

ROMANS 8:28-30 VOCABULARY

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature

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To foreknow. προγινώσκω, proginōskō. “**1** to know beforehand or in advance, *have foreknowledge (of) ... someth. ...* (i.e. what the context makes clear) *in advance.* ... **2** *choose beforehand ... someone... know from time past.*”

To predestine. προορίζω, proorizō. “decide upon beforehand, *predetermine.*”

To call. καλέω, kalēō. “**1** to identify by name or attribute, *call, call by name, name...* **2** to request the presence of someone at a social gathering, *invite...* **3** to use authority to have a person or group appear, *summon...* **4** From the mngs. ‘summon’ and ‘invite’ there develops the extended sense *choose for receipt of a special benefit or experience, call.*”

To justify. δικαιώω, dikaioō. “**1** to take up a legal cause, *show justice, do justice, take up a cause...* **2** to render a favorable verdict, *vindicate...* **3** to cause someone to be released from personal or institutional claims that are no longer to be considered pertinent or valid, *make free/pure...* **4** to demonstrate to be morally right, *prove to be right.*”

To glorify. δοξάζω, doksaō. **1** to influence one’s opinion about another so as to enhance the latter’s reputation, *praise, honor, extol...* **2** to cause to have splendid greatness, *clothe in splendor, glorify, of the glory that comes in the next life.*”

Romans 8:29-30. “Those whom he **foreknew** he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son... And those whom he **predestined** he also called, and those whom he **called** he also justified, and those whom he **justified** he also **glorified.**” NRSVue

Notes:

The five verbs are all in the Greek **aorist** tense, which describes general truths or actions in the past, present or future. The aorist is used for events in past time only where there is an explicit time reference. Note that ‘glorified’ is also an aorist although it logically applies to the future. In the absence of time referents, one may translate Romans 8:29-30: “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.”

The prefixes **fore-** and **pre-** imply something done in advance. Calvinists assert that God foreknew and predestined before he created the world, citing Ephesians 1:4-5, “[God] chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world... he predestined us.” This seems undeniable until one observes that the world in view here is the future world: “the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth” (v. 10).

In Romans 8:29, God foreknows and predestines before when? Nothing is said about eternity past or about creation of the world. Rather these divine prerogatives begin before we are “to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” And in verse 30, before “he will also glorify.”