

Predestinated, Called, Justified and Glorified

Sermon preached by Mr J W Walder at Galeed Chapel Brighton on 13th April 1994

“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.” Romans 8:30

In these words we have some exceedingly great and deep matters that I can only hope to drop just a few remarks upon. I would notice that all the things mentioned in this verse are ascribed unto God alone, without any measure or manner of co-operation from man whatsoever. Man is only the happy subject and object of God’s marvellous love and free and sovereign grace, not only in the decree but also in the accomplishment of the things that are mentioned.

The few words in our text connect this verse with that which is declared previously, for all is one blessed whole in the determinate will and counsel of Jehovah towards that favoured people whom he has loved with an everlasting love. ‘Moreover’—besides, further than this, upon all this, there is further matter to be considered as accomplished in the eternal mind. We may certainly conclude that whatsoever God has promised, whatsoever he has decreed, whatsoever he has proposed is already as good as done. It is as good as finished. There is not the least or the slightest likelihood of anything failing or anything being contrary to the purpose and will of God.

The great matter which is upon my mind, and I trust is frequently upon my mind, is this—my personal interest in the things in our text. Have I any proof that the things that are spoken of here have in some measure been made known and blessedly experienced in my heart by the work and operation of the Spirit of God?

Well, in the previous verse we read, “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.” So it is all in and through the blessed covenant head of the church, Jesus Christ.

*‘Christ be my first elect,’ he said;
Then chose our souls in Christ, our head.*

(Gadsby’s 73)

‘Whom he did predestinate.’ We must first look at what we are to understand by this eternal and most glorious act of God, in his unfathomable love, favour and mercy to that people toward whom he had purposes of grace and goodness. ‘He did predestinate.’ What does this mean?

Firstly, that the destination to which they should eventually come was fixed by God. No subsequent vicissitude, contingency, circumstance, power, principality, or any other thing that we may or could think of, would make the slightest difference whatsoever. The fact that this people, whom God did predestinate, fell in Adam with the rest of mankind—Adam being federal head of all his successors who partook of his nature—I say, although the church fell in Adam, it made no difference to God’s purposes. Their eventual destination was fixed unalterably. Now in this we see something which is not only exceedingly blessed, most wonderful and glorious, but something that is vitally needful. Where will man go, what will he do, what will he choose, what path will he pursue, if he is just simply left to himself? He will destroy himself. He will run the downward road to hell and no other. The destination toward which he will run, according to the lusts of his flesh, is the bottomless pit. It was therefore needful, where the church is concerned, that God should fix their destination to be the heaven that he has prepared, appointed and provided, and to which he himself will bring them.

But this is such a full, incomprehensible subject. Those things which are necessary and inevitably connected with it are so large and so great, that it is impossible for us to fathom the depths and the heights of all that is included in this one glorious act of God—predestination. Not only then the destination is fixed, but also everything that is necessary and needful to the safe arriving of this people to that destination. It would be no good for God to predestinate a person and then leave them to get on the

best they could themselves—to set their feet in the way and say, ‘Now it is for you to find your way to the destination.’ Why, that would utterly fail! God has fixed the way whereby he himself will bring them safely to this glorious place prepared. We read in one place those precious words concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, as being appointed to bring this people safe home in the fulfilment of those words that fell from his sacred lips: “Behold I and the children which God hath given me.” (Hebrews 2:13) And in another place, “Christ died.” Two words, but O my friends, what is contained in them! “Christ died.” It is all in this predestination—for what words follow those two glorious and blessed words? “That he might bring us to God.” (1 Peter 3:18) He died to bring us to that place, that condition, which God had foreordained and to which he had predestinated his people.

Now not only then is the wonderful provision made by God that these persons should unfailingly and most certainly come to the destination—necessitating the glorious and finished work of Christ to that end—but provision has also been made for the working out of it, in the experience of these people. Every minutest detail and circumstance of their whole career and their whole experience was fixed by God before the world began. The time, means, method; the spot where a work of grace was commenced; the various temptations, trials, difficulties and distresses; the helps, deliverances, revivings and renewings; the teaching and leading of the Holy Spirit—every minute detail, in gracious and providential experience, is to this end—that God himself will bring his people to the place that he has appointed and to which they are predestinated. Nothing is by chance, nothing is haphazard, nothing at all in the least or the greatest part thereof is left to the will or power of man. Nothing whatsoever is left to the creature. It is God’s work throughout. It is God who predestinates; it is God who calls; it is God who justifies; and it is God that glorifies. It is God and no other, and this through the glorious work of the Son of God.

*The only gospel we can own
Sets Jesus Christ upon his throne.*

(Zion’s Hymns by Joseph Irons, 466)

This great matter of predestination is an exercise and concern with each and every one of God’s people. They and they only, are really, spiritually persuaded by the Spirit of the solemnity of the truth that there are but two destinations—heaven and hell. No more, nothing between it, no half-way place—it is one or the other. This will cause deep concern, at times especially, and particularly when we are brought in our feelings to stand upon the brink of the river of death, and the soul says, ‘Where am I going? Where shall I spend eternity? Has God fixed my destination? Has he brought me thus far, to this end and purpose, that he may bring me to glory at last?’

Well, concerning the great and wonderful thing which is set before us, how shall we come to some humble, right and gracious conclusion concerning our interest in the matter? The benefits of God’s love and grace, in the predestination of us to eternal life, are known by his calling. The two things are absolutely inseparable: ‘Whom he did predestinate, them he also called.’

The Apostle Paul, writing to one of the churches under the influence of the Spirit says, “For ye see your calling, brethren.” (1 Corinthians 1:26) Well, can we see our calling? Let us ask this question—do we know what it is to be the subject and the object of a call by grace, an effectual call? A call which did something for us and something in us, which left us not where we were before, but wrought that vital and blessed change? I am quite aware of the fact that there be many of God’s people where it is not so clear—particularly in these days of small things when there does not seem to be those marked calls by grace that there have been in former generations, nor as it is in some characters in the Word of God. Yet still there are those that are called by grace, and it will inevitably have the same effect upon them as God, in his holy Word, says it will have.

Now there was a vast difference between David’s call by grace, of which we read in the various places in the Psalms, where he speaks of the effect of God’s visitation, of God’s calling him by his grace and how he felt under this experience; and in contrast to that, the call by grace of ungodly Manasseh. Both were called, both were predestinated, and they both received the blessing of effectual calling. They were both humbled; they were both brought to plead for mercy; they were both made conscious, deeply conscious, of their ruin, guilt, sin, their undone state, their far-offness from God and the vanity of their ways previous to this. When God calls, it turns a person round; it puts his feet in the way to the

destination that God has determined he shall reach. It causes him to possess new desires, new longings, new feelings, new wants, so that he or she is a different person. There are many examples in the Word of God and it is not possible for us to enlarge much here, but, my friends, if you and I would know whether God has predestinated us to the glory in our text, this is how we shall know of it: 'Whom he did predestinate, them he also called.'

Is it possible, do you think, that God should love a person, choose a person, predestinate them to eternal life and that he should never tell them anything about it? That he should leave them just as they are born into the world, so that they know nothing about it until they die? No, this is not God's way. His Word declares to us that he reveals his will and purpose to his own. Well then, it is a wonderful blessing if we have a humble hope that God has called us, that we have heard the voice of God.

In the matter of the calling of Matthew, the Lord Jesus spoke with divine power and only said two words as he passed by Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom. Jesus said to him, "Follow *me*" (Matthew 9:9) Two words, that is all, but you see the power and the effect. Matthew immediately left his seat of custom and his tax gathering, and followed after Jesus.

Do we know something of this, in our little measure? Has God called us to seek after him and to wait for the Son of God to be revealed in us? You know, any general call, any moral call, will break and fail somewhere; but never a call by God's grace. That is for eternity and that cannot fail; it is effectual. It will mean, when it is received, a crying out, as those men of old did, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)

Now I must be brief in trying to look at it a little further. 'For whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified.' Who justified them? God himself. It is all of his grace, from first to last, and what a deep, great, glorious subject we have in this—justification! It is vitally necessary, for we are all unrighteous when tried, we are condemned throughout. But God has devised a glorious way whereby the vilest of sinners should be made just in his holy sight.

What is comprehended in this great matter? Justification is not partial, it is complete. It is not in part, it is perfect. It is so perfect that those whom God justifies are found without spot or wrinkle, without blemish, guilt, filth or any other thing. Now it is God's own glorious wisdom and love that has appointed and accomplished the way whereby the greatest of sinners may be freely justified in the sight of no less a person than God himself.

There are perhaps three points to notice regarding it. The first is that no debt can possibly be laid to the account of these people, for Jesus Christ is their surety, and he has paid off the long score. The handwriting that was against us, he has nailed to his cross. He has paid the utmost farthing so that these people are free from debt, perfectly so. And it is to be known in the experience of it. We have the blessedness of it spoken in the gospel: "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." (Luke 7:42)

Secondly, there is no guilt to be laid to their charge, for the blessed High Priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ, has offered one sacrifice for sin for ever. The guilt of predestinated persons, who are called by grace, has been laid on Christ. And those sins, like the typical scapegoat of old, are carried away unto the land of forgetfulness, never to be remembered again. They are freely, surely and finally pardoned through the one meritorious, glorious and vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The third part of this justification is that God is pleased to impute to them Christ's obedience to the law, whereby he has brought in a righteousness without flaw. O, in him, that is in Christ,

*In him, the Father never saw
The least transgression of his law.*

(Gadsby's 65)

This belongs to predestinated people, those who are called. They may indeed mourn, lament, be grieved, exceedingly cast down, and full of darkness and well-nigh despair at times, because they have not felt or enjoyed their interest in Christ as yet revealed. They cannot lay claim to it, and they know well on account of God's calling and its effect, that they are in themselves unjust, and guilty of breaking all God's laws:

*And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.*

But O, the depths of the mercy and grace and goodness of God in this unfathomable matter, that God the Father sent his Son, who fulfilled the law for his people! He made it honourable and brought in an everlasting righteousness. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"—that is, in the flesh of Christ—"that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." (Romans 8:3-4) He is the law-fulfiller for law-breakers, and this is part of that justification.

Moreover their debts are paid, their guilt is atoned for, their filth is washed away in the precious fountain and their persons are made just by the imputation and the impartation of the righteousness and holiness of Christ. My friends, this is the only way I know of being righteous in God's sight; it is the only way of being holy in God's sight. That is, to have an interest in what Christ has done so freely for sinners. He has done for them what they could not do for themselves—and this is according to God's eternal purpose and decree in predestination. For how do you think it is possible for such sinners as you and I are, to come to where that holy God is, unless we have a righteousness better than our own? Unholy indeed we are, but made perfect and holy in God's sight. How can we come into his presence? How shall we? Why, everlasting and eternal things are given to Christ to communicate, on account of that which he has done for these people. God cannot justify a person in any other way.

'Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified.' The whole thing, so far as our own feelings and conception of it are concerned, seems to hinge upon this one thing—the experience of a call by grace. That is the thing whereby the matter is made known to us, for our comfort and consolation. Everlasting thanks to him if he has called us by his grace!

These people are predestinated, called and justified, and them he will also glorify. I suppose that my mind was led to these words in thinking about our dear brother [*Mr J Pickett*], whose mortal remains were laid in the grave yesterday, and in trying to think a little of where he now is. Why, what an unspeakable thing for us to contemplate, as we have ground to hope and believe that he is now glorified, that his soul is with God. And upon what ground, what foundation is this to be hoped for and expected?—None other but the glorious ground of the finished work of Jesus Christ alone. O, God will glorify his people!

Now I can only just drop one or two thoughts concerning this—"Whom he justified, them he also glorified." What is it? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) This is that after which the Psalmist intensely longed: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15) It is to be with Christ, it is to be like Christ, it is to share in his glory: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne." (Revelation 3:21)

O, this is glorification! Both soul and, in due time, body as well, are glorified by God. Certainly this is not to the extent to which the human nature of Christ is glorified; no! But it is glorification of the same nature, and it is to be with him and like him.

What a prospect is before those who are predestinated, called by grace, and justified and for them who are already in heaven! "There shall be no more curse ... and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." (Revelation 22:3-4) They shall serve him day and night in his holy temple. My friends, is there that in our poor hearts that responds to this? Do we want to see his face? Is that what we long for? Do we love his visits now and do we long that we might be with him for ever? O, what did the apostle say concerning his own experience and feelings? "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8) Can we come in there? Can we say indeed and of a truth that we really love his appearing? And that even now we long for and love his visits?

*More frequent let thy visits be,
Or let them longer last!*

I say again, all this is without the least co-operation of the flesh or of man's will or purpose. It is of God's free grace. "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." (Romans 8:29-30)

The Lord grant that it may be the portion of us each and to him must be ascribed all the glory eternally.

The Lord add his blessing.

Amen.

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