

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
Sermon: All Things for our Good and Predestination, Part 1
Topic: Sovereignty of God
Scripture Text: Romans 8:28–30
6/9/2019

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV) 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

You may notice that the text varies slightly in some of the newer translations.
We will address the differences when we come to them.

First a little summary review of the last message.

Let's continue trying to exegesis this passage. First question we should ask is:

1. Who is the writer or speaker? We know that the writer is Paul written about 56 A.D. *Romans 1:1*
2. To whom is he speaking or writing? – To the Church in Rome *Romans 1:7*
3. Does v28 apply to all things, including evil and to all people? I think I prefer the NLT version.
Romans 8:28 (NLT) ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

And we know - The “we” are Christians within the church, not to the general population of Rome.
We know by experience.

that God causes everything to work together for the good.

“In God’s hands, intended evil becomes eventual good.” Max Lucado, noted author.

Example – Joseph

Genesis 50:20 (NKJV) 20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

to those who love God. - There is a further separation as to whom this applies to and that is to those that love God. This is the greatest commandment.

Deuteronomy 6:5 (NKJV) 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (Matthew 22:40)

Even Jesus requires our love which is proved by our obedience to His commandments.

John 14:15 (NKJV) 15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Let's continue to break this passage down.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV) 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

to those who are the called. (*Have been called NIV*), (*are called ESV*)

Only six word but it opens up a topic of much debate, that is about the “Doctrine of Election.”

Doctrine of Election –

Unconditional election (also known as unconditional grace) is a [Lutheran](#) and [Reformed](#) doctrine relating to [Predestination](#) that describes the actions and motives of [God](#) in eternity past, before He created the [world](#), where he predestinated some people to receive [salvation](#), the elect, and the rest he left to continue in their sins and receive the just punishment, eternal damnation, for their transgressions of God's law as outlined in the old and new Testaments of the Bible. God made these choices according to his own purposes apart from any conditions or qualities related to those persons.[\[1\]](#)

The counter-view to unconditional election is [conditional election](#), the belief that God chooses for eternal salvation those whom he foreknows will exercise their free will to respond to God's [prevenient grace](#) with [faith](#) in [Christ](#).

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconditional_election

Who are “the called?”

Those in the church at Rome that are called by God to be saints.

Romans 1:7 (NKJV) 7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: ...

Saints – Holy ones (set aside) people of God.

1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV) 2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

At this point it seem that God has elected to call some people to become saints. In His calling it seems that He has already predestined them to be saints and is mainly responsible for their coming to salvation through Jesus Christ.

John 6:44 (NKJV) 44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:65 (NKJV) 65 And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.” (Also, John 6:37, John 17:6)

The question arises, “what about those He did not call or predestine to be saved? Are they to be predestined to hell? Our sensibilities want to tell us that it seems unfair to save some and not others when He could save everyone.

God is sovereign. We must understand sovereignty.

Sovereign - possessing supreme or ultimate power.

Synonyms: supreme, absolute, unlimited, unrestricted, unrestrained, unbound, ultimate, unconditional.

I am excited that this part takes us back to our series on “The essentials of our Faith”. The first and most essential Doctrine is the doctrine that **God is God**. God is sovereign, God is righteous and just.

God in His sovereignty can make men for honor or dishonor.

Romans 9:22–24 (NKJV) 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

God was responsible for the power Pharaoh had in order to make His own power known.

Exodus 9:16 (NKJV) 16 But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.

Should we think that God is unfair, unjust or unrighteous. No, He is sovereign.

Romans 9:14–15 (NKJV) 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”

We should not focus on those of dishonor and question God as to why, but we should praise God that we have been counted among the chosen for honor.

Look, God made the animals for our food. Do we say that is unfair to the animals? Can He not make men who were not originally chosen to be vessels of honor, yet still giving them a chance to repent and be saved?

John 3:16 (NKJV) 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Vessels of honor

Philippians 2:15 (NKJV) 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

It means believers must show their character in the midst of a dark culture, as the sun, moon, and stars shine in an otherwise dark sky¹

I apply the same logic to those that were not predestined can still come to God through Christ and share in the same blessing given to the chosen.

Take it another step. We as Christians will reign with Christ. Who will we reign over? It will be others that were saved. So. will there be a difference between the chosen that were saved and the unchosen that were saved?

We are chosen /elected to a special position just as the Jews were. We should rejoice in knowing that and not try to judge the sovereignty of God.

END

Message Scriptures: Romans 8:28–30, Genesis 50:20, Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 22:40, John 14:15, Romans 1:7, John 6:44, John 6:65, Romans 9:22–24, Exodus 9:16, Romans 9:14–15, John 3:16, Philippians 2:15.

¹ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [*The MacArthur Study Bible*](#) (electronic ed., p. 1824). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

