

Subject: *Eternal Security: God's Sovereign Purpose*

Scripture: *Romans 8:28-30*

The Bible teaches three main truths about our salvation:

- 1) Salvation is *possible* because of God's work for us at Calvary
- 2) Salvation is *personal* because of God's work in us at conversion
- 3) Salvation is *permanent* because of God's eternal purpose

Salvation is accomplished and applied and assured for one basic reason...salvation is the work of God. Whatever God sets out to do, He finishes. Eternal security is based on the very character of God. In our text God reminds us that our salvation is a part of His eternal plan and purpose and nothing can ever change or hinder that because God is sovereign and accomplishes all that He chooses to do. We accept God's sovereignty in creation. We accept God's sovereignty in history. We accept God's sovereignty in prophecy. We should also accept God's sovereignty in salvation.

1. GOD'S PROVIDENCE (vs. 28a) – *all things work together for good*

A. This is a comprehensive statement

It includes good things, bad things, and all things. The context of Romans 8 seems to suggest that believers should expect plenty of bad things in life: vs. 18, *the sufferings of this present time*; vs. 23, *we ourselves groan within ourselves*; vs. 26, *our infirmities...we know not*.

B. This is a comforting statement

This means all things work for our ultimate good in eternity. Some things in life are hurtful, even destructive, but everything we experience in life works for our eternal good. Nothing happens to us by chance or accident, but only by the providence of God. He either directs it or permits it, and He uses it for our good. Joseph is a good example of this.

Genesis 50:20 *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

Job is another good example. He understood God's providence and sovereignty in his life.

Job 1:21 *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*

2. GOD'S PEOPLE (vs. 28b) – *to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*

A. God's people love God

This is what defines us as God's children. By nature we do not love God. We are enemies of God. We are unthankful, disobedient, rebellious, and proud. By nature we may love what God does for us, but we don't love God.

Exodus 20:4-6 *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God,*

visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

How do you know if you truly love God? You obey Him. Jesus said: “If you love me, keep my commandments.”

B. God’s people are called according to God’s purpose

This describes Christians from God’s viewpoint. He called us to Himself in salvation. He called us out of the world and out of sin. He called out of darkness into His marvelous light. He called us when we were dead in trespasses and sin and gave us new life. He called us into His own family and adopted us as children. And all of this was part of His purpose in salvation.

3. GOD’S PURPOSE (vs. 29-30)

These verses reveal five links in the golden chain of salvation. It is an eternal chain, reaching from eternity past to eternity future. It is an unbreakable chain, forged by the grace of God and maintained by His sovereign power and will.

- A. Foreknown
- B. Predestinated
- C. Called
- D. Justified
- E. Glorified

Before we look at each one of these, let’s make sure we approach them the right way. First of all, these are all special blessings from God. These are the best things. Second, these are all things done by God. Notice the subject “he” in charge of all these actions. Third, these are all accomplished things. Everything is in the past tense, even glorification, because it is already done in the heart and purpose of God. Nothing can hinder these things in the life of a believer.

How Can I Apply This to My Life?

This text ought to produce at least three things in our lives:

- Self-examination – are these things true of you?

2 Corinthians 13:5 *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*

- Humility

1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*

- Assurance

Philippians 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

Our choir sings the song, “God says you’re gonna make it.” We are secure in salvation because God does all things well and our salvation is His work. He always finishes what He starts