***The Fairness of Election
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The Destiny of Good, segment number 9, based on Romans 8:28-30.

Because God is sovereign, He is free to do whatever He pleases with His creation limited only by the qualities of His own holiness. He cannot do something that is evil with His creation, but as the sovereign Creator God, He is free to do whatever He chooses with all that He has created. God's decision about man, about animals, about the material universe, are described in Romans 8:28, we have found, by the single word "purpose," the word "purpose" referring to God's eternal plan, or His eternal decree. Included in God's purpose is His decision to select some sinners for salvation and thus for eternal life in heaven and to bypass the rest of fallen humanity. Those who are saved, therefore, are such only because God called them and enabled them to believe in Jesus Christ. He can do that because He is sovereign. He can do what He chooses with His own creation.

**The Fairness of God's Election**

This efficacious call to salvation is the Biblical doctrine of election which we have been studying. Divine election is consistent with human responsibility. Election, of course, never relieves one of the responsibility for his sinfulness. People are under God's condemnation because of their own choices to do evil. Ultimately, it is not election which prevents a person from getting to heaven but to his own sinful condition in which he was born and in which he participated. The Bible says that all have been born with a sin nature, and so all are under divine condemnation. That's how we begin. It's not God's fault that you and I were born under His divine judgment because we are born into the human race with a sin nature.

You remember earlier in the book of Romans, this was pointed out to us in Romans 5:21, "Wherefore, as by one man sin [that is, by Adam] entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." All have sinned where? All have sinned in Adam. When we were born into the human race, we inherited his evil nature. So, people are under a condemnation of God as the result of something of which we are guilty - not of which God is guilty. Because God choose some of the lost people for eternal life, of course, does not make Him unfair or relieve the non-elect of their responsibility for the state in which they are in. This is what people try to say. "Well, it's just not fair for God to say, 'I'm going to select some for eternal life, but not all of you.'"

This can be illustrated, perhaps, by somebody who does not want to be called into military service. So, what he does is he inflicts a wound upon himself that creates a handicap so that he cannot meet the physical qualifications for induction. Now, this person, having done that, is responsible for his own rejection for military service. And that's the same with sinners and heaven. We have a self-inflicted wound through Adam that has brought us under a position where we have disqualified ourselves for heaven. Therefore, we are not qualified to be brought into that service. As the person imposes a physical injury upon themselves, eliminates themselves from military service.

But, if, later on, the evader wants to enter military service, and he is rejected because he is found to be physically unfit as the result of this self-inflicted wound, that is his own fault. You see? It's his own fault that now he wants to be in the service. He wants to be one of those few that the U.S. Marine Corps is looking for - one of those few, good men. But he's an incapacitated man by his own fault. And so, there's no one to blame but himself. So, it is with us and spiritual things.

However, if at some time the military authorities decide that there is a certain category of skills that they essentially need, and it's so happens that the people who have those skills have the particular handicap that this man who is evading service inflicted upon himself, the military service is not unjust and unfair if they lower the requirements for those who have this handicap and a certain skill that the military desires. And so, they permit them to come into the service. That is often done, and especially in wartime, that certain standards are lowered in order to bring somebody into the service who is not ordinarily qualified but whose skills are desired and essential and who can function even with his handicap within the category of the service that he will perform.

It is not unjust on the part of the military authorities if they decide to accept some of those people with that disability for the specific service. And it is not unjust if they do not select everybody who has that particular disability, but they select only those that have a special qualification that meets the requirements of the military service.

**Complaints Regarding Election**

And so, too, it is with God. He is not unjust in choosing only some for eternal life for all of those who are suffering with the common disability of the old sin nature. It is ultimately only human reason which arrogantly under the guidance of the sin nature rejects the concept of election as unbecoming the love of God. And that's ultimately the argument: I cannot conceive if God is a God of love that He would ever permit anybody to spend eternity in the constant pain of the brimstone flames of the lake of fire. That's inconceivable for a God of love, is the way the argument goes. And so, this leads to a human solution. We call it "universalism." It is their reaction that there cannot be anybody who spends eternity in such a painful condition, so they conceive of a second chance after death which all will accept, and so, all universally will be saved.

Well, this results in preaching that stresses that God loves the sinner and that all will be well with him no matter what he thinks about Jesus Christ. Now, of course, the Bible does not condone any such view of a universal salvation. The Bible everywhere, as a matter of fact, as you know, divides the human race into those who are the people of God and those who are not the people of God. Separation is clearly stated in the Bible, and God does this separating work.

There is one other complaint that you will hear about the doctrine of election that perhaps we should upon, and that is saying, "Well, it's just fatalism, then." Well, there's a certain comparison between election and fatalism. You know, fatalism just meets "kismit," as the Arabs say; it's just [click] going to happen. Nope, nothing that you can do about it. Nothing you can control. It's going to happen. There's some blind force that's going to bring it about no matter what.

When in one sense, election and fatalism are the same in terms of the fact that the outcome is without question. It's going to happen. But, there's a great difference in what causes it to happen, and that's the difference. The Bible teaches that election is determined by a living, personal, sensitive, holy, and a good Father, while fatalism is based on the blind law of universal causation - just chance. Election says events are accomplished by means which God the Father directs.

Fatalism says events are irrespective of any personal choice or freedom. It's just a machine that's gone berserk. Election says that events lead to the best end to the glory of God. Fatalism says there is no purpose, there is no end. So, the result is that election is the product of a God who knows what is best, who is moving in the affairs of the men, in terms of those He has selected for certain objectives. The fact that certainty exists in election does not equate it to the curse of fatalism. The certainty makes it a blessing. So, there is a great deal of difference, indeed, between the blind chance maneuverings of fatalism and that which God Himself guides in His election.

Another complaint is that election prevents a sincere offer of salvation to the non-elect. Well, we don't know who the elect are. Only God knows that. The messenger does not know that, so we preach to everyone. We know the elect only when they believe, and as a matter of fact, while a great number of you in this auditorium are professed believers and thus would be identified as part of the elect of God, we don't really know that you are until we walk into heaven and we see you there. Then, we will believe it, and maybe it'll be a surprise when we get up there and we find you there in spite of your profession now. But, we don't really know until we get up there and we see you. That's when we know you have been elected.

So, there's a great deal of deception on this earth in those who are mere professors. And a lot of people are brought into religious relationships by the monkeyshines of preachers so that people are conned into thinking they have a basis of the relationship with God which they do not, in fact. There is no question when you yourself have accepted the Savior. As the song says, quoting Paul's verse, "I know whom I have believeth, and to whom I have committed myself, that which I have committed unto Him against that day." I know whom I have believeth.

We don't know, indeed, where, in all of this mass of humanity, the elect are. There are many elect people who are yet not saved, and those are the people we are looking for. God's salvation is sufficient for all mankind, perfectly suited to meet the needs of every sinner. Therefore, we can sincerely extend that salvation to all. The non-elect have a ground for salvation, but only the elect will come. No one can say, "I want to be saved, but I can't," because God won't let no. No one can say that. If you want to be saved, it's a pretty good sign you are the elect. Because you remember, the Bible tells us, "There is none that seeketh after God," Paul says, "No, not one."

The first sign that you are of the elect is that you say, "I want to go to heaven. I want to be saved." That is the first signal that you are of the chosen. Now, you need the information of the Gospel. Now, you need to be told what to do with it so that God the Holy Spirit can seal the eternal life to you. The decree of election, you see, is secret to man. So, we offer it to everybody, and it's a bona fide offer.

In Exodus 3:18-19, you have an example of where God Himself is making an offer that He knows is not going to be accepted. [Exodus] 3. [Exodus] 3:18, "And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, 'The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.'" God directs the elders of the Jewish people there to go to Pharaoh and say, "God has directed us to go our three-day's journey into the wilderness and make a sacrifice. We request that you permit us to do that." In Exodus 3:19, notice, "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand."

So, here is God telling them to request what He knows, because of His divine, sovereign decision, Pharaoh is not going to agree to do. God says, "Make the appeal, but I'm not going to move his will to do it. So, I know that he's not going to do it." You see? God doesn't move you, you're not going to do it. So, it's terrible to see, on the issue of salvation, to be pouring all kinds of confusing things out to people in order to get them to accept salvation and thus to dissuade them from salvation, to get them to do physical acts of one kind or another so that they will be saved. God gives a bona fide offer to the mass of humanity, and those that He has elected will respond.

Romans 8:28 had declared to us that we know on the basis of authority from God, authority to give information from God that all the details of our lives are meshing together for a good. Three levels of good: into salvation, into godliness in the Christian life on earth, and then to rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. This is to those who love God, which are those only who can love Him because they have been born into His family as a result of believing the Word. Then, he says, furthermore, these people are those who are called according to His purpose. And because of the word "called" there, we've been stopping to consider the doctrine of election.

Now, we move to verse 29 that now expands by what he means by "the purpose of God." He says, "For whom he did foreknow." The word "for" is actually the Greek preposition "hoti." It looks like this in the Greek Bible. And we would translate it here as "because." And, the word here implies a certainty of results. It's going to introduce a chain of divine acts now in Romans 8:29-30 which are involved in God's purpose that He refers to in verse 28. He explains that good of verse 28 as progression to salvation and security all the way to glory in heaven.

**Links of the Divine Chain**

All of the things that are listed in verse 29-30, you should observe, are things that God does, not we do. Every one of those things that we read there - foreknowledge, predestination, called, justified, glorified. Nothing there that you do. All of this is the divine chain. And you can almost imagine that that is the chain that God appeared in His heaven, they found, link-by-link, these five links, and there you are, and it links to you and pulls you up to God. It's the chain event that only God does, and therefore there are no weak links.

The first one, he says, is foreknowledge. This looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the word "ginosko." This does not mean, as we have already indicated, advance knowledge. This does not mean that you know something beforehand. It is true that the word is sometimes used that way. You'll find that, for example, in Acts 26:5 and in 2 Peter 3:17 which describe something that people know beforehand. And all of us have a quality of foreknowledge. All of us have a quality of knowing that the sun is going to rise in the morning. We have foreknowledge of that. We have advanced information. And so, in the variety of those, we have foreknowledge about certain things.

But that is not what this word means here basically in the Bible. This word means more than knowing something beforehand. This word has to do even with more than knowing that a certain group of people are going to believe the Gospel. What we have in this word, as we've already learned, is that God is expressing something in the way of a personal, intimate relationship that He has chosen somebody to. Foreknowledge is a personal choice on the part of God. Faith in Jesus Christ, which God indeed foresees someone having, is faith which God has given to that person. And so, a person is under the foreknowledge choice of God, of having faith in Jesus Christ, because God decided to give it to him. That's how God knows that you're going to believe.

Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." The phrase "that not of yourselves" refers to everything from verse 4 on down, which include faith in Jesus Christ. It is God who gives this salvation. It is God who gives the faith to believe it. That's what is involved in the word "foreknowledge."

Philippians 1:29 says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." It is given unto you to believe. You don't do it; it is given unto you. And that's what foreknowledge means: God has affectionately chosen you as a special person to enter His royal family. Please notice in Romans 8:29 that the Apostle Paul says, "For whom He did foreknow." "Whom" refers to a person. He did not says, "For what He did foreknow." He did not say, "What God foreknew," as if God knew what? Well, He knew that you were going to accept the Gospel. Not what, but whom, because He is talking about the person He chose. So, "whom He foreknew" as a personal, divine choice. It refers to a divinely-established relationship, then, of special affection and regard, of special closeness which is established by God as per His sovereign decision.

Genesis 18:19 illustrates this concept in the Old Testament where God is talking about the fact that He took this man Abraham, born in the pagan culture, absolutely no access to the Gospel information. But one day, Abraham looked out on creation, and Abraham said, "There has to be someone out there who made this, and I have a sense of being absent from Him. And I am conscious that some things are right and some things are wrong. And I'm under a sense of having to account to whoever made all this and me." That was Abraham's moment of God-consciousness, and at that moment, in some way, God illuminated Himself to Abraham and brought Abraham the gospel of salvation, revealed Himself to Abraham, and Abraham believed. God at that point foreknew Abraham, and the tenderness of affection of that close relationship that God established with this pagan Abraham is illustrated in Genesis 18:19 when God says, "For I know him [There's the word, the Hebrew, "yada," the word as the same intimacy as this word here in the Greek.], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." There you have a heavenly Father who's looking at His son and expressing his warmth and affection and delight and pleasure because this is a child who is going to respond to righteousness, and that creates this bond of affection.

The same concept is illustrated in Deuteronomy 7:6-8 in reference to the Jewish people as a whole, where God says to the Jewish people, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you [the intimacy of personal affection created the condition of foreknowledge here], and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

God said, "Because I foreknew you to freedom in the Promised Land, you can count on Me to keep my Word." Now, that's important to notice, because as I say, the first link in this chain here is the link of foreknowledge, and that one is absolutely certain, and every other link is absolutely certain so that when it gets down to you and you tie into that heavenly chain, you are going no place but heaven. You can never again be destined for anything else, because every link in the chain is a product of God Himself.

That's one of the horrendous things about the whole charismatic movement who suggest to people that this linkage can have a weak point in it that can break and suddenly you drop out from your connection to heaven. That is out of hell itself. It is a terrible deceit, and everybody who's in the charismatic movement who doesn't know any better actually believes that he's here today, relative to heaven, but steps out of line, and he's doomed tomorrow. But when God says that He foreknows you, if means it's permanent.

This Greek word, this verb, "proginosko," is in the aorist Greek tense, which mean it's the point when God made His divine decree and included you. It's active; this is an objective that God has selected, now He's going to explain what He wants to do with you. A statement of fact.

And what He did was to predestinate. That's another word we've already looked at in some detail. Here it is again. "Proorizo." And the word, as you learned, means to mark out beforehand for a special purpose. It's the same word we sometimes translate as foreordination. This word indicates what the person who has been selected by God's foreknowledge has been marked out for. What is God destining you to do? He has intimately chosen you for eternal life. Now, He's predestinated you who He has known for some purpose. And that purpose, as we shall see, will be to transform you, of all things, into the very image of Jesus Christ. This word is in the aorist tense again, the point of God's divine decree in eternity past. Active: a divine choice of God Himself. A statement of fact, indicative mood.

And what is that purpose? It says, "To be conformed." It is the adjective here: "summorphos." "Summorphos" means, "to have the same form as something else." This word is used twice in the Bible. One time, it is here, in Romans 8:29, where it means "spiritual conformity to Jesus Christ." It is used one other place, in Philippians 3:21, where we read, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." He will change our lowly body that it may be fashioned like. And there, we have the same word indicating that our physical bodies are going to be conformed into the very image of Jesus Christ in His resurrection. So, God is filling the universe, He says, with replicas of Jesus Christ.

He further identifies this in Romans 8:29 by the word "image," that those whom God has intimately chosen with affection He is setting apart to be conformed to be reproduced in appearance to the image. This is the Greek word "eikon." The word "eikon" is a noun. It refers to a derived likeness. Matthew 22:20 uses this word "eikon" in referring to the coins which were in use in the day of Jesus in New Testament times that had on it the head of the emperor. Matthew 22:20, "And He saith unto them, 'Whose is this image and superscription [the image]?'" A child will have an external "eikon" to his parents. He will have the appearance and the look of his parents.

In Revelation 13:14-15, we have the description of a statue which is going to be placed in the Jewish temple for them to worship a statue of the antichrist, and it uses the word "eikon" because when you look at the statue, it's going to look exactly like the antichrist. It will be him in appearance. Now, the reference here in Romans 8:29 is to God's Son, Jesus Christ. So, notice what he's saying. Christians are going to be conformed. They're going to be made to appear like the image of Jesus Christ.

They'll be conformed to Him, Philippians 3:10 tells us, by sharing the suffering for righteousness. Philippians 3:10, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." Conformed to His suffering. We'll be in that kind of the image of His appearance and the works of Jesus Christ. We will also, in verse 21, 3:21, we've already seen, have the appearance in resurrection of this perfect body.

So, God's goal is to make us, as Christians, display the character and the destiny of Jesus Christ. This, of course, does not mean that we will share His deity. Don't make the mistake of the Mormons. We will not share His deity; that is intrinsic to Himself. But what will share will be all the other qualities and characteristics of Jesus Christ physically and spiritually.

Romans 1:23, we read that the human race so degenerated in time that they wanted to make God in the image of fallen man, in man's fallen likeness. Romans 1:23, "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and [worse than that, they descended] to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." But here in Romans 8:29, wonder of wonders, we are told that God is going to remake all of us into the very image of Jesus Christ.

Now, just think for a moment what that means in terms of changes. The image of Jesus Christ. We're not all going to look like Jesus Christ externally. Our bodies will be perfect. You might as well settle for the fact that you are stuck with what you look like. We will know you immediately in heaven by the size of your ears and the length of your nose and all the other things. We're going to recognize you. I trust that the Lord will make some improvements.

It will be undoubtedly a time when we will be at the prime of life. Wouldn't it be nice if He made everybody, let's say 70 years in half, so everybody's 35. That's where you come out. But, all your teeth are back in, and all the other things that have broken down have been corrected. But you're still going to look like yourself. But there are certain things, while you will still be human, you will not be a god that will be exact replica, duplications of Jesus Christ.

Just think of the humbleness for a moment of the Lord Jesus. People, including Christians, are so downright arrogant today. So arrogant. They are so proud of what they know. I heard on the news recently that the state is now debating a new law, the government is debating a new law concerning the treatment of an inmate on death row who has gone insane while he was on death row. And they want to pass a law that he cannot be executed while he's crazy until the psychiatrist has made him sane. And the psychiatrists are having qualms about whether they want to take this crazy man and make him sane so that he can be executed.

Now, notice the arrogance. The psychiatrists who can't even agree among themselves when somebody is crazy . . . are arrogantly saying that they have the capacity to treat you so that they can correct your insanity. Now, unless it's a chemical disorder that they can give you medication for and that will change your mental stability, the psychiatrists and the psychologists are a bunch of witch doctors, and they have no more capacity than the witch doctors. As a matter of fact, witch doctors usually do better, because at least they have the demon spirits working for them. They cannot do the things they claim. They cannot correct the mental disorders.

And of course, as some of the leading psychiatrists and psychologists now say, there is no such thing as mental illness. There is only the sin nature and a variety of deliberate, arrogant expressions. And when I heard this, I thought, "Here it is." How wonderful it will be when all of us are transformed to the image of Christ and no more of that kind of arrogance coming out of the mouth of people. No more of that kind of haughty pretense that makes us fools of the human race.

The tenderness of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's got to be corrected in a lot of us. Christians are so unkind to one another on so many occasions. They gloat, and they gossip about somebody's weaknesses, somebody's ill fortune, or somebody's stupidity, and there ain't anybody dumber than the Christian. I cannot believe what Christians will decide to do. But, all the mean talk that moves the person are so unlike the person of Jesus Christ. Christians have to learn to lower their voice and even to close their mouths to avoid these things that are unkind and that are not, as the scriptures calls upon us to be, tenderhearted to one another.

The little concern that is shown for another's burdens and the circumstances of life which another person carries. Yes, sometimes people are under burdens that they have brought on themselves, but you can give them a hand, and you treat them with kindness. You do that even to your dog when he injures himself foolishly, and you treat him with kindness and consideration. That tenderness is all going to be corrected, and there's not going to be any trouble. There's not to be any more trouble with Christians cranking TLC by the carloads once we have been transformed. All that TLC will be there. Tender, loving care.

Well, how about the loyalty of Jesus Christ? This is one thing that you can count on the Lord Jesus. He stood by the people of God. He was such a stable person. Don't you get sick and tired of the instability of Christians and the instability of the Fig Newtons that are in the Christian community that you cannot count on? Jesus was a friend you could count on. Jesus was the friend that would stand up for you when you would be slandered.

Somebody recorded the news the other day in a group where somebody took off on me. Can you believe it? [Laughter.] And, it was somebody who'd never been in this auditorium. They'd never had any contact with us but who picked up all the scuttlebutt there because we are not the most popular church in the city of Irving because we mind our own business, we are devoted to the Word of God, and we are the providers of benefits to people that their own churches do not provide for them. And so, they are happy to come to us.

But, there was this snide, slanderous remark about the Berean Ministry by somebody who couldn't possibly know, but he made the mistake of saying it in the presence of one of the men in our school who happened to be sitting in that group and who didn't know that he was associated with our school. So, he set him straight. This kind of snideness, this kind of unkindness, of disloyalty, is just amazing based upon people's ignorance. It's going to be nice when Christians are no longer ready to abandon those who are with them on the battlefield in the angelic warfare.

The morality of the Lord Jesus Christ. So much of the moral filth of the public media today. It's there appalling, the moral filth in public media. And so much compromising on the part of Christians with that moral filth. All the compromising in there on dealing and being part of supporting that, listening to it, paying attention to it. Now, they're always bringing on these entertainers, the stars of the entertainment world, most of them whom I don't know.

And I've often thought how the country would be changed if everybody were like myself. [Laughter.] Boy, would some of those entertainers be out of business fast. There would hardly be any of them that would survive. A couple of them, here and there, but most of them, man, they're gone. It's just absolutely amazing the morality level in our society and how Christian compromise. It's going to be so nice when the Lord Jesus comes along, and He's going to wean us off our attraction for the world. We're going to have a belly full of it, and we're not going to have a taste of it again.

And it is amazing how the kids do it. Really to reel your children and, say, "This is the role of manliness. This is the role of womanliness." And, all of the sudden, we get some teenage kid that's off there out into the world attractions and doing what the world thinks and wants to dress like the world, and act like the world, and talk like the world, and it's all garbage. It's going to be so nice when Christians are going to finally be cleaned up into the image of Jesus Christ. Just imagine our Lord walking through our society, and you get a little picture of the changes that are going to come about.

And, of course, there's the integrity of the Lord Jesus. Christians who so easily resort to the lie, to the deceit, so that their word is not trustworthy. You're never really sure that they're telling you the truth. They will promise to do something, and then they won't do it. They'll promise to be someplace, and they won't show up. And they won't pay their bills for the service and materials that they've received. And they'll be indignant that you suggest that they ought to do it. Christians who don't live up to agreements and promises. That is absolutely so sad, and it is not uncommon among Christians to lack the integrity of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's going to be so nice when we are transformed into the image of His integrity.

And then, there's the service of the Lord Jesus, this man who was more interested in giving than receiving. And indeed, He found it more blessed that way. And to do it not without arrogance and show, to get somebody to praise and somebody to give Him glory in return, but just doing it in a low-key way between Him and the Lord. As Jesus said, yes, the Pharisees have stood out on the corner. They wore the long, luscious, dramatic, decorated robes to identify themselves as the religious leaders. And Jesus says, "Yes, some of these clowns have stood out there, and they had a guy who knows how to blow a trumpet. And they have him stand on the corner. They have him blow assembly so that all the people can come around while the Pharisee puts on his pious act of prayer.

And the Lord says, "Well, Mr. Pharisee, you got your reward. You got your kicks. You got your praise. But you're going to get nothing in heaven." And then the Lord says, "You go into your closet. You go and pray quietly. You go and do this unobtrusively. You do this just between you and the Lord, and I guarantee you that the day will come when you will be rewarded before everybody for what you have done in the quietness of your own life in dealing with the Lord."

Service. That's the kind of service the Lord Jesus did. And He was consistently on the job. Don't you get tired of Christians who are always A.W.O.L.? (Absent WithOut Leave), or outright deserting on the field of battle. It's so wearisome. It's so tiresome. And the saddest thing is, you have to so pity them while they go chasing rabbits and follow where they think their star is leading them. It was the love of the Lord Jesus that motivated His service, and His service was motivated for the good of the people that He served. That was the highest quality, and that's what God honors.

Well, we could multiply this many times over. What is the image of Jesus Christ fully like? We can't comprehend it. But they are going to be dramatic changes in all of us, changes that are going to bring us to where we are indeed like Him. And all these devastating, disgusting weaknesses and compromises and instabilities that are characteristic of us are going to be removed. We are going to quit wasting our lives. We're going to quit pursuing things that are secondary and useless and nonsense and meaningless, and we're going to start investing in the things that are really important: the things that are of value.

And He is going to give us the capacity to enjoy those things. The God who tenderly, affectionately foreknew us, and thus in His purpose chose us for eternal life, also has set us apart by predestinating us to be revised, retooled, redesigned into the very image, spiritually and in physical resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, so that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. And what a phrase that is. He to be the preeminent one among those whom He deems to call His brothers. And next time, we'll jump off with that point.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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