

The Golden Chain of Salvation (Part Two)

This is **part two** of the "golden chain of salvation." To review, Paul wrote in **Romans 8:29-30**: "*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*" Paul wants us to understand that our salvation started in eternity past and continues into eternity future. So, does that mean we can live however we like? No, we also have human responsibility: We worship and praise God, read the Bible, and pray to our Lord; we live a holy life and faithfully evangelize the Gospel. You might ask why, since we are already the "elect"? This is the mystery of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. No one can explain it because we cannot understand God's will, but we should accept it gratefully and with thanks. The first link in the chain is **Foreknowledge**, which shows that God, in His own sovereign and good pleasure, chose individuals, recognizing them as His own and electing them to eternal life and glory. There is no other way to interpret this passage, and we cannot fully explain what God's foreknowledge means. What we do know is that God's love for us is certain; He has given us a purpose. It's not based on our love for Him, but on His choosing us before the world was created. God's foreknowledge is not just awareness of what will happen, but it is the determining force that causes it to happen. It's not that God sees what will happen before time and then creates His plan; rather, He determines what will happen before time begins. That is God's foreknowledge. Some believe that **foreknowledge and predestination** are the same, but they are not. The word predestination comes from two parts: pre- and destined. It means deciding on a destination in advance. **Predestination** refers to God's act of ensuring that those He chooses (His elect) reach heaven. The moment we believe and receive Jesus Christ, we have a secure path to heaven. As Christians, we should be filled with peace and joy, knowing that long before the world was created, God cared about us and called our names. We don't take the initiative; God takes the initiative, and in the process, we become part of His forever family. "*Whom He predestined, He also called.*" We were born physically alive but spiritually dead. That's why we need salvation. The Bible teaches that everyone who believes in Jesus will be saved. **John 3:16**. This is the universal Gospel invitation to everyone, whether they hear the Gospel preached in church or somewhere else. Then there is the inward call, when God declares that we belong to Him, and He transforms His elect from spiritual death to spiritual life. The Holy Spirit confirms and applies the call to our hearts. God calls these individuals, and they receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We also know that many respond to the call at different points in their lives, so ongoing evangelism remains important. When God **justifies** us, it is an act of justice. This doesn't mean that we have never sinned, nor is it amnesty.

Justification is God exchanging our sin for His righteousness, taking our sin on the cross, and

pouring out His wrath on His own Son to pay the penalty for our sin. In the process, He declares that we are not just forgiven but justified. It is an act of grace and mercy. **Ephesians 2:8:** *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”* Lastly, we are **glorified**. *“whom He justified, He also glorified.”* Note that **“glorified”** is in the past tense. From God's perspective, we are already glorified. God sees us as we truly are in our standing before the Father. This causes us to look forward to the new heavens and the new earth, where time as we know it ends, along with sin and corruption. A new home where we will dwell with Christ before God forever. God loves us, has always loved us, and will always love us. He established the plan of redemption, and He will see it through to completion.