



How God Loves Me, Part 1

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Kick Start:

How did God speak to you through this message?

Main Point:

The world to many people seems to be a random place where anything can happen. But believers never have to faint in times of suffering and trial because they know that God loves them and has a perfect plan that guarantees He has not forgotten, or abandoned, or stopped loving those who He has called.

Introduction:

After a summary stating that God works in all things for our good, Paul give us five golden links, you might say, in the chain of God's sovereign love and care that take us from eternity past to eternity future.

Message Outline:

I. God Foreknew Us

God's plan for us was not an afterthought. It began in a decision to enter into an intimate, personal, relational, covenant love with us before the creation of the world. (Gk. *proegnō* - "to know beforehand, to choose in advance with loving intent.")

Romans 8:29

Talk About It:

1. What does "foreknew" reveal about God's relationship with believers?
2. How can you grow in sharing the Gospel, knowing that God's sovereignty and foreknowledge guide the outcome?

II. God Predestined Us

God determined beforehand, to set us apart based on the intimate knowledge He had before we were born with the purpose of conforming us to the image of His Son. He wanted to create a family of believers who look just like Jesus in their character and actions and thoughts, with Jesus being the Elder Brother in this family. (Gk. *Proorizō* – "foreordained", used primarily of parents making plans for their children)

Romans 8:29

Talk About It:

1. How can God's sovereignty and human responsibility coexist without contradiction?

2. What do you think: If God already predetermined who will be saved, then everything is fated and evangelism is pointless.
3. How does God's foreordained plan for you of being conformed to Christ's image impact your perspective on sin, suffering, and spiritual maturity?

III. God Called Us

God has set His love on His own. He has extended to them not only the general, universal invitation to believe the gospel but His effectual calling—the call that is effective in bringing a person to Christ in salvation. This call is not a mere invitation but a decisive action of God, working in the hearts of people to enable repentance and belief.

Romans 8:30

Talk About It:

1. How have you experienced God's effectual calling in your own life, and how has it shaped your faith?
2. How does knowing God called you according to His purpose give you hope, affect your trust in Him and your sense of security in your faith?

IV. God Justified Us

Christ's sacrificial death reconciles sinful man to a holy God. And because of your faith in and relationship with Jesus Christ, God the righteous Judge declares you to be righteous. Your sins were placed on Jesus and paid for by Him and Christ's righteousness was placed on you.

Romans 8:30

Talk About It:

1. How does knowing that God declares you righteous the moment you trust Christ affect your sense of peace and assurance in Him?
2. What specific ways does justification impact the way you live and hope for eternity?
3. Consider the areas in your life where you are not reflecting the righteousness of Jesus. What steps can you take to align yourself with the way God declares you to be?

V. God Glorified Us

Glorification is the final stage of our salvation. While justification declares a believer righteous, glorification is when God removes all remaining sin and fully transforms them into Christ's likeness so they can dwell with God forever. Written in the past tense, this tells us that glorification is so sure that it is as good as done from God's point of view.

Talk About It:

1. What does the glorification and transformation of our future bodies teach us about God and His plan for humanity?
2. How does the promise of glorification shape the way you view your struggles with sin?
3. How can you live in a way now that reflects the eternal reality of your glorified future?

Conclusion:

How do you know if you are among the elect? There is only one way, and it is not by trying to peer into the eternal counsels of God, stripping the cover from the book of his divine foreknowledge and predestination. The only way you will ever know if you are among the elect is if you respond to the gospel. We are told in the Bible: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved ..." (Acts 16:31). Do it. Then you can know that God has set his electing love on you and that, having loved you, he will continue to love you and keep you to the end. (JMBoice)

Make It Practical:

BECOMING MORE LIKE CHRIST

When a person is saved, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within them and a lifelong transformative process begins—called sanctification—through which we are conformed to the image of Christ. Becoming more like Christ is a continual process for the believer. How can we cooperate with the Holy Spirit to become more like our Savior?

- Learn more about our wonderful God by meditating on His written Word (Psalm 1:1–3).
- Ask God to make His Word come alive to us. The more we understand and apply God's word, the more we emulate Christ (Psalm 119:18).
- Jesus outlines the necessary sacrifice we must make to become like Him. We are to put to death our old sin nature for the sake of obedience to Christ. (Luke 9:23-24).
- Growing in spiritual maturity, becoming more solidly grounded in our faith and in love (Ephesians 4:11–16).
- Becoming like Christ ultimately involves the pursuit of the knowledge of God and active obedience to His commands and instructions to us (James 1:22).
- Keep from being easily swayed by emotions, opinions, or false teachings. Stay grounded in God's truth (Ephesians 4:14–15; James 3:17).
- Cultivate a willingness to lay down our lives in big and small ways for the sake of the others (1 Corinthians 13:4–7).
- Rely on the truths of His Word rather than feelings or circumstances (Hebrews 11:1; Proverbs 3:5–6).

As these qualities deepen in our lives, they confirm that the Spirit is shaping us to look more like Jesus.

Keep your model before you. You see what you are predestinated to be; aim at it every day. Above all, commune much with Christ. Communion is the fountain of conformity. They said of Achilles, that when he was a child they fed him upon lion's marrow, and so made him brave; and of Nero, that he was suckled by a woman of a ferocious nature. If we take our nutriment from the world, we shall be worldly; but, if we live upon Christ and dwell in Him, our conformity with Him shall be accomplished, and we shall be recognised as brethren of that blessed family of which Jesus Christ is the firstborn. — C. H. Spurgeon.

Prayer Points:

- We thank you your plan for us that started before the foundations of the world.
- Thank you for your work in our lives, even the parts we don't like or understand.
- Thank you for bringing into salvation with you and seeing us as righteous.
- Help us to be more like your Son and fulfill your purpose in our lives.
- We ask that you call out to family and friends with the effect of bringing them to repentance and faith in you
- Help us to live now with our future glory in mind.
- Pray for the needs of the group