

**REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 8: 28-30  
PREACHED ON JUNE 7, 2026, BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER**

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

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- Last week, when we considered verse 28 of Romans 8, the apostle told us that God governs everything-"all things"-for the good of His people. Paul, a man familiar with suffering, a man who knows everything about being opposed for being a follower of Christ, a man who was tortured, hurt, and rejected for Christ, tells us that God even works in the negative things that come our way as Christians for our good. The mistakes we make, the successes we achieve, the income we lose, and the good and bad experiences we have are used by God for our ultimate good. God overrules both the good and bad things for our good. God is sovereign, and He overrules everything for the good of His people. Why does God overrule all things for our good?
- Paul gives us the answer in the second part of verse 28. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." He does that for His purpose; He does it according to His plan. What then is the purpose of God? Paul tells us in verses 29 and 30. "29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."
- You will notice that Paul described God's purpose as a 5-unbreakable-link chain. It starts with the first one and ends with the fifth. God would complete what He started. It begins with God's foreknowledge and ends with glorification. To whom God the Father foreknew, He also predestined, to whom He predestined, He also called, to whom He called, He also justified, and to whom He justified, He also glorified. All 5 of these purposes apply to the same person. It is like a train with 5 passenger cars. The first passenger car pulls the second, the second pulls the third, the third pulls the fourth, and the fourth pulls the fifth.
- Notice that the first two acts of God's purpose happened in eternity and before time began. God's foreknowledge and predestination were in eternity. The third and fourth were done in time. The calling of God and justification happened in time. The last, glorification will happen in the future.
- Before we planted this church, we had a plan and a purpose in mind. We saw the need for a confessionally reformed church in this area, and then we came up with

a name, registered it with both the State and Federal governments. I began studying and preparing sermons in advance. We then looked for a place for our meeting, chose some songs in the public domain, printed a hymnal, bought equipment, advertised our presence in the Town Crier, and on Facebook. Even as human beings, we did all this planning for the start of the Remnant Church, so what about God? The all-wise God also had a purpose for the world; He had a plan for this world.

- It is important to understand the context of the verses we are considering. Paul is not telling us about the purposes of God for the sake of intellectual argument, to divide Christians, or for any other reason. Paul had only one reason for bringing this revelation to our attention: to comfort us when we are suffering for the sake of Christ. When you are slandered, isolated, hated, opposed, and denied basic needs for the sake of your faith, Paul says they are not an indication that things are out of control; they are the purpose of God for the Christian. Knowing God's purpose in this world is your source of comfort. God is in control of all things, He governs all things, and has a plan for the Christian and the world. We will spend the rest of our time this morning considering God's purposes for the Christian.

➤ **FIRST CHAIN IN GOD'S PURPOSE: GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE**

- The chain starts with God's prior or foreknowledge. What does the word "knowledge" as used here mean? This word is used in Amos 3:2 when God said of the Israelites: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." We will all agree that the God who is all-knowing is not saying that He only has information about the Israelites out of all the people on the earth. What the word "knowledge" meant here is special affection, or love. God is saying to the Israelites, "Out of all the families in the world, it is you I have special affection for, it is you I love."
- The word is also used in Matthew 7:23 at the time of the Final Judgment when God would say to the false Christians. 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' God is not saying that He doesn't have information about the false Christians, but He is saying that He didn't have love for them; they were not the object of His special affection. Foreknowledge, therefore, does not merely mean God knowing in advance what people will do. Rather, it means God's fore-ordination or setting His heart and love upon certain people before the foundation of the world. When the Bible says God "knows" someone, it means He has a special interest in them and has set His love upon them.
- The verse tells us that God's purpose for this world started with God in eternity, setting His heart on a group of people, the Christians. God's plan for the world started with His love for the Christian. The apostle is telling us that before history began, before the world was created, before there were stars, the moon, trees, people, and anything in the world, God had determined in eternity that He loves

you, He loves me, and He loves Christians throughout every generation. Long before we began to think of God, He already loved us.

- This is the electing love of God. He loved us in Christ even before there were people on earth. Why did Paul show a tremendous love for God, for other Christians, and suffer greatly for Him? Why did the apostles commit themselves greatly to God and show much love to other Christians? It is because they understood the electing love of God, as John wrote: “We love because he first loved us.”

## ➤ **SECOND CHAIN IN GOD’S PURPOSE: PREDESTINATION**

- “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.” To whom God loved, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.” What do we mean by predestination? It means to foreordain, to fix beforehand, or to predetermine. God manages everything in this world according to His prior plan. What we see around us and in the world is God putting into operation a prior plan for this world. When we say God is king, we mean He is in control and putting His plan into effect.
- God had predetermined in eternity past that a certain group of people would be conformed to the likeness of Christ, His son. In eternity, He selected a certain group of people out of love, and His plan for them is to make them like His Son, Jesus Christ. Before there was anything in this world, God had a plan, and you and all Christians in all generations were in that divine plan. God has revealed His plan to us, and we know that in that plan, He wants to make us like Christ. Everything we have gone through in our lives, who we are now, and everything that we will go through are all in the eternal plan of God.
- All the sufferings we are going through now on earth have one and only purpose, and it is to make us like Christ. Suffering is God’s means to make us like Christ. Paul said to the Thessalonian Christians: “that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this.” 1 Thessalonians 3:3. God is directing every aspect of your life and my life in order that we end up like Jesus Christ, to reflect the glory of Christ. Nothing can stop God from making us like Christ.
- The desire of the true Christian is to be more and more like Christ, so we groan when we stumble in sin. We grieve when we are not able to keep God’s Moral Law and live by the Sermon on the Mount. We groan when we say things we shouldn’t have said, when we hear things we shouldn’t have heard, when we wear things we shouldn’t have worn, and act in unbiblical ways. True Christians battle sins daily, confess when they stumble, repent of those sins, and immediately try to live according to God’s way.
- Why does God want to make us like Christ? Paul tells us in verse 29: “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” He wants us to be

like Christ so that He, Christ might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. All the apostle is saying is that God wants to make us like Christ to honor Christ. Jesus is honored when His adopted brothers and sisters reflect His holiness and glory.

- In heaven, Christ will be the firstborn, the pacesetter of a large group of adopted sons and daughters who look like Him. Jesus will be the leader of a huge Christ-like family. While we live here on earth, how can we honor Christ? We honor Him by living like Him, by following Him, by showing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, which Christ demonstrated during His ministry on earth. In the second chain of God's purpose, Father God had predetermined to raise up a multitude of people who would be like Jesus Christ, from all nations, tribes, languages, and people groups, from every generation that has ever lived. Christ will be their older brother.

➤ **THIRD CHAIN IN GOD'S PURPOSE: EFFECTUAL CALLING**

- "And those he predestined, he also called." The same people Father God loved in eternity, He predestined them to be like Christ in eternity, and the same people He predestined, He also called in time to a saving union with Christ. How do you know if you are one of those people: loved by God and predestined by Him to be like Christ in eternity? You know when you are called by God at a certain point in time. Christians are called people. Generally, the word called is used for anybody and everybody who hears the voice of God in the gospel. So the call of God is heard when someone hears the gospel preached. God calls anyone who hears the gospel of Christ preached, and that is the general use of the word called.
- The calling Paul used here is the effectual calling of God. It refers to God making those who heard the gospel respond positively to it; it is God making them Christians; it is God adopting them as His sons and daughters. Being called, as it applies to Christians, is more than just hearing the gospel preached; it is the power of God actually drawing people to Christ, and it is part of God's purpose. You did not decide to become a Christian; you did not decide to follow Christ; you are a Christian only because you were in His plan.
- Every true Christian has had this experience of the calling of God, where the gospel draws you to Christ even if you didn't want to. God does this because of His purpose for the world. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day." John 6:44.
- Every Christian has been drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ by God. They have been summoned by Him as part of His purpose. Saul of Tarsus was drawn by God on the road to Damascus, even though he was zealously on a mission to end God's work by persecuting the Christians. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, was drawn by God, and he became the first Gentile convert after Peter preached to him. The Ethiopian Eunuch was also drawn by God; he was baptized by Philip after he expressed his desire to understand the Scriptures. Lydia, a seller of

purple goods, was drawn by God. After hearing Paul preach, she opened her heart and was baptized along with her household. The Philippian Jailor was converted after an earthquake freed Paul and Silas, leading him to ask how to be saved, and this was the drawing of Father God. It is the same for Mary Magdalene, who became a follower of Jesus, witnessed His resurrection, and became a key figure in the early Christian community. It is the same for you if you are a Christian.

➤ **FOURTH CHAIN IN GOD'S PURPOSE: JUSTIFICATION**

- “And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified.” We have spent so much time in the past considering the doctrine of justification, so I will just summarize it. The doctrine of justification by faith was the primary focus of the Protestant Reformation led by Martin Luther. Justification is a legal or forensic term that belongs to the realm of the law court. It means to declare just and to declare righteous, the opposite of condemnation. God has justified every one of the called. It is a once-for-all declaration that cannot be broken or lost.
- It is a legal declaration by God to a sinner that he or she is not guilty before Him. He covers your sin and my sin, pardons all of our sins, and covers sinners with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Believers, therefore, obtained a righteousness that is not their own. The justified man and woman have peace with God. They have access to God's grace and the hope of the glory of God. It is Father God who justifies those He has called. The moment a man is justified, the process of sanctification has started. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in that person and gives power to him or her to radically battle with personal sins.

➤ **FIFTH CHAIN IN GOD'S PURPOSE: GLORIFICATION**

- “And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” Glory means splendor, honor, and integrity of character that shine. Christians will be changed to be like Jesus Christ in His glory, completing God's plan. The sinful part of us will be gone, all corruption and decay will be removed. All the wicked and evil tendencies and thoughts we have will be removed. We shall be delivered finally and completely from every single conceivable effect of sin and evil. There will not be a trace left.
- We will have a resurrected body, and our souls, which went to the presence of God at death, will unite with our new, glorious body. When a Christian dies or falls asleep, the soul enters the presence of God, and the body returns to the dust from which it came. This is an intermediate state, and we receive a partial glorification. The full glorification will take place at the second coming of Christ, when we will be resurrected with a new, glorious body like Christ's, and our souls will unite with that body. The Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 12 verse 7 says: “and

the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”

- You will notice that Paul put our glorification in the past tense: “those he justified, he also glorified.” God, through the apostle, speaks of our glorification in the past tense as though it has already happened, showing how certain our ultimate salvation is from God's eternal perspective. The apostle is so certain that God will complete the work He has started that he writes about it as if it has already happened. God has begun an unbreakable chain of gracious acts as His purpose for the Christian, and nothing can stop Him from completing what He has started in eternity by first loving the Christian. “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6.
- Not even the sufferings we go through can defeat God’s purpose for the Christian. Later in this chapter, the apostle will tell us that: “35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

## ➤ CONCLUSION

- All five acts that constitute the purpose of God have 2 things in common. First, each of them is an act of Father God. It is God the Father who loved us before the world was created. It is God the Father who predestined us to be like Christ. It is God the Father who called us. It is God the Father who justified us, and it is God the Father who will glorify us. Secondly, none of these 5 acts of Father God happened without the role of Jesus Christ. God the Father loved us in Christ. He predestined us to be in the likeness of Christ. He called us to have a saving union and fellowship with Christ. He justified us on the basis of Christ's work on the Cross and imputed the righteousness of Christ to us and therefore declared us righteous in His sight. Then Father God has planned the future glorification so that we will be like Christ in body and soul. All these acts of God’s purpose apply to the Christian, and none apply to the non-Christian.
- Between our justification and glorification are the hardships, the sufferings we have to endure for the sake of Christ. Suffering is part of God’s purposes for our lives, so it is not an indication that things are out of control. Just as the pains Christ suffered were part of God’s plan for Him and our salvation, our sufferings are also part of God’s purpose to make us like Christ. Would you have a different understanding of your sufferings now? God is using your sufferings to make you like Christ.

- “12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. 17 For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” 19 So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.” 1 Peter 4:12-19.
- What do you make of all that the Lord is telling us this morning? The 5 unbreakable chains of God’s purpose are one of the clearest reminders that salvation belongs entirely to God and leaves no room for human pride, self-righteousness, or boasting. We contribute nothing to our salvation except the sin from which we must be rescued.
- God knew everything about us; He knew our many sins, crooked ways, yet He set His love upon us even before the world was created. How do we explain this love? John wrote: “See what kind of love, what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” 1 John 3:1. Literally, John asked: “From which country is this love coming from?” Why would God love Saul, a man who wanted to end Christianity, who imprisoned the Christians, and murdered some? How do we explain this love? How did God love someone like you who breaks His Ten Commandments?
- No one can explain this love of God. Love for the Christian was the first thing in the heart and mind of God in eternity. Out of that love, He predetermined to make the people He loves be like Jesus Christ. We meet as a Church to hear God’s Word, pray together, sing together, and fellowship together, because we know that God has loved us and has predetermined to make us like Jesus Christ. We take His Word seriously as He uses it to make us conform to the likeness of Christ.
- We share the gospel with others because we know that God has a people in every nation, tribe, and language whom He loved in eternity past and predestined to be like Christ. Through the sharing of the gospel, those whom He loved and had predestined to be like Christ will respond positively to our message. Our labors are never in vain until all of God’s elect are drawn to Him.
- These will be the words of Christ to the Christians on the Final Day of Judgment in Matthew 25:34: “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’” The Kingdom has been prepared for you since the creation of the world.