
Sermon Notes

August 30, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

God is For Us: Calling

Romans 8:30-34, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

All Things Work Together...

- ❖ Romans 8:28 is a well-known, wonderful promise
 - but what comes next?
 - the verses that follow tell us HOW God accomplishes His purposes
- ❖ The verses that follow Romans 8:28 summarize the bedrock of salvation

The Golden Chain of Salvation

- ❖ The “Golden Chain of Salvation” outlined in Romans 8:30 describes various things God does **for** us and **in** us as He redeems us and applies the benefits of salvation **to** us
 - those whom God foreknows, God predestines
 - those whom God predestines, God calls
 - those whom God calls, God justifies
 - those whom God justifies, God glorifies
- ❖ Would you rather live life in “Black and White” or in “vibrant HD, 3D Color”?

- ❖ Each link in the “Golden Chain” is inseparably linked with the others
 - each link is forged in heaven
 - each link flows from eternity past
 - each link reflects something God does

Called According to His Purpose

- ❖ What is God’s purpose in calling us?
 - v. 29, to bring glory to Christ
 - to conform us to the image of (make us like) Jesus
 - to showcase the power and majesty of Jesus
 - to show the Father’s acceptance of Jesus’ sacrifice and to reward Jesus for it
- ❖ Salvation is all about bringing glory, honor, and attention to Christ
- ❖ If we lose sight of God’s purpose in salvation
 - we get “off-track” and begin to look at salvation as something human-centered rather than God-centered
 - we miss out on blessings that God holds in store for those whom He adopts into His family

General and Effectual Call

- ❖ God’s general call is the open invitation God extends to all people to repent of their sins and turn to Jesu

- Matthew 11:28, 16:24; John 7:37
- God's general call is sounded out for EVERYONE to hear
- anyone who wishes, can come to Jesus and be saved
- ❖ Problem is, NO ONE ever responds to God's general call
 - in the sinful state into which all of us are born, **NO ONE** wants what God offers (Luke 14:15-24)
 - people love darkness rather than light (John 3:19)
 - the god of this world blinds the minds of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4)
 - no one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws them (John 6:44)
- ❖ Unlike God's general call, God's effectual call always hits its mark and leads to salvation
 - throughout the NT, when the term for calling is used in connection with salvation, it points to a call that accomplishes the purpose for which it is designed
 - Romans 1:6-7, 11:29; 1 Cor 1:9; Eph 4:1; 2 Peter 1:10
- ❖ God's effectual call is well illustrated in Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11)
 - Lazarus has no ears to hear and no ability to come back from the dead
 - Jesus' effectual call opens Lazarus' ears and gives Lazarus the power he needs to respond
- ❖ "The call of God is one that effectively saves those to whom it is addressed." (James Montgomery Boice)

- when we think of, rejoice in and thank God for our salvation, we must always keep in mind that God is the One who does the calling
- we are completely dependent on the sovereign grace of God to hear and respond to His saving call
- ❖ All those whom God calls and adopts into His family are held onto by God and brought safely across the finish line of this life and given to Christ as His reward in eternity
 - our calling is high, holy and heavenly from the start
 - the life God calls us to gives us the motivation and power to live in a way that causes God's character to shine out of us like the stars that sparkle against the black night sky (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)
- ❖ We have a responsibility to receive and respond to God's gracious call (Ephesians 4:1; Philippians 2:12-13)
- ❖ We are equally responsible to announce God's general call to others

Personal Application

1. As you read the outline Paul gives in Romans 8:30 of the blessings and benefits God gives us in salvation, are you living your life in "Black and White" or in full "Color"?
2. Take time to review your life's story and identify some of the ways God was making His general call known to you before He spoke His effectual call to you. What changed in your thinking, your heart attitude and your behavior as you heard and responded to God's effectual call?
3. In what ways is God using you to speak His general call to others around you?