "God has ... called [καλέω] us ... to holiness."

Predestined To Glorification

Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], ... them he also glorified."

Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy, ... before ordained [προοιμάζω] to glory."

Called To Glorification

1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called [καλέω] you to his [future] kingdom and glory."

2 Thess. 2:14. "He called [καλέω] you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."

1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called [καλέω] us to his eternal glory."

2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to glory."

Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses - Predestined to Glory, Not to Faith

| Total (88) | Faith (0) | Justification (12) | Sanctification (32) | Glorification (44) |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Chosen/Elected (27) | 0 | 3 | 6 | 14 |
| Predestined (13) | 0 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| Called (48) | 0 | 6 | 21 | 21 |

Biblical predestination to glory de-Calvinizes every point of TULIPS. Yes, God predestines individuals, not groups; but to glory, not to faith. Yes, grace is irresistible, but to sanctification and glorification, after faith.