

Epistle to the Romans 8:19-30 (NRSVue)

God solves Christians' indwelling-sin problem in seven ways (Romans 8)

1. God does not condemn Christians (1-11)
2. Sin cannot require Christians to sin (12-17)
3. Christians wait patiently for a new body (18-25)
4. God's Spirit prays for Christians (26-27)
5. God has decided to glorify Christians (26-30)
6. Christ died & intercedes for Christians (31-34)
7. Nothing separates Christians from God's love (35-39)

Christians wait patiently for a new body (18-25)

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

- Sufferings: Do not discount God's love.
- Present: The context of this chapter.
- Worth: Rewards disproportionate.
- Glory: → 'he will glorify' in 8:30.

¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it...

- Creation: To be made a new creation in the end.
- Revealing: Replacing the fallen ones.
- Futility: At the Satan-Adam fall.
- Subjected: No perfect governance.

... in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

- Free: New creation yet to come.
- Decay: All (known) life forms die.
- Glory: Risen, ruling, and righteous.
- Children: Born again and adopted.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

- Adoption: Publicly displayed.
- Redemption: Made immortal, like Jesus.

²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

- Hope: Confident expectation.
- Seen: "Is this all we get?"
- Wait: Eagerly.
- Patience: Endure 'under' difficulties.

God's Spirit prays for Christians (26-27)

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words.

- Spirit: Ministry by the Holy Spirit
- Weakness: Easily tempted, discouraged.
- Intercede: Asking the Father for help.
- Groaning: More sensed than thought.

God has decided to glorify Christians (26-30)

27 And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

- Searches: Enjoys intimacy with us.
- Mind: The Holy Spirit thinks!
- Intercede: Asks the Father for help.
- Will: He wants us to remain joyful.

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

- All: All which things? (The five divine works leading to glorification.)
- Good: Good what?
- Those: As a group or as individuals?
- Called: To what? (In the NT epistles, God calls new Christians to a new way of life, which includes fellowship with him, holiness, sonship, peace, freedom, hope, purity...)
- Purpose: What purpose? (Glorification, v. 30).

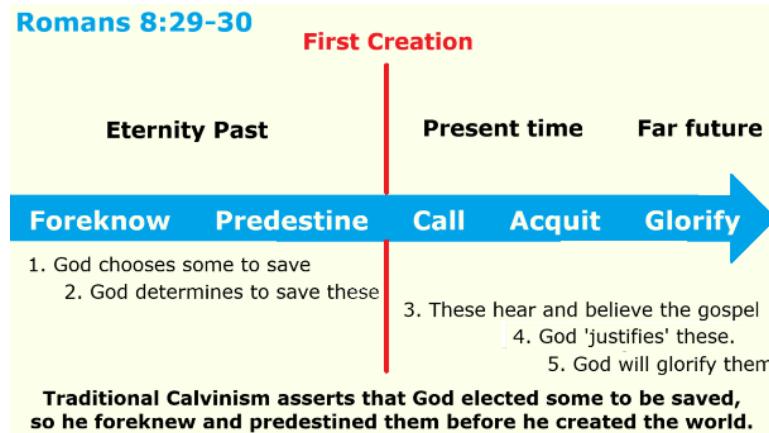
29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.

- Foreknow: Before when? (Before glorification.)
- Predestine: Pre-when? (Before glorification.)
- Image: We are God's image-bearers; we become Christ's image-bearers.)
- Firstborn: Superior in rank.
- Family: Holy angels and saved humans.

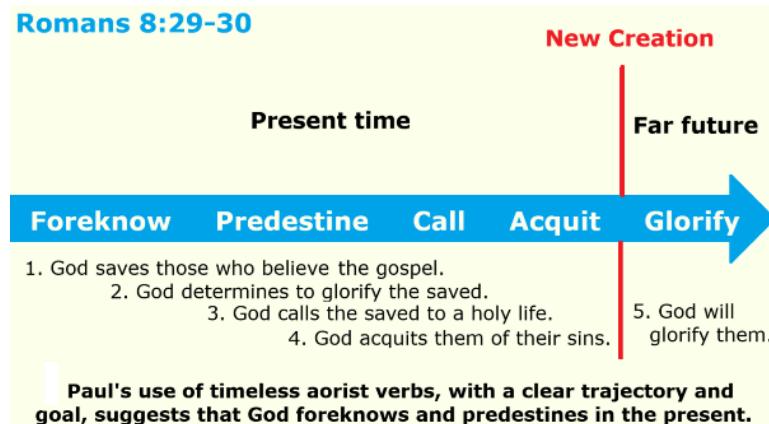
30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

- Verbs: Timeless aorist tenses. May be past, present or future.
- Order: Logical or chronological?
- Justify: Acquit, declare innocent.
- Glorify: Raise from death in glorified bodies like Jesus' body. This remains future the goal of salvation, before which God foreknows, predestines, calls and justifies.

Reformed or Calvinist theology asserts that God foreknew future Christians before he created the world, and then predestined them to salvation, and all others to perdition.



In the context of Romans 8, Paul asserts that God foreknows Christians before he glorifies them, and then predestines them for glory before the future New heaven and new earth.



“Those whom he foreknows he also predestines to be conformed to the image of his Son... And those whom he predestines he also calls, and those whom he calls he also justifies, and those whom he justifies he will also glorify.”

Soteriological definitions

- Foreknow: to acknowledge as saved. Likely occurs at moment of repentance with faith.
- Predestine: to ensure eternal life. God's goal for all who trust in Messiah Jesus.
- Call: to invite into a new life on earth (holiness, fellowship, hope, peace, purity, and more).
- Acquit: to declare believers forgiven.
- Glorify: to resurrect in the Kingdom.

Conclusion

➔ Whether one adopts a Calvinist view or a biblical view, the implication remains the same: It is God who ensures our everlasting glory, despite our failures and tribulations!