

Salvation: Eternity Past to Eternity Future (*Part 2*)

Romans 8:28-30

Thought for the Day: The Lord saves us for our good and for His glory.

There are two primary truths that Paul is communicating in verses 28-30. I call this...

I. The Perfection of Our Salvation (8:28-30)

It is perfect because...

A. Our salvation is the work of God from beginning to end

1. From the rest of Scripture, we know that we must do our part.
2. In a word, our part in salvation is faith. We must simply take God at His word and accept His offer of salvation by receiving Jesus Christ into our lives as our Lord and Savior. (John 6:28-29; Acts 16:30-31; Ephesians 2:8-9)
3. We are responsible for what we do with the spiritual light God gives us. We will be held accountable for what we do with God's offer of salvation through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. But in these verses, Paul's focus is on the work God does on our behalf in order to emphasize the security of the believer's salvation in Christ.
5. Verse 28 – it is God who is working in all things for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose into a personal, saving relationship with Himself.

B. Our salvation, in Christ, is eternally secure

1. In verses 29-30, God's work of conforming believers to the likeness of His Son extends from eternity past (foreknowledge, predestination), through the present (calling, justification) and will be consummated in eternity future (glorification).
2. Paul presents this work of God in the believer's life as an unbroken and unbreakable chain (all of these acts of God are spoken of in the past tense, assuring us of their fulfillment).
3. As we continue to the end of chapter 8, climaxing in verse 39, we're going to see that the whole thrust of this passage is that "nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

II. The Purpose of Our Salvation (8:29)

The purpose of our salvation is the good of the believer and the glory of the Lord.

A. That the believer might be conformed to the likeness of God's Son

- Ever since Adam and Eve rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden, thereby twisting, distorting and all but destroying the image of God, God has been at work to restore His image and likeness in mankind. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15)
- As God works to restore the image of God in humanity, He is working to conform us to the likeness of His Son. (Hebrews 2:10-11)

- “In bringing many sons to glory” – this is glorification; Christlikeness; to be conformed to His image and likeness.
 - This is why the Second Spiritual Priority in the Christian life is to Grow and Become more like Christ in our character and conduct. (*Know, Grow, Show*)
1. It will be a physical likeness (Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 48-55)
 2. It will be a spiritual likeness (1 John 3:1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

B. That the Lord might be glorified

- This is the significance of Christ being “the firstborn among many brothers.”
- “God’s supreme purpose for bringing sinners to salvation is to glorify His Son, Jesus Christ, by making Him preeminent in the divine plan of redemption.
“In Jewish culture the term *first-born* always referred to a son, unless a daughter was specifically stated. Because the first-born male child in a Jewish family had a privileged status, the term was often used figuratively to represent preeminence. In the present context that is clearly the meaning.” (*Dr. John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*)
- Our salvation is certainly for our good, but it is first and foremost for the praise of God’s glory. (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; Colossians 1:15-18)

So what? What is the Practical Application?

1. We were created by God in His image.
2. We were created to be reflectors of His character and nature.
3. Our ability to reflect His character and nature was twisted, distorted and destroyed by sin.
4. When we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and submit to Him as the Lord of our lives, the Holy Spirit sets about the work of restoring us to the image and likeness of God.
5. For all of eternity, it will be our privilege and joy to bring glory, honor and praise to God—to worship and serve Him.
6. We can begin doing that now as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He works to conform us to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ by pursuing holiness, godliness and purity in our daily lives. (1 John 3:2-3; 2 Corinthians 7:1)

The glory of God—His praise, worship and adoration—is the primary goal and biblical motivation for living a pure, holy and godly life.

III. The Process of Our Salvation (8:28-30)