***Faith Rest and Election
RO118-02***

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This morning, we continue with the book of Romans 8:28-30. Our subject is The Destiny of Good. This is segment number 7.

The Bible, we have found, makes it very clear that the sovereign Creator God has provided the human race with a plan of salvation which requires no human works to receive it. As a matter of fact, because it is a great plan of salvation, if you add any works to it, you've contaminated it, and it will not work. This divine plan is, of course, based on the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for the sins of mankind - He, dying there, as the sinless Lamb of God. God thereby has satisfied His own justice, and so, He is free to give salvation as a gift to those who will accept it as such from Him. He will not give anybody salvation partly as a gift and partly as something you have tried to earn, but He will give you salvation if you take it on His basis. Apart from God's gift plan of salvation, there is simply no way to be born again spiritually in order to qualify for eternal residence in heaven.

And many people who think they're going to heaven are not going to end up there simply because they have contaminated God's grace basis of being saved. They have added something in the way of human works to what Christ has already completed.

**The False Gospel of Mormonism**

Two of our teenage band girls yesterday were telling me that they had attended a funeral of a friend's mother who was a Mormon. The lady, as a matter of fact, was a temple Mormon, which meant she had gone through the endowment program of the Mormon Church, which is really a duplication of what the Masonic Lodge goes through in its ritual program.

And since this was a temple Mormon, this lady was buried in her veil, her temple clothing, her apron -that little green apron which is worn on the front of the body and which, in the ceremony in the Mormon temple endowment program, somebody representing Satan walks in with that apron on. And somebody stands there and says, "What is that?" And Satan says, "That is the sign of my power and priesthood." And it always has amazed me that the Mormons repeat that thousands of times in that ceremony of the endowment. "What is that apron you are wearing?" "That's the representation of the power and the authority of me, the Devil." The lady lay in her casket with her little apron on.

Well, because our girls have attended Berean Memorial Church, and because they kept their ears open and paid attention, they were well-informed on what was going on and what the lady was actually wearing and the significance of all that. They told me that the Mormon preacher explained the four steps of salvation which were called the "Everlasting Gospel Revealed to Joseph Smith." And I do commend the preacher for the fact that at a funeral, he attempted to preach the Gospel as he understood it, attempted to at least use that occasion to help somebody to escape the possibilities of eternity in the lake of fire. But unfortunately, his plan was Joseph Smith's plan.

So, he said, "Number one, you must have faith." By that, the Mormons mean you must have faith in the divine calling of Joseph Smith to proclaim the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Secondly, you must have repentance, by which the Mormons mean, and they interpret, you will stop doing bad things, and you will do good things. You must live a good life. The third thing is you must experience water baptism in order to be cleansed of your sins. And the fourth thing, he said, was you must have the laying on of hands of the church authorities to impart to you the Holy Spirit.

The deceased Mormon lady, I can assure you, whether what she believed about how one secures eternal life in heaven was God's plan or whether it was just a concoction of Joseph Smith. And I'm afraid that she has found that she has been the victim of an enormous deception of a Gospel plan that was humanly devised, a Gospel plan that was not found in the authority of the scriptures. She is now discovered, to her horror, and to her eternal sorrow, that she has a destiny forever in hell.

**Paul's Warning of Humanly-Invented Gospels**

This is why the Apostle Paul was so adamant about warning us not to be tripped up, not to be suckered into believing a humanly-invented Gospel. The price you pay is enormous. People in the area of Galatia, the ancient world, were doing just that.

So, at the very beginning of the book of Galatians, Paul says, chapter 1, beginning at verse 6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel [one that is not the true Gospel]: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Paul says there is no such thing as another Gospel; there is only THE Gospel. But some people have come into your midst to pervert what I have taught you as the Gospel that God had taught me: that Gospel of grace, that gift Gospel. No works attached.

Verse 8 says, "But though we." Even Paul says, "Even if I were to do this, or an angel from heaven such as Joseph Smith claims approached him." "Even though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. [May he be under the curse of God.] As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." And I suspect that that poor lady whose funeral our two teenage girls attended is now cursing Joseph Smith who probably resides in that same agony of pain in Hades awaiting his transfer to the lake of fire as she does.

My point is that what you believe makes a great deal of difference. God's promises may be ignored, or they may not be believed, but they cannot be revised to fit your personal preference. And that's what people are doing with the Bible all the time: changing it, revising it to make it fit what they think God should say and God should do. One cannot be saved by merely coming close to God's plan of salvation. This is one thing you have to be right on target, or you're out. Faith, of course, itself is useless, unless it is faith in what God has agreed has value, and that is His son and the Word of God.

**Characteristics of the Faith-Rest Technique**

We've been talking, then, about the faith-rest technique by which a person secures personal peace in his soul in the basis of believing the promises which God has given in scripture. Faith-rest is brought into use when the believer has gone as far as he can on functioning on Biblical principles to meet a situation, and then, when he can't do anything more about it, he takes the problem to the Lord, and he leaves it there.

We have seen that the faith-rest technique which is taught us in the book of Hebrews 4 has certain, definite characteristics. First of all, it involves the believer abandoning his self-efforts, the efforts of his sin nature, to meet his problem. Secondly, it involves personal diligence in obeying the Word of God - not just selectively, but devotedly obeying them. And third, it involves the use of the promises which are recorded in the Bible. That's what faith-rest means. God has made a promise. You mix that promise with your faith, and the result is God takes over and brings peace and rest to your soul.

There is a few more characteristics that we want to point out. In Hebrews 4:13, we have the next one, which says, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

The Bible tells us that God sees it all. Divine omniscience makes every believer's life an open book before God. Our minds stand naked before God, therefore, He knows what we believe. He knows what our attitude is toward what He tells us to do and what He tell us not to do, no matter what kind of a front we put on on the outside. All of us, therefore, should be aware that we must give an account to God. God's inspection of our mind reveals the degree of faith that we have in Him. God knows our mental attitude sins. He knows all about our pseudo-love, but people see only the fact that we look like a nice, washed sepulcher on the outside. In time, we all answer to God for our lack of faith-rest, for our lack of trusting what He has promised to do. So, faith-rest involves the fact that we are under divine observation.

Then, verse 14 tell us that faith-rest also involves personal consistency. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." The Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest of the believer. He, as the high priest, stands before God. He is representing us before God, and that's why our salvation is secure. Our high priest keeps us secure before God. As a matter of fact, the Bible tell us that Jesus Christ acts as our personal advocate, our personal lawyer when we are guilty of sinning.

1 John 2:1 says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. ["I have given you guidelines," the Apostle Paul says, "in scripture so that you'll know what you should do in walking as a believer and with Jesus Christ. But, you are going to sin, because you have a sin nature.] So, if any man sins [you will do that], we have an advocate [a lawyer] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

And it is comforting to know that the Lord Jesus Christ is consistently standing there defending us before God when Satan would accuse us when we have done wrong. And he gives the evidence of His blood, which we have accepted as our covering, and God the Father says, "Not guilty." You'll get a lot of discipline from God, but you will not lose your eternal life, because Jesus Christ is a lawyer who never loses a case.

The Christian is to depend, verse 14 says, only upon his profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in itself has no value, but faith when placed in the Son of God has value for salvation. Faith, when placed in the Word of God, has value for producing a lifestyle which earns rewards in heaven. Apart from faith in the Bible, the faith-rest technique is, of course, inoperative. So, verse 14 is saying, "Stand by your profession if faith in Jesus Christ, your confidence in what He has said, and who He is."

There is another factor in verse 15. Faith-rest involves trials. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The Lord Jesus Christ has gone through all of the temptations and trials as a human being that you and I face. Faith-rest is the status which is under continual pressure as it was for Him. The problems and the sufferings that we can do nothing about actually teach us why we need faith-rest.

But the Lord is our pattern. He was tempted to do evil. But how did He meet it? Well, you know the demonstration with Satan on the Mount of Temptation, He met it by the promises of the Word of God. Jesus Christ in His humanity was able to resist temptation by applying the Word of God. But He is, because of that, sympathetic to all of us in the pressures that we Christians experience in a world which is under curse. He stands ready to help us.

And furthermore, He not only acts as our lawyer, out Advocate, Hebrews 7:25 gives us another comforting factor in that He helps by praying for us. He is our intercessor. Hebrews 7:25 says, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." And when the Lord Jesus Christ presents a petition on your behalf to the Father, you may be sure that it's going to be answered.

One more, and that is that faith-rest involves prayer. In the last verse of Hebrews 4 says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Let us, therefore, look back to verse 15 that says we have such a high priest. He understands us. He is ready to help us. Therefore, verse 16 says, "Let us come unto this high priest, and let us come unto Him boldly."

The word in the Greek Bible here looks like this. It's "proserchomai." "Proserchomai" means "to approach." In the Greek language, this is in the present tense, which tells us we are to constantly approach God. And that's what the Bible says: pray without ceasing. The Word of God says the faith-rest technique involves praying. It involves approaching God and presenting the issue and the problem to Him. And it is to be done constantly. But it is also in the active voice in the grammatical structure, which means you have to decide to do it. Nobody's going to beat you over the head. Somebody may try, but that won't work. You must decide. It's in the subjunctive mood, which means it's a potential. It's something you may do, but a lot of you are not.

So, you may want to consider that the Word of God says you can approach Him boldly. And what you approach is called the throne of grace. This refers to that imperial throne of God which we have been seeing in the book of Revelation on Sunday nights in that heavenly scene that John has been viewing where there is God sitting upon his imperial throne. That is the throne of grace where he waits to hear whatever it is that you wish to ask. And don't forget: praying is asking.

Today, our high priest, Jesus Christ, gives us free access into the very Holy of Holies. In the Old Testament, only the High Priest could come into the very presence of God and the throne of God in the Holy of Holies. But to us, we have that access because of Jesus Christ. And so, Ephesians 2:13 says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who once were far off are made near by the blood of Christ." You can come into the very presence of God.

The purpose of prayer in the faith-rest technique is to obtain mercy from God, comfort in your misery, to find grace to help in times of need (when you need to be "graced-out" by him), and thereby to solve the problems and the needs that you cannot solve by yourself. Prayer is asking what we need and desire and leaving it with God.

So, all these factors are involved in this principle of faith-rest. Learn the principle. Take the promises of God as you find them in scripture. Believe them. Mix them thereby with your faith, and the result will be you can lean back and wait for Him to act in your behalf. The faith-rest technique is based, of course, upon the character of God.

And so, I remind you that God as the sovereign God is the one who invented the faith-rest technique. This isn't something that some preacher came up with. That's why it works. That's why you must view it with great respect. It is a plan that God himself produced. Because God is absolute righteousness, He's not going to do anything sinful or wrong in meeting the requests that you have. So, you don't have to be afraid to ask Him. He'll process it and tell you, "We better not do this this time," or "Yes, this is a good thing to do."

Because He is justice, He is always going to respond to you in complete fairness. So, just relax. Because He is love, he's going to deal with you in that way. So, just relax. Because He is eternal life, we share His life, his eternal life, in every crises, even at the point of death itself. So, relax. Because He is omniscient, He knows our sufferings, and He knows what should be done about it. So, just relax. Because He is omnipresent, He is everywhere, so He is always on top of thing. So, just relax. Because He is omnipotent, He is all-powerful, and therefore, He has no problem in meeting our need that is beyond our capacity to cope with. So, just relax. Because He's immutability, He never changes, you can trust Him to keep His promises, so just relax. And because He is veracity, He is absolute truth, He tells the truth, we can confidently believe what He has said. So, just relax.

**Faith-Rest As Seen in Joseph**

We have in that great faith chapter of the Bible, Hebrews 11:22, a splendid, classic example to tie all this up with - a classic example of a believer using the faith-rest technique. In Hebrews 11:22, we read about Joseph. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones." In this chapter that lists some of the great heroes of faith, Joseph is remembered because before he died in Egypt, he left some instruction as what was to be done with his bones after he died. He told the Jews, "When you go back to the Promised Land from Egypt, I want you to be sure you take me with you. When resurrection day comes, I don't want to come to life in Egypt. I want to come to life in God's Promised Land."

The reason Joseph did this is because he knew from the Word of God that God had made a dramatic promise to the Jewish people that while that would spend 400 years in Egypt, He is going to at the end of that time take them back to the Promised Land. We have this in Genesis 50:24, "And Joseph said unto his brethren, 'I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to give Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, 'God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from here.' And Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a sarcophagus in Egypt."

That is, he was put in a box above ground. They didn't put him in the ground; they put him in a beautiful sarcophagus, a case above ground, so that the Jews for 400 years saw where Joseph was buried. And for 400 years, they were reminded that someday, they were going to open that box and take him out of that and take him back to the Promised Land. The reason they believed this was that God had promised that they would have the land of Palestine forever. Genesis 13, 14, and 15, Abraham received that promise. Genesis 26:3, Isaac receives that promise. Genesis 35:12, Jacob receives that promise. Right down the line, the patriarchs were told, "You're going to have the land of Palestine forever. The Arabs are going to ooch in, they're going to muscle in. I'm going to put them out in time. You are going to have this land; it is yours for all eternity. Not just until the end of time - for all eternity.

And so, they believed this, and they believed that there was indeed a time of return. That promise was made in Genesis 15 to Abraham, beginning at verse 13. Genesis 15:13, "And he said unto Abram, 'Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a sojourner in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.'" Now, this is in Abraham's time that God is saying, "The people I'm going to raise up through your seed, Abraham, are going to come to a point in time where they are going to be slaves in Egypt for 400 years."

This is one of those examples of what only the Bible does. Of all the religious book of the world, of making prophetic declarations about things that are hundreds of years in the future in precise detail. No other religious book in the world dares to do such a thing because they're all produced by men. Only God can tell precisely what's going to happen down the line.

Here's one example, and of course, here's what precisely came to pass. Verse 14 says, "And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward they shall come out with great substance." And, of course, that's what happened. The Jews came out very wealthy. Just before they left, God told them, "Ask your former slave owners to give you the gold and silver and whatever they had," and those people gave them whatever they asked. They just wanted those Jews out of the land. The Death Angel had passed through, killed the firstborn, and they'd had their stomach full of the Jews. They wanted to be rid of them. They gave them everything they asked just to get them out.

"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." A generation then was a hundred years, and four generations later, God said, "I'm going to bring you back to your land." Now, Joseph believed this, and therefore had himself placed in a sarcophagus above ground. And when they left Egypt, they took him with them. All the while that the Jews saw that sarcophagus, it was a testimony to Joseph's faith-rest.

It's a pity that the Jews themselves did not imitate the faith-rest that Joseph had, because, as you know, when they finally did get out of Egypt, and they got in the wilderness, they were such a backward, rebellious people unable to believe the promises of God that those who were twenty years old and up ended up dying in the wilderness and never did get into the land. Joseph was finally buried in the land of promise, because when they left, they indeed took him with them (Joshua 24:32). So, Joseph is there. Someplace in the land of Palestine now, his bones lie buried awaiting the resurrection day. God's useful servants are, of course, those who use the faith-rest. They are the ones who understand blessing and happiness now.

**The Doctrine of Election**

And so, coming back to Romans 8 which was our jumping-off point for the study of the faith-rest technique, we have been looking at the famous Romans 8:28 passage, "For we know [on the basis of information from God] that all things work together [mesh together] for a good to them that love God." This is one way of describing those who are born again. The only way you get to love God is because you get to know about Him through scriptures. You don't love somebody that you don't know. You have to get acquainted with Him before you love Him. You do that through a knowledge of the Word of God. And then, he adds a second thing. In the rest of Romans 8:28, ".to them who are the called according to his purpose."

"To them who are the called." And this word "called" is the Greek word "kletos." This word denotes a special selection. And in the Greek language, this is in a dative case. It is called a dative of advantage. That means it is a privilege, an advantage to be called. Why? What is he talking about? He's talking about being called to be a member of the family of God. Now, that's a big advantage. And the word "called" is in apposition, it's in conjunction, with that previous word "love." In other words, he's talking about the same people. The people who are going to have eternal life are not going to have eternal life simply because some preacher said, "Hey, come on down the aisle and become a believer! Raise your hand, and we'll pray for you." Or because come preacher cajoled you, "Wouldn't you like to be in heaven with your dear mother?"

No, you don't decide to go to heaven. You don't even decide to believe the Gospel. You don't decide to accept Jesus Christ. If you have, breathe a sigh of relief, because you happen to be in one of the kletos groups. Almighty God fingered you and selected you and opened your understanding through God the Holy Spirit to the Gospel and propelled you to believe it. Indeed, "Whosoever will," the scriptures say, "come to eternal life but only those WILL to come - whom God has first directed to - so will."

Now, I'm putting it up hard, clean-cut, because there is no escaping that that's what this word means. And I'll tell you something else. The Apostle Paul uses this word several times in the New Testament, and if you would make a study of this, you would discover that he never uses the word "kletos" except of those who are going to believe the Gospel. He uses the word "called." As a call that the theologians call efficacious. It always works. When God emphasizes this call to a person, the person responds. That's the only kind of call the Apostle Paul talk about in scripture. The call here is that the person will go positive.

In other words, this is not just an invitation to believe; it's a call that you are going to respond. So, a Christian, we find, is chosen for salvation and for eternal life in heaven by the sovereign purpose of God. Why He picked you and me over, against somebody else that's nicer, that's more cultured, that's more educated, that uses better language, that lives better, that acts better - I don't know. Somewhere in the sovereignty of God, there is this decision.

So, on a human side, we fall in love with God, and we accept. But on the divine side, it is God who has called us to love Him. This results in our being oriented to the plan of God for salvation and for service, which results in our final good at the judgment seat of Christ. Love for God does not secure the good of eternal life, but if you love God, it marks the mature believe who has that eternal life. The fact of God's efficacious call ensures the execution of the chain of things that we're going to be reading about in verses 29 and 30 that follow verse 28. And we'll get into those later.

So, we Christians are not saints because we love God but because of what God's love did for us that He chose to call us into that eternal life. And why did He do it? Well, He says here in Romans 8:28 that He called us according to His purpose. The word "purpose" is the Greek word "prophesis." Now, I put these words up here so you know I'm not making this up, that this is what God the Holy Spirit has said. So, you cannot just dismiss this as something that you don't want to believe because it doesn't fit what you think is fair and just and reasonable. This word means a setting forth, a pre-determined plan, a design which has been fixed beforehand. It is in reference to the doctrine of election, and that's what we're talking about. The doctrine of election. "Prophesis" refers to election. It is a plan that God has pre-determined.

We have this word used, for example, in Ephesians 1:11. Ephesians 1:11 says, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose [predestinated according to the predesigned plan] of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." After the counsel of His own will. God did not consult with anybody else when He decided to make you a member of His family; He did it according to the counsel of His own will. We have the word used in 2 Timothy 1:9. 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." According to His own purpose, purposes. He got it again. According to God's own predetermined plan which He put together even before He created the universe.

So, a Christian is in God's royal family because of God's own purpose, not because of our merit. God did not choose us because some of us deserve to go to heaven more than other people deserve. The Holy Spirit uses Gospel preaching to make the divine call effectual. The outward call of scripture, the inward call of the Holy Spirit.

And so, when we look at this doctrine of election, and we look at a few significant points about it, the first thing to do is to join together the fact that the Bible uses words that you cannot dismiss as meaning anything else but the fact that God chooses those who are going to be in heaven. And since none of us deserves to be in heaven, none of us has a right to be in heaven, none of us has any call upon eternal life, the fact that not all are chosen is not in any way unfair. It is God's privilege as the Creator and sovereign God to make that decision. We don't have any rights that are being denied us.

So, let's define "election." When we talk about election, we are talking about the sovereign act of God in choosing for salvation in Christ Jesus those whom He hath predestinated according to His own purpose. Those whom He has predestinated to that salvation according to His purpose.

**Election**

There are certain words which are related to his doctrine, and we ought to look at those. The first is the word "election." That's the one that most people are acquainted with. We have several words. We have, first of all, the verb which looks like this: "eklego." We have the noun, "ekloge." And we have an adjective, "eklektos." All of these words mean "to pick out, to select." This is the language that you would use in the New Testament when you went down to the fruit market and you looked over the fruit stand and you pick this fruit, you pick this one, and you pick this one, and you made a selection, and you left the rest. This is the word that you would have used to describe what you did at the fruit stand in making a selection of certain items of the fruit out of the rest. It means to choose out of the mass of mankind certain human beings to be destined for eternal life.

Ephesians 1:4 refers to this, "According as He has chosen." And there is the word. It's sometimes translated as "chosen." "According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

The selection of individuals by God unto salvation is referred to in 1 Peter 1:1-2, where we read, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the sojourners [or, to the elect sojourners] scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God. The verb form is in the Greek middle voice always in the New Testament so that this verb always means "God selecting for Himself." I choose you for Myself. I elect you for Myself. The word "election" stress the process by which God expressed His love toward the saved. He expressed His love toward the saved by simply choosing them for that life.

**Predestination**

But there's a word that you're more acquainted with, and that's "predestination." That one causes a lot of problems for people. It looks like this in the Greek language. "Proorizo." "Proorizo" means to mark something out beforehand from a group for a special purpose. Predestination is expressed in God's decree, and God's decree is His master plan for the universe. What predestination refers to is God's will, which is going to be executed. And God's will, you know, we call His "decree" (or plural "decrees"). God's will is His decree. That's what He has predestinated to do, and it applies to those of fallen mankind whom God has destined for salvation. It marks them out for a special goal. So, predestination is another word for the fact that a person has been predestined, marked out beforehand for election.

**Foreknowledge**

And then we've got a real bug-a-boo. Foreknowledge. "Prognosis." That also has to do with the doctrine of election. This word, as used in the Bible, means more than simply knowing something beforehand about what somebody will do. Foreknowledge has a great deal more meaning in terms of its Greek and Hebrew use. In the Hebrew language, the Hebrew word "yada" means "to know." And what this refers to is knowing in an intimate way. This is why this is used in the scriptures in terms of knowing a person sexually. So, Adam "yada" his wife, meaning he had an intimate knowledge of her in terms of that sex relationship. This stresses the nature, then, of the relationship into which God has entered with those that He has chosen for salvation to be His very own people. When the Bible uses this Hebrew word "yada," it is telling us that God has chosen certain ones for a very personal, intimate relationship with Himself.

We have this illustrated in the book of Amos. Amos 3:2 uses this Hebrew word "yada." Amos 3:2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Here, God by omniscience is acquainted with all the nations of the world. And yet, He says, "Only Israel have I known." Now, what does He mean? Didn't He know about the other nations, about the other countries? Of course He did! But He says, "Only Israel have I known." What does He mean by that? "Only with you have I established an intimate relationship. Yes, I've known a lot of other people. I've known a lot of other individuals, but only with you have I made the kind of intimate relationship that I establish that brings you and me together in a unique combination." The statements means that only with Israel has God by deliberate choice entered a special relationship.

In the book of Galatians 4:9, we have the Greek word illustrated. Galatians 4:9 says, "But now, after ye have known God, or rather are known by God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, unto which ye desire again to be in bondage?" "Are known of God" here means God who is acquainted with everyone knows you in a special, intimate way that He does not extend to everybody else. Of course, God knows everybody, but here, Paul is talking about Christians who are known in an intimate relationship with God.

So, the Bible does not use, you see, this word "foreknowledge" in the sense simply that God knows beforehand who would go positive to the Gospel and so choose them for salvation. And that's a mistake you don't want to make. Some people say, "Well, election means that God looked down through the corridor of time, and He looked down there and He says, "Well, look it there, Sam Jones. I never would have thought he would have accepted the Gospel, but he's going to believe! So, I'm electing him. But Suzie Brown, now, Suzie was one of the sweetest girls. I thought she would accept. But, she's not, so I don't elect her."

Well, if God is doing that, He's not omniscient, is He? He's having to look down and find out something, then. He learns. The one thing you must never make the mistake of telling God that He learns anything. He knows it all. He is omniscient. And the reason He knows that Sam Jones is going to believe is because He has chosen Sam. The reason Suzie is not is because God has bypassed her. He knows it. He has foreknowledge, because He did not establish an intimate relationship with one but He did with the other in terms of eternal life. Foreknowledge in the Bible, then, is the results of God's decree, and thus, He has foreknowledge. Foreknowledge is never what God knows but whom God knows. Maybe that will help. In the Bible, it is never what God knows. He knows it all. It is whom He knows that is whom He has chosen to become intimately associated with. It's an intimacy of personal choice.

**Purpose**

One more, and that is "purpose." And, we've touched on this one a little bit. "Prothesis . . . "Prothesis" refers to all that God does by way of election, predestination, and foreknowledge. It stresses the fact that God's election program is something that He has planned in His decree. It's not haphazard. God's purpose is the result of His sovereign choice, and that is guided by His essence.

God does not decide on a person's salvation after he is born into the human race. He is not making that decision when He sees that a person is positive toward the Gospel. See, that's the mistake that some people teach: that a person is elected when he decides to believe the Gospel. God does not choose a person at the person of exercising faith in Jesus Christ. That would leave election with the individual. The Bible makes it clear that election is something that God does - not the individual. God knew a person in the intimate relationship of salvation because He had chosen that person before He ever created the universe. The choice of a person for salvation, we say, is pre-temporal, before there was such a thing as time. And it was made, therefore, by God alone. You and I had nothing to do with it. The word "purpose" stresses this pre-temporal planning of God in the election of a person.

So, when the Apostle Paul identifies we Christians who are going to have potentially God's maximum good as those who are called according to His purpose, that is a very humbling thought: to realize that someday, I will spend eternity in heaven with a holy, perfect God but only because He decided to take me into the family - not because I decided to choose Him.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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