

The Golden Chain -- Foreknowledge

Sermon 28 in the Romans Series

Rom 8:29-30

Last week we saw the promise of v. 28 only applies to Christians.
God is working for Christians in a very different way than He is working among the lost.

Verse 29 is misread by the majority of evangelicals.

Thousands of Christians read these verses and unconsciously insert these words.

“For whom God looked ahead *and saw that they would choose to have faith in Him*, them He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His son.”

The italicized words are **not** in the text.

I. The Context of “Foreknow” in Romans 8:29

If God looks into the future to see who will choose Him and then chooses them – the man is the author of His own salvation.

In the context of “God looking ahead to see who will choose Him.”

“To be sure, a human choice is made, a free human choice, but the choice is made because God first chooses to influence the elect (i.e. the inward call) to make the right choice. The basis for God’s choice does not rest in men, but solely in the good pleasure of the divine will.” RC Sproul **Chosen by God** p. 137

CEV – and he has always known who his chosen ones would be

GW -- This is true because he already knew his people and had already appointed them

GNT – Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart

ICB – God knew them before he made the world. And God chose them

NOG – This is true because he already knew his people and had already appointed them

2 popular Bibles of the 30 in English missed the mark (making man the author of salvation)

1. Living Bible -- For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him— and all along he knew who would
2. New Life Version -- God knew from the beginning who would put their trust in Him. So, He chose them

II. There is a Sense in which God does not Biblically “know” the Lost

Mathew 7:23 – And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

I was never intimately acquainted with you.

You never belonged to me.

You were never mine.

I never set my special electing love and grace upon you.

III. Christ was Foreknown before the Foundation of the World

1 Peter 1:20 -- He indeed was **foreordained** before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

ESV and NASB -- He was **foreknown** before the foundation of the world

NIV says **chosen** before the foundation of the world

Foreordained, foreknown, and chosen all help us understand the word which literally means “know before.”

IV. Foreknowledge as it is Exercised by Men

Acts 26:5 -- They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

2 Peter 3:17 -- You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

V. Foreknowledge as it is Exercised by God

1 Peter 1:1-2 -- To the ¹pilgrims of the Dispersion... ²elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, ESV -- To God’s elect, exiles scattered

Rom 11:2 -- God hath not cast away his people which he **foreknew**. (Israel)

The Greek word “foreknow” can incorporate the Hebrew idea of know, “love”
Adam “knew” his wife Eve

Psalms 1:6 -- For the LORD **knows** the way of the righteous

Psalms 144:3 -- LORD, what *is* man, that You take **knowledge** of him?

Jeremiah 1:5 -- Before I formed you in the womb I **knew** you;

Amos 3:2 -- “You only have I **known** of all the families of the earth;

Galatians 4:9 -- But now after you have known God, or rather **are known** by God,

VI. The Practical Implications of “Foreknowledge”

1. He foreknew us – loved us before time
2. He predestined us to be conformed to Christ’s image
3. He called us to Himself with an inward effectual call
4. He justifies us
5. He glorifies us – as if it has already happened