

## Salvation—Predestination (3<sup>rd</sup>)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we briefly study the justified and glorified as listed in Romans 8:29-30.)

In previous podcasts concerning predestination, we introduced, defined, and began studying somewhat the subjection of predestination as it relates to the salvation of God. The last podcast ended while studying verse thirty of Romans 8:29-30, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” We saw that those foreknown or loved in verse twenty-nine were called unto God by His grace and that was “was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” II Timothy 1:9. First, we desire today to look at those who were predestinated unto justification. We plan to cover more fully the subject of justification in future studies; therefore, we will briefly give the essence of justification, identify who are the justified, and Who it is that justifies.

The doctrine of justification is a central truth in Christianity and has been the focus of many books and articles written from various viewpoints. An incident related to me by a friend some years ago illustrates from everyday experience the need for a clear and an understandable explanation of this crucial subject. During a break at work, my friend discussed with an associate the apparent differences between present day Christian writers and those of the past. The associate or fellow worker asserted that modern writers and Christians possess greater spiritual insight into the Scriptures than did Christians in previous eras. To the amazement of his co-worker my friend disagreed pointing out that very few people presently had a satisfactory understanding of important Bible doctrines such as justification. The ruffled co-worker replied, “What’s that?” This professed “spirit filled Christian” was totally ignorant of the essential doctrine that is required for any individual to be saved. Why do we say this? It is because unless a person is justified before God he cannot be at peace before God or admitted into the glory world of the redeemed. Also, while there are many benefits of justification, I will only list three at this time—biblical or true assurance of salvation, strength for Christian warfare, and the only proper incentive to a holy life. The Lord willing we will say more about these when the address justification more fully.

Several writers and dictionaries could be quoted to give the meaning of justification; however, I will only quote a couple that I believe summarizes it as clearly as any. First, I will quote John Dick from his *Lectures on Theology* (Cincinnati: J. A. & U. P. James, 1850), p. 371. It is as follows:

Justification is a forensic term, which denotes not a change of personal disposition, but a change of his state in relation to the law. It does not make him righteous by an infusion of holy habits, but pronounces him righteous on valid grounds.... To justify the righteous is not to make him, but to pronounce him, righteous upon proof of his innocence, and of the goodness of the cause.... In the New Testament, the word δικαίω always bears a forensic sense, or a sense closely connected with it, importing not to make, but to pronounce righteous.... The forensic sense of justification is manifest from its being opposed to condemnation. “It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?” ... Justification is a change, not of our nature, but of our state.

The second is a simple quote that summarizes it even further. It is from John Gill's *Sermons and Tracts*, (London: T. Smith. 1814; repr., Streamwood, IL: Primitive Baptist Library, 1981). vol. 2, p. 457.

... justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned ...

Again, we remind you that justification is a legal or forensic term that does not make a person righteous; it only pronounces him righteous according to the law. The individual does not do anything to become righteous; he is righteous. To help show this further, justification is the opposite of condemnation. When a person appears in a court of law due to some charge against him there must be proof of the crime charged for the court to condemn him. When such proof is provided without question, the evidence does not make him guilty; the evidence is proof that he is guilty. The judge or jury does not make the criminal guilty; the man is simply declared to be what he is—guilty. Likewise, when no evidence is provided regarding the crime charged the person is not made righteous or not guilty, he is simply declared to be what he already is—not guilty or righteous according to the law.

One other example given to show that justification does not make a person righteous but only declares him to be righteous is found in Luke 7:29-30. It says, "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Obviously, those who submitted themselves to the baptism of John did not make God righteous. Their actions were saying that what God required of them was right. It is without question that there is nothing anyone can do to make God righteous; however, when we submit ourselves to the commandments of God we are confessing that God is just, right, or righteous. We will, the Lord willing, review other passages when we study justification more fully in the future, but this brief overview should be sufficient to show that when one is justified before God he is declared to be righteous. It is without question that this righteousness is not something produced by us. It is the righteousness of Christ "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Timothy 1:9.

Returning to Romans 8:29-30, we see that those foreknown or loved by God are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. Further, the predestinated are called, and the called are justified. Note also it is God that predestinated, called, and justified. It is not man or the gospel that predestinated, called, and justified. Also, it is not the gospel minister that predestinated, called, and justified. It is God. Romans 8:33 plainly declares, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth."

Thankfully, the passage does not end with justification, but it extends to the final state of all the redeemed—glorification. You will notice that this too, like the calling and justification, is in the past tense. How can this be? We are not yet glorified. This is called a *prolepsis*. A prolepsis is "... the representation of a thing as existing before it actually does or did so." Another definition of prolepsis is "... when we anticipate what is going to be done, and speak of future things as present." The Scriptures tell us that God declares "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," cf. Isaiah 46:9-10. From the perspective of God, the calling, justifying, and glorifying are viewed as being completed because of how sure it is that they will all come to pass. Therefore, every individual that will be glorified and live with the Lord in that glory world to come, are justified, called, and predestinated by God. This passage in Romans 8:29-30 is a summary of the salvation of God. Salvation originated in eternity past when God set His love on

those that were predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified. To deny the predestination of God is to deny that salvation is of the Lord, cf. Jonah 2:9b.

The Lord willing we will begin our next podcast by studying predestination in connection to the salvation of God by examining Ephesians 1:5, 11. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.