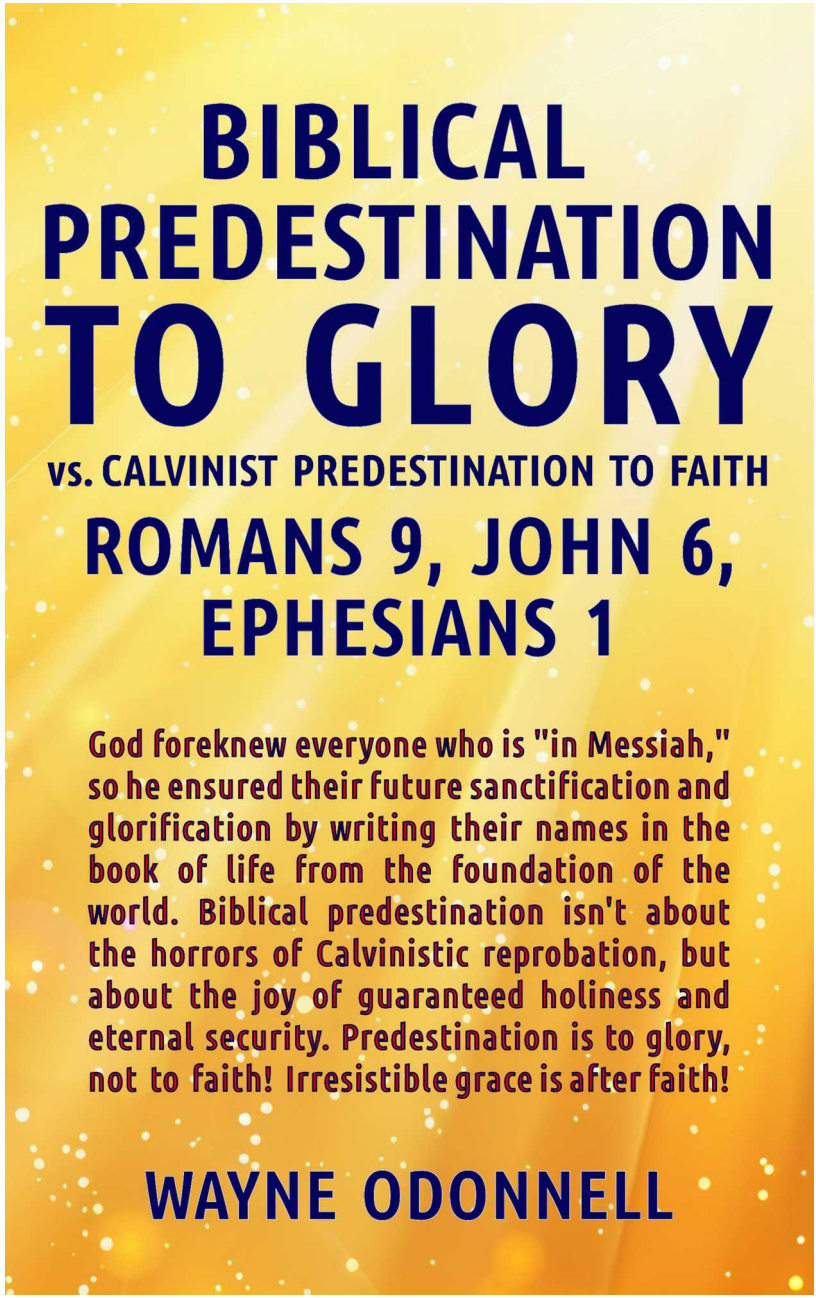
Biblical Predestination to Glory
vs. Calvinist Predestination to Faith
Romans 9, John 6, Ephesians 1



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vs. Calvinist Predestination to Faith
Romans 9, John 6, Ephesians 1

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Wayne ODonnell

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Chapter 1. PREDESTINATION: To Holiness & Glory; Not To Who Becomes Saved

All Christians believe in predestination, because the word is in the Bible. But biblical predestination is far different from Calvinist predestination. I'll call the biblical version of predestination "Predestination to Glory." Let's start with what the Bible actually says about predestination. (When I use the word "predestination" in a general sense, I'm also including "election," meaning "choosing," and "calling.")

Biblical Predestination Ensures Glorification (Eternal Security)

"Glorification" is the final step of our salvation, when Jesus "will change our vile body, so that it will be fashioned like his glorious [brightly shining] body" (Phil. 3:21). So predestined glorification is equivalent to "eternal security," and the certainty of our future inheritance. (See "The Meaning of Glory in the Bible" on page 131 for more information about glory.) As you read the following verses, you can rejoice you have eternal security, because whatever God predestines always comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

Chosen to Glorification

2 Pet. 1:10-11. Election ... to the ... [future] kingdom.
2 Tim. 2:10. The elect ... obtain ... salvation ... with eternal glory.

Predestined To Glorification

Rm. 8:29. Predestined ... to be conformed to the [glorious] image of his Son.
Rm. 8:30. Whom he predestined, ... them he also glorified.
Rm. 9:23. Vessels of mercy, ... prepared before to glory.
1 Cor. 2:7. Predestined before the world to our glory.
Eph. 1:11. We have obtained an inheritance, being predestined.

Called To Glorification

Rm. 8:30. Whom he called, ... them he also glorified.
Eph. 1:18. The hope of his calling, ... the glory of his inheritance.
1 Thess. 5:23. Preserved ... to the coming, he that calls you ... will do it.
2 Thess. 1:10-11. He will come to be glorified in his saints, ... this calling.
1 Thess. 2:12. God has called you to his [future] kingdom and glory.
2 Thess. 2:14. He called you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord.
Heb. 2:10; 3:1. Many sons to glory, ... the heavenly calling.
Heb. 9:15. They who are called will receive the ... eternal inheritance.
1 Pet. 5:10. God has called us to his eternal glory.

2 Pet. 1:3. Through ... him that has called us to glory.

Bible: Chosen > Predestined > Called > Irresistible Glorification

To believe in biblical predestination, you also have to believe in eternal security, because that's its purpose, the reason why God did it.

Biblical Predestination Ensures Sanctification (Holiness)

To be "sanctified," or to be a "saint," means to be "set apart," "holy," and "consecrated." "I am the Lord your God. Therefore you will sanctify yourselves, and you will be holy, because I am holy," Lev. 11:44. "Sanctification" refers to the process of progressing more and more in purity and righteousness. "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness," 2 Cor. 7:1. As you read each of the following verses, you can rejoice that you will walk (though not take every step) in holiness, because whatever God predestines always comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

Chosen to Sanctification

Eph. 1:4. He has chosen us in him, ... that we would be holy.
Col. 3:12-14. Put on ... as the elect of God, holy and beloved, ... love.
1 Pet. 2:9. You are a chosen generation, ... a holy nation.

Predestined to Sanctification

Eph. 2:10. Good works ... before ordained that we would walk in them.

Called to Sanctification

Rm. 1:7. Called to be saints.
1 Cor. 1:2. To them that are sanctified, ... called to be saints.
Eph. 4:1. Walk worthy of the calling to which you are called.
1 Thess. 4:7. God has ... called us ... to holiness.
1 Thess. 5:23. God ... sanctify you; he that calls you ... will do it.
2 Tim. 1:8-9. God ... called us with a holy calling.
1 Pet. 1:15. As he which called you is holy, so you be holy.
1 Pet. 3:8-9. Love as brethren, ... knowing that you are thereto called.
2 Pet. 1:3. Through ... him that has called us to ... virtue.

Bible: Chosen > Predestined > Called > Irresistible Sanctification

To believe in biblical predestination, you also have to believe in irresistible sanctification, because that's the purpose of predestination, the reason why God did it. Since sanctification is predestined, it has to

come to pass without fail, and so God's sanctifying grace is irresistible. Those predestined to holiness, fruitfulness, and love, won't be overwhelmed by "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, ... but [will] bear fruit, ... some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Mt. 13:22-23). The fact of sanctification is predestined, but the amount is up to us according to the amount of our labor.

Biblical Predestination Ensures Justification

Although biblical predestination is primarily to ensure sanctification and glorification, there are a few verses about predestination to justification. Justification, like sanctification and glorification, is after faith. God predestines our justification, but not the faith that results in our justification.

Chosen to Justification
1 Pet. 1:2. Elect ... to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.

Predestined to Justification
Jn. 6:37. All that the Father gives [predestines to] me will come to me [be justified].
Rm. 8:30. Whom he predestined, them he also ... justified.

Called to Justification
Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me [justif.], unless the Father ... draw [call] him.
Rm. 1:5-6. For obedience to the faith, ... you are ... the called of Jesus.
Rm. 8:30. Whom he called, them he also justified.

"As many as received him, to them he gave the authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jn. 1:12-13. Believing is the part unsaved men can do, and then God gives them justification and miraculous new birth, which only he can do.

Biblical Predestination Ensures Salvation

Salvation is completely comprised of justification (past), sanctification (present), and glorification (future).

> Rm. 5:1-2. Having been justified by faith [past justification], ... also we had our access by faith into this grace in which we stand [present sanctification], and rejoice in hope of the glory of God

> [future glorification].
>
> Ligonier Min. (Calvinist). What saved us in the past ... was the grace of God in the gospel. ... The New Testament can also speak about our salvation in the present tense - we are “being saved” - ... as well as in the future tense - we “shall . . . be saved.”[1]

Since, we saw above, we're predestined to justification, sanctification, and glorification; and since salvation is completely comprised of those three things, we can also say we're predestined to salvation.

> 2 Thess. 2:13. God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation.[2]

But no one is predestined or caused to believe, because faith is never predestined.

Biblical Predestination Is Never to Faith

In the section "New Testament Predestination Verses," on page 133, I list every New Testament predestination verse I could find that relates to all Christians (so excluding verses like Paul being chosen to be an apostle, etc.), and there are no verses for predestination to faith, only to after-faith things. The following table shows a summary of what we're predestined to. There are a few verses about being predestined to justification, but justification is also after faith, just as sanctification and glorification are.

Table 1: Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses

DISTRIBUTION OF 88 NEW TESTAMENT PREDESTINATION VERSES				
Total (88)	**Faith (0)**	**Justification (12)**	**Sanctification (32)**	**Glorification (44)**
Chosen/Elected (27)	0	3	6	14
Predestined (13)	0	3	5	9
Called (48)	0	6	21	21

Since faith isn't predestined, it isn't God-caused, and therefore it has to be man-caused.

1 Ligonier Min., Derek Thomas, https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/3-tenses-gospel, accessed 6/26/26.

2 This verse might actually be talking about being chosen to 'future' salvation, i.e. glorification. See 2 Thess. 2:13 on page .

Election Is Based on Foreknowledge of Everyone in Messiah

Since faith isn't predestined, predestination doesn't cause faith, but instead faith, in some way, has to cause predestination. The Bible never says faith causes predestination, because it doesn't. Not directly. Faith results in justification, which includes union into Messiah. (I use the Hebrew transliteration "Messiah" throughout this book instead of the Greek transliteration "Christ," because both words would translate to "The Anointed," but everyone understands what a Messiah is, while the word "Christ" has misleading religious and doctrinally-antisemitic overtones.)

> Rm. 6:3-4. As many of us as were [spiritually (1 Cor. 12:13)] baptized into [union with] Jesus Messiah [at our justification by faith], were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him, ... so that as Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also would walk in newness of life.
>
> 1 Jn. 1:3. That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that you also may have union with us [by believing our message], and truly our union is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Messiah.
>
> Jn. 6:54-57. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood [i.e. believes], has eternal life. ... He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him [i.e. union]. As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he will live by me.

And union in Messiah causes each of us to be intimately foreknown from the foundation of the world, because Messiah is eternal and part of the godhead. And God chose everyone he foreknew in Messiah, not to believe, but to be sanctified and glorified.

> Rm. 8:29. Whom he foreknew [in Messiah], he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.
>
> Eph. 1:4. He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we would be holy.
>
> Rm. 16:13. Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord.

Grace Is Irresistible After Faith

Grace has to be irresistible, because whatever God predestines has to come to pass, and God uses irresistible grace to cause it to come to pass. God predestined the after-faith things of our sanctification and glorification, and accomplishes their predestination through after-faith irresistible grace. We don't enter into irresistible grace until after faith.

> Rm. 5:1-2. Having been justified by faith ... we also have had our access by faith into this [irresistible] grace in which we stand.

We know the grace we enter into through faith is irresistible, because we all stand in it. If it weren't irresistible, some of us would stand in it, and some of us would fall.

Bible: Faith > Justification > Irresistible Grace Calvinism: Irresistible Grace > Faith > Justification

Only after we enter into Messiah via justification by faith does grace reign over us, and irresistibly so.

> Rm. 5:19-21. As by one man's disobedience [in Adam] many were made [καθίστημι, kathistymi, constituted] into people that sin, so by the obedience of one [IN MESSIAH] many will be made [καθίστημι, kathistymi, constituted] into people that live righteously, ... so that as sin has reigned [irresistibly] unto death, even so grace would reign [irresistibly] through righteousness.

Also, not until our union into Messiah's death at the time of our justification were we legally emancipated from our old master, sin; and then by our continued union with him into his resurrection life, we were regenerated and enslaved to irresistible grace.

> Rm. 6:4-18. We are buried with him by [spiritual - 1 Cor. 1:13] baptism-into-death, so that like Messiah was raised up from the dead ... even so we also would walk in newness of life. ... Sin will not have rule over you, because you are ... under [the reign of irresistible] grace. ... Having then been freed [emancipated] from sin, you became the servants of righteousness.

Bible: Faith > Justif. (Freed by Death) > Regen. (Enslaved to Grace by Resurrection)

Biblical Predestination Is About Who Will Be Gloried, Not Who Will Become Saved

God created other spiritual beings, angels and men, so he could be in relationship with them ("God is love," 1 Jn. 4:8), and therefore didn't create them as robots. He shared some of his creative abilities with them, so they could make uncaused decisions. He had the power to do this, because he can do anything that can be logically and righteously done. He knew it would mean sin and suffering would enter the world, but he would provide salvation.

Because God gave his creatures freedom of choice, he needed to predestine some things to happen without fail, so he could accomplish his purposes, regardless of the allowed, uncontrolled choices of his creatures. If there was no freedom of choice, there would be no need for him to predestine some things. If God predetermined everything, he wouldn't need to predestine specific things.

Predestination isn't a complicated, mysterious, philosophical paradox where God predestines and man freely chooses the same thing. Man is free to choose among the things God hasn't predestined, which is almost everything; and mostly also free to choose how the things God predestines will come to pass.

Predestination is like God prophesying some future things into existence, without using a prophet. For example, God predestined the Son to die in our place to provide salvation, "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). And he predestined all those he foreknew in Messiah, to the absolute certainty of their sanctification (holiness) and glorification (eternal security).

> Rm. 8:29-30. Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be ... glorified.

God predestined the specific people he foreknew in Messiah, from the foundation of the world, by writing their names in the book of life.

> Rev. 17:8. Names ... written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

Your name, written in the Lamb's book of life, is your guarantee of eternal security, your reservation to enter the holy city at the end of all

things.

> Rev. 21:1-4, 23-27. I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. ... And I heard a great voice ... saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. ... The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God lit it up, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved will walk in the light of it, and the [glorified] kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ... And there will in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, nor whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie, but [only] they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Calvinist Predestination Is About Who Will Believe & Become Saved

The doctrine of Calvinist predestination was created by Augustine around 412 AD, and was later picked up by Calvin. It's vastly different than biblical predestination, because it's all about who will become saved instead of who will be sanctified and glorified. By a misinterpretation of Romans 9, Calvinist predestination says when God planned the creation of the world, he decided to create some men to share in his glory, and the rest to demonstrate the power of his wrath.

> Rm. 9:21-23. Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory?[3]

Calvinist predestination says God decreed Adam's fall,[4] so his descendants would be born unable to believe the gospel, so God could control who believes, by regenerating only the ones he predestined to

3 This verse actually explains how God is using the unsaved majority of Israel for his own purpose even though they're unsaved. The "same lump" is Israel. "My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites," Rm. 9:3. Romans 9 doesn't mention 'Gentiles' until verse 24. And it isn't about who will believe and who won't. Faith isn't mentioned until verse 30. See The Potter's Vessels on page 109.

believe.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). 822 God has ordained whatsoever comes to pass - even the preparation of vessels of wrath unto destruction - in order that his people [elected to salvation] might enjoy the fullest display of his glory. ... 1519 Calvinism [is] the thought of John Calvin. The term is applied particularly to the doctrine of predestination, according to which God sovereignly chooses some to salvation. ... 1534 Predestination [is] generally, God's eternal, uninfluenced determination of all things; specifically, God's eternal choice of those who will be saved and those who will be passed over and condemned for their sin.[5]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). God maintains his sovereign purpose of election by determining, before they are born, who will belong to the saved.[6]
>
> Sproul (Calvinist). We may define predestination broadly as follows: From all eternity God decided to save some members of the human race and to let the rest ... perish.[7]
>
> Berkhof (Calvinist). Predestination includes ... election and reprobation. ... The election that comes into consideration here as a part of predestination ... may be defined as that ... act of God whereby He ... chooses a certain number of men to be the recipients of ... eternal salvation. More briefly it may be said to be God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race.[8]
>
> Boettner (Calvinist). The doctrine of Election is ... a particular application of the general doctrine of Predestination or Foreordination as it relates to the salvation of sinners. ... The Reformed Faith has held to the existence of an eternal, divine decree which, ... separates the human race into two portions and ordains one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting death. ... The Westminster Confession states ... "By the decree of

4 Berkhof (Calvinist), Systematic Theology: 157 Whether the fall of man was decreed or was merely the object of divine foreknowledge ... may have been ... the original point of difference; but, surely, anyone who asserts that the fall was not decreed but only foreseen by God, would now be said to be moving along Arminian rather than Reformed lines. Both Supra- and Infralapsarians admit that the fall is included in the divine decree. ... 165 [Infralapsarians] speak of the decree respecting sin as a permissive decree, but with the distinct understanding that this decree rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain. And if the question be raised, why God decreed to permit sin and thus rendered it certain, they can only point to the divine good pleasure, and are thus in perfect agreement with the Supralapsarian.

5 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine.

6 Piper, Justification of God, 218.

7 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 165.

8 Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 150.

> God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated to everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death.[9]

Calvinism is often described using the acrostic TULIPS. All 6 points really say the same thing: God chooses who will believe and become saved.

Table 2: Calvinism's TULIPS: God Chooses Who Will Believe & Become Saved

CALVINISM'S TULIPS: GOD CHOOSES WHO WILL BELIEVE & BECOME SAVED		
TULIPS	**Men**	**God**
[T]otal Depravity	Men can't choose to believe	
[U]nconditional Election		God chooses who will believe
[L]imited Atonement*		God only paid for redemption for those he chose to believe
[I]rresistible Grace	Men can't choose not to believe	
[P]erseverance of the Saints*	Men can't choose to stop believing	
The [S]overeignty of God		God chooses everything

*I mostly deal with the highlighted topics in this book. *There's a brief consideration of the Perseverance of the Saints and Limited Atonement on page 151.*

Calvinism believes God controls who gets saved by controlling who believes. But you won't find a single verse in the Bible that says:

"predestined to believe"
"predestined to faith"
"ordained to believe"
"ordained to faith"
"elected to believe"
"elected to faith"
"chosen to believe"
"chosen to faith"
"called to believe"
"called to faith"

Yet every Calvinist teaches predestination to faith. That's the heart of Calvinism, what defines it, and sets it apart from all other theologies.

Calvinism: Chosen > Predestined > Called > Faith

Augustine. Elected to believe. ... Called … that we may believe.
Barrett. God had chosen these very Gentiles to believe.

9 Boettner, Doctrine of Predestination, 65.

Boice. God has ... called us to faith.
Calvin. We were ... ordained to faith in Christ.
Chafer. Election is to faith. ... Predestined ... to belief.
Gill. Men ... are called that they might believe. .... Chosen to faith.
Lloyd-Jones. Whom he predestined, he ... called to believe.
Luther. It was foreordained who should ... disbelieve.
MacArthur. Foreknowing ... those ... effectually called ... to saving faith.
Piper. His people are those ordained to believe, ...choosing them for this.
Sproul. We are elected to faith.
Von Staupitz. Decreed ... elected and predestined ... to faith.
Ware. All those whom he calls heed the call to believe.
Zwingli. The elect ... are called to faith.

Augustine, On Predestination, 90239, 154526. Barrett, Reclaiming Monergism, 3756. Boice, A Golden Chain Of Five Links, https://www.monergism.com/golden-chain-five-links, accessed 4/20/26. Calvin, Concerning Eternal Predestination, 66. Chafer, Soteriology, 404. Baptist Confession, 3:5. Gill, Doctrinal Divinity, Book 3, Chapter 2, 2b5c, 2b7. Lloyd-Jones, Romans, 243. Luther, Commentary on Romans, in Boettner, Predestination, 251-252. MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 4454. Piper, Providence, 565. Sproul, Reformed Theology, 170. Von Staupitz, Eternal Predestination, in Oberman, Forerunners, 125. Ware, Still Sovereign, 224. Zwingli, Selected Works, 3687.

Many Calvinists recognize the Bible never says we're predestined to faith, but they say we're predestined to faith anyway as a MEANS to accomplish being predestined to become saved.

> Boettner (Calvinist). God ... has elected particular persons to eternal life and to all the means necessary [faith and repentance] for attaining that life.[10]

Boettner mentions some verses to try to support his statement, but none of them say we're predestined to faith. "God has ... chosen you to salvation through sanctification ... and belief" (2 Thess. 2:13). This verse says God has chosen you to salvation (justification, sanctification, and glorification). It doesn't say "God has chosen you to belief." If it did, Calvinism would be true. Boettner also mentions, "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts 13:48). This verse says we're ordained to eternal life. It doesn't say "as many as were ordained to believe, believed." If it did, Calvinism would be true.

> Piper (Calvinist). Between the act of predestination and justification, there is the act of calling [in Rm. 8:30]. Since justification is only by faith, the calling in view must be the act of God whereby he calls faith into being. ... He predestines this people to be conformed to the image of his Son, he calls them to

10 Boettner, Predestination, 71.

himself in faith.[11]

Piper says we're called to faith, which he recognizes the Bible never says, as a means to accomplish our predestination to be conformed to the image of his Son, which the Bible does say.

> Westminster Confession (Calvinist). 3.5 Those of mankind that are predestinated to life, God ... hath chosen ... to everlasting glory. ... As God hath appointed the elect to glory, so hath he ... foreordained all the MEANS thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected ... are effectually CALLED TO FAITH. ... 7.3 Promising to give to all those that are ordained to life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe ... 10.1 All those whom God hath predestinated to life ... he is pleased ... effectually to call ... to ... salvation.

The Westminster Confession says we're called to faith, which it recognizes the Bible never says, as a means to accomplish our predestination, election, and calling to life, glory, and salvation, which the Bible does say.

If we want to let the Bible determine our doctrine, we will recognize that since the Bible never says we're predestined to faith, then we aren't. God wouldn't have failed to mention something as important as predestination to faith if it were true. Predestination to faith is taught by Calvinism because otherwise Calvinism can't be true. God can't control who becomes saved if he just lets anyone believe. But since biblical predestination is to ensure sanctification and glorification, God can allow "whosoever will" to believe, per the normal meaning of language throughout the Bible.

We saw above that we have "access by faith into ... [irresistible] grace" (Rm. 5:2), so God can accomplish our predestined sanctification and glorification. We don't have "access by irresistible grace into faith," so God can cause us to believe, as Calvinism teaches. Justification by faith brings us to irresistible grace; irresistible grace doesn't bring us to justification by faith.

All the things we're predestined to - justification, sanctification, and glorification - are after-faith things; so biblical predestination can't determine who will believe and become saved. Paul doesn't talk about predestination in Romans 3 which is about who will become saved by

11 Piper, Five Points, 676.

faith. He talks about it in Romans 8 which is about the certainty of individual glorification.

> Rm. 3:22. The righteousness of God [justification] which is by faith of Jesus Messiah to all and on all them that believe.

> Rm. 8:29-30. Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be ... glorified.

The book of life isn't checked when a person hears the gospel to see if he should be caused to believe, but at the end of all things, to see if he may enter the future holy city.

> Rev. 21:1, 27. And I John saw the holy city, ... and there will in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, ... but [only] they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Table 3: Biblical Predestination to Glory vs. Calvinist Predestination to Faith

BIBLICAL PREDESTINATION VS. CALVINIST PREDESTINATION		
	Biblical Predestination to Glory	**Calvinist Predestination to Faith**
When	At Creation	At Creation
Specificity	Individual	Individual
Election	Conditional	Unconditional
Who	Everyone Foreknown in Messiah	Foreknew Who He Would Pick
To	Holiness & Glory	Believe & Become Saved
Irresistible Grace	After Faith. Causes Holiness & Glory	Before Faith. Causes Faith
Regeneration	After Faith. Causes Sanctification	Before Faith. Causes Faith
Sanctification	Predestined and Certain	Certain
Eternal Security	Predestined and Certain	Certain Perseverance

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: Predestination Can't Determine Who Will Become Saved

Biblical predestination can't determine who will believe and become saved because faith is never predestined; only after-faith things - justification, sanctification, and glorification - are predestined. Irresistible grace can't determine who will believe and become saved because we don't enter into it until after justification by faith. The Lamb's book of life can't determine who will believe and become saved because it's not checked when a person hears the gospel, but rather

when people are cast into the lake of fire or enter the future holy city. Therefore, Calvinist predestination to determine who will believe and become saved is unbiblical.

Chapter 2. THE GOLDEN CHAIN: Excludes Faith; Not About Who Becomes Saved

The Golden Chain of Predestination in Romans 8:29-30 has five links of predestined salvation: "Whom he [#1] foreknew, ... he also [#2] predestined, ... he also [#3] called, ... he also [#4] justified, ... he also [#5] glorified" (Rm. 8:29-30).

#1 Foreknowledge > #2 Predestination > #3 Calling > #4 Justification > #5 Glorification

Every link is the monergistic work of the Father - the same one that foreknew is the same that will glorify. And every link is effectual - the same ones that are foreknown are the same that will be glorified. Faith isn't included in the Golden Chain.

Calvinism Tries to Add Faith Into the Golden Chain of Predestination

Faith isn't included in the Golden Chain of Predestination, because faith isn't the monergistic work of God, but rather the monergistic action of men. These Calvinists describe it pretty well, even though they think God indirectly causes faith.

> Murray (Calvinist). Faith is not the act of God; it is not God who believes in Christ for salvation, it is the sinner. ... Faith is an activity on the part of the person and of him alone. ... We alone believe.[12]

> Frame (Calvinist). Election, effectual calling, and regeneration are things that God does. Faith and repentance are things that we do.[13]

Man's faith is something man does that points to the Golden Chain of Predestination. The Golden Chain doesn't point to faith.

12 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 111.
13 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 28.

Table 4: Faith Points to the Golden Chain of Predestination Not Visa Versa

FAITH POINTS TO THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF PREDESTINATION NOT VISA VERSA			
The Bible		**Calvinism**	
What Man Does	**What God Does**	**What Man Does**	**What God Does**
	Glorification		Glorification
Faith >>>>>	Justification>Union>Regen. ^	Faith >>>>>	> Justification ^
	Calling ^	^	<<<<< Regeneration
			Union ^
			Calling ^
	Predestination ^		Predestination ^
	Foreknowledge of All ^ in Union in Messiah		Foreknowledge of ^ Those He Will Choose

Calvinism needs to add faith into the Golden Chain as something God causes in order for Calvinism to be true, because God can't control who will become saved without also controlling who will believe.

Piper (Calvinist) Tries to Add Faith Between Calling and Justification

Piper tries to add faith into the Golden Chain of Predestination between calling and justification.

> Piper (Calvinist). Between the act of predestination and justification, there is the act of calling. Since justification is only by faith, the calling in view must be the act of God whereby he calls faith into being. ... So the calling of verse 30 is the sovereign work of God which brings a person to faith by which he is justified.[14]

Piper: Predestination > Calling > Faith > Justification

But there's no need for Piper to guess what the calling in the Golden Chain is to. All the verses we looked at earlier state it plainly. Calling is to justification, sanctification, and glorification; never to faith!

Rm. 1:5-6. For obedience to the faith, ... you are ... the called of Jesus.
1 Cor. 1:2. To them that are sanctified, ... called to be saints.
1 Thess. 4:7. God has ... called us ... to holiness.
1 Thess. 5:23. God ... sanctify you; he that calls you ... will do it.
1 Pet. 3:8-9. Love as brethren, ... knowing that you are thereto called.

14 Piper, Five Points, 56.

2 Pet. 1:3. Through ... him that has called us to ... virtue.
1 Thess. 2:12. God has called you to his [future] kingdom and glory.
2 Thess. 2:14. He called you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord.
1 Pet. 5:10. God has called us to his eternal glory.
2 Pet. 1:3. [He] has called us to glory.

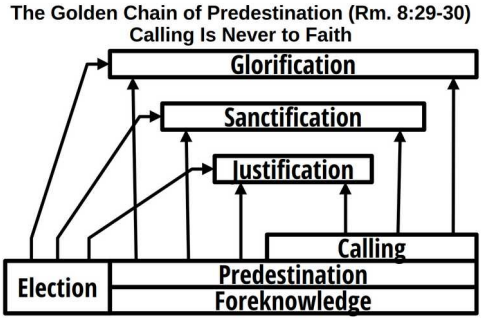


Figure 1: Calling Is Never to Faith

MacArthur (Calvinist) Tries to Add Faith Via Regeneration at Calling

Calvinism's doctrine of "total depravity" says unsaved men don't have the ability to believe. That way Calvinism's God can control who gets saved by giving a piece of salvation, regeneration (i.e. new birth), before faith, only to those he chooses to be saved, so they can and will believe. MacArthur, and probably most Calvinists, try to make calling and regeneration synonymous in the Golden Chain, and then regeneration produces faith.

MacArthur: Calling/Regeneration > Faith > Justification

> MacArthur (Calvinist). When Paul speaks of calling in Romans 8:30, he does not need to include regeneration, for he conceives of them as one and the same act. ... Regeneration logically precedes and gives birth to faith. Therefore, [the order is] ... call/regeneration, ... faith, justification. ... The call itself creates the life that it commands. Thus the effectual call ought to be identified with regeneration.[15]

The reason Reformed Theologians often equate calling and regeneration, isn't because scripture says they're equivalent, but to avoid a dilemma. If they put regeneration after calling, totally depraved

15 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 918-921, 1075.

men can't respond to the call. But if they put regeneration before calling, then nothing initiates regeneration. So they make them equivalent, saying as MacArthur did, "the call itself creates the life that it commands."

But the biblical call of predestination asks for no response. No willing response was needed when God spoke light into existence, or called Isaac's birth into existence. We're called by the gospel to glory, not to faith. "He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of ... Messiah," 2 Thess. 2:14. The entreaty to believe the gospel message isn't the same as the predestined, irresistible call to glory. This clarification gets rid of all the Calvinistic nonsense about the call to faith being irresistible, but not coercive.

> Barrett (Calvinist). Augustine, Calvin, Dort, and Westminster all emphasize monergism but quickly qualify that it is not coercive nor impersonal, but both effectual and sweet.[16]

The Arminians are just as wrong on this (and probably everything else) as the Calvinists are.

> Barrett (Calvinist). If [we] Calvinists only use causal categories to describe the effectual call, we are in danger of the Arminian objection, namely, that grace is coercive, treating men like blocks of wood.[17]

If the predestination call were to faith, and so would also result in reprobation for those not called, the Arminian charge would be valid. But since the call is to glory, no one should fear the Arminian charge of coercion. Thank God for treating men "like blocks of wood" when it comes to the certainty of glorification, like when the disciples' ship was teleported to Capernaum (but we'll come to that later).

There are some verses that talk about predestination to eternal life.

Acts 13:46-48. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.
1 Tim. 6:12. Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto you are also called.
Titus 1:3. According to the faith of God's elect, ... in hope of eternal life, which God ... promised before the world began.

I take those verses to be talking about predestination to future

16 Barrett, Reclaiming Monergism, 5595.
17 Barrett, Reclaiming Monergism, 6791.

glorification, focusing on the length of eternal life vs. the kind of life. But even if we assume they're talking about predestination to regeneration, they still don't tell us *where* regeneration fits into the Golden Chain of Predestination. Most verses about calling are to glorification, and glorification doesn't come immediately after calling.

Murray (Calvinist) Tries to Add Faith Via Union at Calling

Two other Calvinists, Murray and Frame, try to put faith into the Golden Chain of Predestination between calling and justification, by saying God calls us into union in Messiah, as the Bible says in 1 Cor. 1:9, which then causes us to be regenerated, which then causes us to believe, which then causes us to be justified.

Murray: Calling > Union > Regeneration > Faith > Justification.

> 1 Cor. 1:9. God is faithful, by whom you were called to the fellowship [κοινωνία, koinonia, union] of his Son.
>
> Murray (Calvinist). Calling ... is ... that act of God by which we are actually united to Christ (1 Cor. 1:9). ... And surely union with Christ is that which unites us to the inwardly operative grace of God. Regeneration is the beginning of inwardly operative saving grace. ... Regeneration ... immediately registers itself in the conscious activity of the person concerned in the exercises of faith and repentance.[18]
>
> Frame (Calvinist). Effectual calling ... is the work of ... the Father summoning you ... to ... union with Christ; 1 Cor. 1:9. ... When God calls us to fellowship with Christ, ... regeneration is the first effect, ... [and] regeneration is the cause of faith.[19]

But again, like being called to eternal life or regeneration, being called to union with his Son doesn't tell us *where* to put union in the Golden Chain. Being called to union doesn't mean union takes place right after calling, anymore than being called to glory means glorification takes place right after calling.

1 Thess. 2:12. God has called you to his [future] kingdom and glory.
2 Thess. 2:14. He called you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord.
1 Pet. 5:10. God has called us to his eternal glory.

18 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 96, 108.
19 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 2254-4653.

2 Pet. 1:3. [He] has called us to glory.

At Justification We Have Union in Jesus' Death; and Regeneration in His Resurrection

Biblically, union and regeneration are acts of God that fit into the Golden Chain at justification, not between calling and justification. We're justified by union into Jesus' death, and then because of that union into his death, we're also regenerated by resurrection with him into new life.

Bible: Calling > Justification/Union/Regeneration

> Rm. 4:25. Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses [justification via his death], and was raised again for our righteous living [regeneration and sanctification via his life, δικαίωσις, dikaiosis, see Rm. 5:18 on page 84].
>
> Rm. 5:10. Since, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son [justification via his death], much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].
>
> Rm. 6:3-4. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death [justification via his death]. Therefore we are [also] buried with him by baptism-into-death, so that like Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also would walk in newness of life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

Why is burial mentioned here? Because once we entered into Messiah at the point of his death to pay for our sins, everything else that happened to him from then on legally happened to us also: buried, resurrected, and ascended into the heavens. "God ... has quickened us together with Messiah, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah," Eph. 2:4-6.

So union into Messiah and regeneration are both included within justification in the Golden Chain of Predestination, with union logically preceding regeneration, because Jesus' death preceded his resurrection. And the moment we enter into union with Messiah, we enter into God's intimate, past Foreknowledge, because Messiah is eternal and part of the Godhead, which is why God predestined us to glory.

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: The Golden Chain Can't Determine Who Will Become Saved

Calling is never to faith in the Bible so calling can't determine who will believe. And Union in Messiah and regeneration don't happen until justification, which is by faith, so they can't be the cause of faith.

Table 5: The Golden Chain of Romans 8:29-30

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF PREDESTINATION OF ROMANS 8:29-30			
Man	**The Father**	**The Son**	**The Spirit**
	#5 Glorification		
Works >			Sanctification
Faith >	#4 Justification	Resurrection ^ Death/Union	Indwelling/Regeneration ^ Spirit Baptism
Gospel	#3 Calling		
	#2 Predestination (#1+#2 Election) #1 Foreknowledge		

We are "elect" unsaved people before we believe; but it's impossible to be an "in-Messiah" or a "born-again" (regenerate) unsaved person. Union in Messiah and regeneration are both parts of salvation, and since salvation is by faith, faith has to come before union and regeneration, and can't be caused by it.

Bible: Faith > Salvation (Union+Regeneration)
Calvinism: Salvation (Union+Regeneration) > Faith

Salvation is fully comprised of justification, sanctification, and glorification. Salvation isn't union, plus regeneration, plus justification, plus sanctification, plus glorification. Therefore, union and regeneration must be included in justification, the first part of salvation. And faith precedes justification: justification by faith.

Bible: Salvation = Justification + Sanctification + Glorification
Bible: Salvation = Justif. (Union+Regeneration) + Sanctif. + Glorif.
Calvinism: Salvation = Union + Regeneration + Justif. + Sanctif. + Glorif.

Union in Messiah and regeneration are both works of the Holy Spirit, that God, because of his righteousness, can't give us until the legal problem of our sin is removed through justification. Justification frees the constraints on God's love so he can shed abroad all salvation blessings in us by giving us his Spirit.

> Rm. 5:5-6. The love of God is shed abroad [without constraint] in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us, because ... being now justified.

Bible: Faith > Justif. > Spirit (Union, Indwelling, Regeneration) > Sanctification)
Calvinism: Spirit (Union & Regeneration) > Faith > Justification > Sanctification*

* A few pages below we'll see Calvinism actually begins sanctification before justification.

Since the Golden Chain of Predestination doesn't include faith, predestination can't determine who will believe and become saved. Since union in Messiah, regeneration, and salvation, are all a result of justification by faith, they can't determine who will believe and become saved. And since God's righteousness can't allow him to give us his Holy Spirit before we're justified by faith, the Holy Spirit can't determine who will believe and become saved. So Calvinist predestination to determine who will believe and become saved is unbiblical.

Chapter 3. REGENERATION: After Faith; Can't Affect Who Becomes Saved

Calvinists say total depravity makes it impossible for unsaved men to believe the gospel when they hear it, so God gives them faith as a gift, by monergistically regenerating them (giving them new birth), by irresistible grace and effectual calling, so that the gospel message will be irresistible when they hear it.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). God's foreknowledge and predestination are intimately linked with the other aspects of the application of redemption, including the effectual call. ... 928 The effectual call [is one] in which man is summoned irresistibly to spiritual life [regeneration]. ... 943 Referring to the effectual, irresistible call of God in regeneration, ... because of the sinner's depravity, no one can come to him in saving faith unless the Father grants the gift of being effectually drawn in regeneration. ... Effectual calling [is] God's irresistible, saving grace working upon the elect so that they respond in faith.[20]

> Sproul (Calvinist). Irresistible grace means that the sinner's resistance to the grace of regeneration cannot thwart the Spirit's purpose. ... The doctrine of irresistible grace ... historically ... has been called effectual calling. ... The Westminster Confession ... [declares] all those whom God has predestined to life, ... he is pleased ... effectually to call ... to grace and salvation, ... effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ [i.e., to believe], ... being made willing by His grace. ... Effectual calling is effectual because in it ... God effects ... the quickening of spiritually dead souls to spiritual life [regeneration].[21]

But Calvinism is unbiblical: Unsaved men can believe. Faith isn't a gift. Irresistible grace is after faith, not before. And the Bible clearly says regeneration is after faith. So God doesn't use regeneration before faith to control who will believe and become saved, which is Calvinist predestination.

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: Unsaved Men Can Believe

Calvinism claims unsaved men can't believe, but the Bible never specifically says that. It says unsaved men sometimes "won't believe,"

20 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine.
21 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 219.

"don't believe," "didn't believe," "would have believed," and "how can you believe;" but never "can't believe," as Calvinism claims.

Jn. 3:12. I have told you earthly things, and you don't believe.
Jn. 3:12. How will you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?
Jn. 4:48. Unless you see signs and wonders, you won't believe.
Jn. 5:38. Whom he has sent, him you don't believe.
Jn. 5:44. How can you believe, which receive honor one of another.
Jn. 5:46. Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me.
Jn. 5:47. If you don't believe [Moses], how will you believe my words?
Jn. 6:36. You also have seen me, and don't believe.
Jn. 6:64. There are some of you that don't believe.
Jn. 6:64. Jesus knew from the beginning who ... didn't believe.
Jn. 7:5. For also his brethren didn't believe in him.
Jn. 8:45. Because I tell you the truth, you don't believe me.
Jn. 8:46. If I say the truth, why don't you believe me?
Jn. 10:25. I told you, and you didn't believe.
Jn. 10:26. You don't believe, because you're not of my sheep.
Jn. 10:38. Though you don't believe me, believe the works.
Jn. 12:37. Though he had done ... miracles, yet they didn't believe.
Jn. 16:8-9. He will reprove the world, ... because they don't believe.
Jn. 20:25. Unless I ... see ... the print of the nails, ... I won't believe.

The Bible does say unsaved men can't "receive," and can't "come," but they aren't synonyms to "believe." The Bible never says unsaved men can't "believe."

Jn. 3:27. A man can't receive, ... unless it's given him from heaven.
Jn. 3:32. He testifies; and no man receives his testimony.
Jn. 3:20. Every one ... hates the light, neither comes to the light.
Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me, unless the Father ... draw him.
Jn. 6:45. [Only] every man ... that ... has learned of the Father, comes to me.
Jn. 6:65. No man can come to me, unless it were given to him of my Father.

In fact, the Bible specifically says unsaved men "can believe."

Jn. 10:38. Believe the works, so that you can know and believe.
Jn. 11:42. Because of the people ... I said it, so that they can believe.
Jn. 19:35. He that saw it bare record, ... so that you can believe.
Jn. 20:31. These are written, so that you can believe..

There is one verse in the Bible that says unsaved men "can't believe," but it's only talking about a specific group of unsaved men, for a specific period of time, and it's not talking about believing on the Son

for eternal life.

> Jn. 12:39-40. Therefore they couldn't believe, because Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I would heal them" [Is. 6:9-10].

John is quoting Isaiah 6:9-10, which wasn't about preventing the Jewish people of Isaiah's time from being saved spiritually, but from being healed as a nation. Isaiah starts out, "Ah, sinful nation, ... from the sole of the foot even to the head, ... wounds, and bruises. ... Your cities are burned with fire" (Is. 1:4-7). God told Isaiah, "Go, ... make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, ... until the cities be wasted without inhabitant" (Is. 6:9-11).

Isaiah 6:9-10 is such an important passage, it's quoted in all four gospels, ends the book of Acts, and the concept is expounded in Romans 11. (Mt. 13:10-15; Mk. 4:11-12; Lu. 8:10; Jn. 12:39-40; Rm. 11:7-25; Acts 28:25-28.) After the nation of Israel rejected Jesus as the Messiah in Matthew 11-12, he began teaching them in parables in Matthew 13, so they couldn't understand. "Without a parable he didn't speak to them, and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples," Mk. 4:34. He wasn't blinding individuals to prevent them from believing in himself as Savior, but was blinding the nation to prevent them from accepting himself as Messiah. If this had been about preventing saving faith, which it's not, that alone would prove men CAN believe, or it wouldn't have been necessary to blind a subset of men to keep them from believing.

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: Faith Isn't a Gift

> Eph. 2:5-9. By grace you are saved. ... For [1] by grace [χάρις, charis, feminine noun] you are saved [σωτηρία, sotyria, feminine when in noun form] [2] through faith [πίστις, pistis, feminine noun], and that [τοῦτο, touto, neuter pronoun] [3] not of yourselves; it [not in the Greek] is the [4] gift of God, [5] not of works, lest any man should boast.

The meaning here is that salvation is: 1) by grace, 2) through faith, 3) not of yourselves, 4) the gift of God, 5) not of works. The "that," which is both not of yourselves and a gift, is a neuter pronoun, and so can't refer back to faith, which is a feminine noun. "By grace you are saved"

is repeated twice. "Being saved" is the gift, by grace, through faith, not of yourselves, and not works. "The gift of God is eternal life" (Rm. 6:23), not faith.

> Calvin (Calvinist). Instead of what he had said, that their salvation is of grace, he now affirms, that “it [salvation] is the gift of God.” ... And here we must advert to a very common error in the interpretation of this passage. Many persons restrict the word gift to faith alone. But Paul['s] ... meaning is, not that faith is the gift of God, but that salvation is given to us by God.[22]

Calvin is right it can't mean faith is the gift of God. He still gets it wrong though because he includes faith as part of salvation. If faith were part of salvation, then you couldn't receive salvation by faith, or it would be iterative. But at least it would be a great relief if Calvinists heeded Calvin and stopped saying Eph. 2:8 says "faith is the gift of God." See "Eph. 2:8-9, Saved by Faith, the Gift of God" on page 141.

Calvinists say if faith were our own faith, it would be a work, and thus couldn't save us; but that gifted faith isn't a work, and so can save us. This is so unbiblical. In the Bible, grace and faith are always contrasted with law and works; one's own faith is never contrasted with gifted faith. "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," Rm. 3:28. If Calvinism were true the Bible would make it clear that "a man is justified by gifted faith, without the deeds of the law" (Calvinist Rm. 3:28). And, "the gospel ... is the power of God to salvation to every one that giftedly believes" (Calvinist Rm. 1:17). You can't take one misinterpreted proof text, like Eph. 2:8-9, to change the plain meaning of all the other references to faith in the Bible.

> Hunt (Non-Calvinist). The phrase “thy faith” is found eleven times in Scripture, while “your faith” is found twenty-four times. Individuals are given credit that the faith is their own. Never is there any indication that ... the faith was a gift from God as Calvinism insists it must be. ... Christ said “thy faith hath made thee whole” to the woman who was healed by touching the hem of His garment (Mt. 9:22; Mk. 5:34; Lu. 8:48), to the blind man outside Jericho (Mk. 10:52), and to the Samaritan healed of leprosy (Lu. 17:19). Christ said, “Thy faith hath saved thee,” to the sinful woman who washed His feet with her tears (Lu. 7:50) and to the blind man outside Jericho (Lu. 18:42). “Great is thy faith,” He said to the Canaanite woman who desired just a

22 Calvin, Complete Commentaries, 531623-531653.

> "crumb" of blessing (Mt. 15:28). ... Each of these statements is made to the unregenerate.[23]

Calvinists Say Regeneration Precedes Faith

Some Calvinists believe regeneration precedes faith chronologically.

> Thomas (Calvinist). With my wife, Rosemary, I don't know exactly when she was converted because she may well have been regenerated in her mother's womb. As a Presbyterian, I am okay with that.[24]

> Berkhof (Calvinist). It is possible to proceed on the assumption (not the certain knowledge) that the children offered for baptism are regenerated and are therefore in possession of the semen fidei (the seed of faith).[25]

> Grudem (Calvinist). 500 God is able to save infants in an unusual way, apart from their hearing and understanding the gospel, by bringing regeneration to them very early, sometimes even before their birth. This regeneration is probably also followed at once by a nascent, intuitive awareness of God and trust in him at an extremely early age. ... 701 [Regeneration and faith] usually come so close together that it will ordinarily seem to us that they are happening at the same time. ... This secret, hidden work of God in our spirits does in fact come before we respond to God in saving faith (though often it may be only seconds before we respond). ... Of Lydia, "The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul" (Acts 16:14). First the Lord opened her heart, then she was able to give heed to Paul's preaching and to respond in faith. [See Lydia on page 78.][26]

Most Calvinists are desperate to assure us that regeneration and faith occur simultaneously, to try to avoid the charge of faith by salvation instead of salvation by faith.

> Sproul (Calvinist). Regeneration precedes faith because it is a necessary condition for faith. ... It is important to understand, however, that the order of salvation refers to a logical order, not

23 Hunt, What Love, 4266-4276.
24 Thomas, Derek. Ligonier Panel, If the Foundations Are Destroyed: Escondido 2022 Conference. https://learn.ligonier.org/qas/do-regeneration-and-conversion-take-place-at-the-same-time, accessed 4/30/26.
25 Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 935.
26 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 702,

> necessarily a temporal order. ... Faith precedes justification in a logical sense, not a temporal sense. Justification is logically dependent on faith, not faith on justification. We do not have faith because we are justified; we are justified because we have faith. Similarly when Reformed theology says regeneration precedes faith, it is speaking in terms of logical priority, not temporal priority. We cannot exercise saving faith until we have been regenerated, so we say faith is dependent on regeneration, not regeneration on faith.[27]

> Piper (Calvinist). Your act of believing and God's act of begetting are simultaneous. He does the begetting and you do the believing at the same instant. ... And - this is very important - ... his begetting is the decisive cause of your believing. If you have a hard time thinking of one thing causing another thing if they are simultaneous, ... the instant there is fire, there is heat, ... there is light. But we would not say that the heat caused the fire, or the light caused the fire. We say that the fire caused the heat and the light.[28]

The Bible Says Faith Precedes Regeneration

> Sproul (Calvinist). When speaking of the order of salvation (ordo salutis), Reformed theology always and everywhere insists that regeneration precedes faith.[29]

> Grudem (Calvinist). The idea that regeneration comes before saving faith is not always understood by evangelicals today. Sometimes people will even say something like, “If you believe in Christ as your Savior, then (after you believe) you will be born again.” But Scripture itself never says anything like that.[30]

Never says "anything like that," Wayne Grudem; that "if you believe in Christ as your Savior ... you will be born again?" The youngest believer, untouched by the 'higher knowledge' of Calvinism, knows scripture repeatedly says that by the normal meaning of language.

Here are 23 verses from the Gospel of John alone that say faith precedes regeneration, and what they would say if a Calvinist God had written them. The difference between what the Bible actually says, and

27 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 226.
28 Piper, Finally Alive, 102.
29 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 226.
30 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 703.

what a Calvinist God would have said, shows Calvinism is unscriptural.

Jn. 1:12. As many as received ... become the sons, even ... them that believe.
Calvinism. As many as become the sons believe, even them that receive.

2) Jn. 3:14-15. Whoever believes in him will ... have eternal life.
Calvinism. Whoever has eternal life will believe in him.

3) Jn. 3:16. Whoever believes in him will ... have everlasting life.
Calvinism. Whoever has everlasting life will believe in him.

4) Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.
Calvinism. He that has everlasting life believes on the Son.

5) Jn. 3:36. He that doesn't believe the Son will not see life.
Calvinism. He that doesn't see life will not believe the Son.

5) Jn. 5:24. He that ... believes ... has ... life.
Calvinism. He that has life believes.

6) Jn. 6:35. He that believes on me will never thirst.
Calvinism. He that never thirsts will believe on me.

7) Jn. 6:40. Everyone which ... believes ... will have everlasting life.
Calvinism. Every one which has everlasting life will believe.

8) Jn. 6:47. He that believes on me has everlasting life.
Calvinism. He that has everlasting life believes on me.

9) Jn. 6:57. He that eats me, even he will live by me.
Calvinism. He that lives by me, even he will eat me.

10) Jn. 6:58. He that eats of this bread will live for ever.
Calvinism. He that lives for ever will eat of this bread.

11) Jn. 7:37-38. He that believes, ... out of [him] will flow ... living water.
Calvinism. He that out of him flows living water, will believe on me.

12) Jn. 7:39. The Spirit, which they that believe on him, will receive.
Calvinism. The Spirit, which they that have received, will believe on him.

13) Jn. 8:23-24. If you don't believe you will die in your sins.
Calvinism. If you are dead in your sins you won't believe.

14) Jn. 9:38. He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.
Calvinism. He worshiped him. And he said, "Lord, I believe."

15) Jn. 10:38. Though you don’t believe, ... believe [so] you may know.
Calvinism. Though you don’t know, know so that you may believe.

16) Jn. 11:25. He that believes in me ... will ... live.
Calvinism. He that lives will believe in me.

17) Jn. 11:26. Whoever ... believes will never die. Do you believe this?
Calvinism. Whoever never dies, will believe in me. Are you alive?

18) Jn. 12:36. Believe in the light so that you may be the children.
Calvinism. Be the children so that you may believe in the light.

19) Jn. 12:46. Whoever believes on me won't abide in darkness.
Calvinism. Whoever doesn't abide in darkness will believe on me.

20) Jn. 14:11-12. He that believes on me [will do] the works that I do.
Calvinism. He that does the works that I do will believe on me.

21) Jn. 16:27. The Father ... loves you because you ... have believed.
Calvinism. You have believed because the Father loves you.

22) Jn. 17:20-21. Them ... which will believe ... [are] one.
Calvinism. Them which will be one believe.

23) Jn. 20:31. You may believe, ... so that believing you may have life.
Calvinism. You may have life, so that having life, you may believe.

Why didn't God write those verses the Calvinist way? Because God isn't a Calvinist God. God can't give regeneration to sinners until after their sins are forgiven at justification by faith, because God's love for sinners is limited by his righteousness. And since regeneration is after faith, it can't determine who will believe and become saved, which is Calvinist predestination.

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: Regeneration Can't Determine Who Will Become Saved

Since the Bible says men can believe, faith isn't a gift but rather our own faith, and that regeneration is after faith; regeneration can't determine who will believe and become saved. So Calvinist predestination to determine who will be born again so they believe and become saved is unbiblical.

Chapter 4. SALVATION BLESSINGS: After Faith; Can't Affect Who Becomes Saved

Most people, Calvinists included, probably think Calvinism teaches salvation by faith; but Calvinism actually teaches a false gospel of faith by salvation instead.

CALVINISM'S FALSE GOSPEL OF FAITH BY SALVATION	
Calvinism	**The Bible**
Union & regeneration are before justification by faith	Union & regeneration are part of justification by faith (Rm. 6:3-4)
Be saved to believe	Believe to be saved (Acts 16:31)
Faith by salvation	Salvation by faith (Eph. 2:8)

Some Calvinists admit Calvinism doesn't teach salvation by faith.

> Patton (Calvinist). No one has ever claimed that salvation is by faith alone. This is not a Protestant doctrine. We believe in justification by faith alone. This is what sola fide means. ... Involved in salvation are ... justification, ... calling, election, sanctification, glorification, and faith. Some of these happened in the past, some will happen in the future. But they are all part of our salvation. ... In the end, Calvinists do not believe in salvation by faith alone. We believe in justification by faith alone.[31]

> Snoeberger (Calvinist). The various passages in this non-exhaustive list indicate that faith precedes salvation. Some have extrapolated that this is evidence that faith must also precede regeneration, since regeneration is a part of salvation. ... But ... election does not follow faith; the efficacious call does not follow faith - and surely no one could deny that these are both aspects of salvation. [I deny election is part of 'applied' salvation; and the efficacious call is to glory.] There is no reason why regeneration cannot be listed with these.[32]

Snoeberger: Regeneration (Salvation) > Faith > Justification (Salvation)

Most Calvinists are desperate to assure us that regeneration and faith occur simultaneously, to try to avoid the charge of faith by salvation instead of salvation by faith. MacArthur says it's OK to say men are

31 Patton, C. Michael. https://credohouse.org/blog/do-calvinists-really-believe-in-salvation-by-faith-alone, accessed 4/27/26.

32 Snoeberger, Mark A., The Logical Priority of Regeneration to Saving Faith, Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal, 7 (Fall 2002): 59-61.

regenerated, and experience the blessings of salvation while still unsaved causally before faith, so long as regeneration and faith both occur simultaneously.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). 942 The distinction between regeneration and faith is to be defined not in terms of time but in terms of logical causality. Some synergists reject the notion that regeneration causes faith because they want to avoid saying that someone might be regenerated without saving faith. However, while some monergists have advocated that regeneration temporally [timewise] precedes faith, most have clarified that they are speaking of logical, not chronological, order. From a temporal perspective, regeneration and faith occur simultaneously; in the exact moment that man is born again, he repents and believes the gospel. Nevertheless, this simultaneity does not rule out causality. Though two events may occur at the same time, one may still cause the other. To illustrate this, consider the imagery Paul employs when he defines regeneration as the opening of the sinner's blinded spiritual eyes so that he sees the light. ... Now a man perceives light in the very same moment that he opens his eyes. ... However, his perception of light is causally dependent on opening his eyes.[33]

Calvinists think by defining salvation as justification by faith, they can put regeneration and other salvation blessings before faith, without being guilty of teaching salvation before faith. They claim regenerated (i.e., born again) men in the causal ordo salutis aren't yet saved.

Sproul (Calvinist). We cannot exercise saving faith until we have been regenerated.[34]
Piper (Calvinist). New birth ... enables a ... person to receive Christ and so be saved.[35]
MacArthur (Calvinist). Regeneration is the cause ... of saving faith.[36]
Grudem (Calvinist). [Regeneration] does ... come before we respond ... in saving faith.[37]

For all their talk about how unsaved men can't believe because of total depravity, they actually think unsaved *regenerate* men can believe. (If I'm wrong, and Calvinism believes regenerate men are saved causally before faith, then even more clearly Calvinism teaches salvation before faith, instead of salvation by faith.)

Calvinism Claims: Regeneration > Saving Faith > Justification (Salvation)

33 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 942.
34 Sproul, Biblical Doctrine, 936.
35 Piper, Five Points, 30.
36 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 942.
37 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 702.

> Murray (Calvinist). Regeneration is the beginning of all saving grace in us. ... We ... believe because we have been regenerated. ... The [causal] priority of regeneration might create the impression that a person could be regenerated and yet not converted [believe]. ... The regenerate person [simultaneously] exercises faith. ... We must not think of regeneration as something which can be abstracted from the saving exercises [faith] which are its effects.[38]

He's saying regeneration is chronologically simultaneous with faith, so it's OK to say men are logically regenerate, experiencing "all saving grace" before being saved by faith.

> Frame (Calvinist). The Westminster Confession (10.3) says this: "Elect infants dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved, ... as also are other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word." ... When the Spirit regenerates a person, that person eventually will come to faith. ... The Westminster Confession's statement should not encourage anybody to think that he can be saved without trusting in Christ.[39]

He's saying regenerate people in the ordo salutis aren't yet saved, and sometimes regeneration even takes place chronologically before faith and salvation.

Seven Salvation Blessings Calvinists Claim We Receive Before Salvation

Grudem says regeneration comes before we're saved, but also says it's one forth of our salvation.

> Grudem (Calvinist). Regeneration comes before saving faith. ... Salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.[40]

But it's logically impossible for us to have salvation before we get saved. If we're saved by faith, we can't be saved before faith. Actually, Calvinism says we receive almost every salvation blessing at regeneration before we're saved.

Calvinism: Regeneration (Most Salvation Blessings) > Faith > Justif.

38 Murray, Redemption Applied, 106.
39 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 2392.
40 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 702, 1200.

Most Calvinists claim faith is the *first* salvation blessing that results from regeneration.

> Murray. (Calvinist). Regeneration ... immediately registers itself in the conscious activity of the person concerned in the exercise of faith.[41]

But they actually believe faith is the *last* salvation blessing that results from regeneration, because Calvinism says we need all those other salvation blessings in order to be able to believe.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). Saving faith is the first and foremost result of regeneration. As the divine light shines into the sinner's heart, opening his spiritual eyes ... the newborn soul ... lays hold of Christ with the embrace of saving faith.[42]

As soon as MacArthur says faith is the "first" result, he says spiritual understanding and new life come from regeneration before faith does. The whole reason Calvinism puts regeneration before faith, is so God can control who believes, by controlling who is regenerated.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). When the objective beauty of Christ is held forth in the gospel message, the unregenerate man sees no glory in him, and therefore, left to himself, he will ever and always choose to reject the gospel. ... The remedy for man's spiritual blindness is monergistic regeneration. He gives us new spiritual eyes so that we finally see sin for what it is - in all its objective ugliness - and so finally see Christ for who he is - in all his objective beauty and glory. And when sinners finally have functioning spiritual eyes and the light necessary to see things as they actually are, they turn away in disgust from the filth of sin (repentance) and eagerly embrace the Christ whose glory they can at last see (faith). It is for this reason that theologians speak of the regenerating grace of God as irresistible. ... It is impossible that anyone with restored spiritual sight through regeneration should see sin and Christ side by side and do anything but turn from sin and embrace Christ in saving faith. ... In the final analysis, regenerating grace is irresistible because Christ is irresistible, for regenerating grace opens our spiritual eyes to his irresistibility.[43]

MacArthur: Regeneration > New Life + Spiritual Understanding > Faith

41 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 96, 108.
42 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 946.
43 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 937.

Let's look at seven salvation blessings Calvinists say we receive before faith to cause us to believe, and their location in Romans. I don't disagree with Calvinists that we receive most of these blessings at regeneration (not forgiveness, union in death, and emancipation though), but biblically, regeneration is after salvation by faith.

Seven Salvation Blessings Calvinists Say Precede Salvation
#1) Forgiveness (Rm. 4:8)
#2) Union in Death (Rm. 6:3)
#3) New Life/Heart/Creation in Resurrection (Rm. 6:4)
#4) Emancipation and New Master (Rm. 6:7, 18)
#5) Indwelling Holy Spirit (Rm. 8:1)
#6) Sanctification (Rm. 8:1)
#7) Spiritual Understanding (Rm. 8:5)

I'll give a short quotation from the same three Calvinists - MacArthur, Piper, and Murray - for each salvation blessing for consistency before any additional discussion.

1) Forgiveness of Sins (Rm. 4:8)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of forgiveness of sins at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

MacArthur (Calvinist). Regeneration speaks of a cleansing from sin.[44]

Piper (Calvinist). What happens at new birth is ... a new human nature ... forgiven and cleansed.[45]

Murray (Calvinist). Regeneration ... must cleanse from sin.[46]

Calvinists believe we receive forgiveness of sins at regeneration because their three regeneration passages all mention water. (To understand what they're saying, you'll need to know Calvinists interpret "cannot enter the kingdom of God" to mean "cannot believe." See "Unless a Man Be Born Again" on page 138.)

Calvinism: Regeneration (Forgiveness) > Faith > Justification

MacArthur (Calvinist). In Ezekiel’s prophecy of the new

44 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 933.
45 Piper, Finally Alive, 28.
46 Murray, Redemption Applied, 100.

> covenant, he famously speaks of both water and the Spirit in the context of regeneration: "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean [Ez. 36:25] ... Surely this was the truth Jesus had in mind when he spoke of being born of water and the Spirit [Jn. 3:5]. ... Christ's point was unmistakable: without the spiritual washing of the soul, a cleansing accomplished by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) ... no one can enter God's kingdom [i.e., Calvinism for 'believe'].[47]

> Piper (Calvinist). 39 "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean" [Ez. 36:25]. ... I think this is the passage that gives rise to Jesus' words, "Unless one is born of *water* and of he Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God [i.e., believe]" [Jn. 3:5]. ... Titus 3:5: "He saved us ... by the washing of regeneration."[48]

> Murray (Calvinist). A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezek. 36:26). ... This, in a word, is regeneration. ... We may focus attention upon verse 5: "Except one be born of water." ... Entrance into the kingdom of God [i.e., Calvinism for 'faith'] could only be secured by purification from the defilement of sin. ... Regeneration ... must cleanse from sin as well as recreate in righteousness.[49]

But biblically, forgiveness of sins occurs at justification, explained in Rm. 4:8; while regeneration doesn't happen until Rm. 6:4. It's at justification that God both 1) declares and counts an unrighteous man righteous, and 2) forgives sin and counts a sinner as a non-sinner.

> Rm. 4:5-8. To him that ... believes on him that justifies the UNGODLY, [1] his faith is counted [imputed, reckoned] for righteousness. ... Blessed is the man [who sins] [2] to whom the Lord will not impute [count, reckon] sin.

Bible: Faith (Rm. 3:22) > Justification (Forgiveness (Rm. 4:8)) > Regeneration (Rm. 6:4) Calvinism: Regeneration (Forgiveness) > Faith > Justification

If forgiveness of sins occurred at regeneration before justification by faith, as Calvinism teaches, there would be nothing left to forgive at justification. God would be justifying the godly, not "the ungodly" per Rm. 4:5 above. There would be no need to "count" (Rm. 4:5) men as righteous at justification, because they would already be so.

47 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 940.
48 Piper, Finally Alive.
49 Murray, Redemption Applied, 100.

2) Union in Messiah's Death (Rm. 6:3-4)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of union in Messiah at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). He effectually calls his people ... into fellowship with his Son. ... This is ... regeneration.[50]

> Piper (Calvinist). In the new birth, the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ.[51]

> Murray (Calvinist). Union with Christ ... unites us to ... inwardly operative grace. ... Regeneration is the beginning of inwardly operative ... grace.[52]

But biblically, union happens at our spiritual baptism into Messiah's death in Rm. 6:3, and regeneration happens at our resurrection into Messiah's new life in Rm. 6:4. Before justification, it's only 'foreknowledge' of union in Messiah. We're justified and forgiven when we're united into Messiah legally at the point of his death in his experience, and experientially at the point of our justification in our experience, and from the foundation of the world in God's foreknowledge.

> Rm. 3:3. Don't you know, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death?

> 1 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we're all baptized into one body.

And then our continuing union with him in his resurrection, causes our regeneration in his new life. At regeneration we're raised as new creatures with new life. And, as Lloyd-Jones attests in his book on Romans 6, in context our "old man" is simply the man we legally were before we became the "new man" we are now, so no surviving 'sin nature' nonsense.

> Rm. 6:6. [We] were baptized into his death, ... so that like Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also will walk in newness of life. ... Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him.

Amazingly, Frame agrees with me about how union into Messiah's

50 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 930.
51 Piper, Finally Alive, 32.
52 Murray, Redemption Applied, 97.

death is followed by regeneration in Messiah's resurrection, but he puts both union (via calling), and regeneration, before faith. He puts Rm. 6:4-5 ahead of Rm. 3:22. And he says we have "all the blessings of salvation" through the first of those salvation blessings, regeneration, before salvation.

> Frame (Calvinist) 2257 Calling is into fellowship with Christ, union with Christ. ... It is in Christ we have all the blessings of salvation. ... 2262 The first of those [salvation] blessings ... is regeneration, or the new birth. ... 2273 Paul uses the language of ... being "made ... alive together with Christ." We can find this idea of resurrection also in passages like Romans 6, which speak of us dying and rising with Christ. ... As effectual calling calls us into union with Christ [in his death], so regeneration is our union with him in his resurrection life.[53]

Bible: Faith (Rm. 3:22) > Justif. (Union (Rm. 6:3)) > Regen. (New Creature (Rm. 6:4))
Calvinism: Regeneration (Union & New Creature) > Faith > Justification

But if a person could be "in Messiah," one with God, dwelling in God and God dwelling in him, and having all the blessings of salvation, before being saved, then he wouldn't need salvation.

3) Regeneration (New Life/Heart/Creation) in His Resurrection (Rm. 6:3, 6)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of new life, a new heart, and becoming a new creature, at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). "God ... made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4), ... giving him a new heart. This is ... regeneration.[54]

> Piper (Calvinist). What happens at new birth is ... the creation of a new human nature.[55]

> Murray (Calvinist). "A new heart also will I give you," ... a change which is nothing less than a new creation. ... This ... is regeneration.[56]

But biblically, although we do receive the salvation blessing of new life, a new heart, and being a new creation at regeneration; regeneration

53 Frame, Salvation Belongs.
54 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 930.
55 Piper, Finally Alive, 28.
56 Murray, Redemption Applied, 99.

is a salvation blessing we receive after justification, and our new birth is part of our salvation by faith.

> Eph. 2:5. God ... quickened us together with Messiah (by grace you are saved).

4) Emancipation & New Master (Rm. 6:7, 18)

Calvinists claim we we receive the salvation blessing of emancipation from sin and servitude to a new master at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). In regeneration, ... the sinner's will is ... freed from the bondage of sin unto the liberty of righteousness.[57]

> Piper (Calvinist). Paul celebrates our liberation from slavery. ... The new birth happened. ... God caused us to get ... a new nature that hates sin.[58]

> Murray (Calvinist). The new life ... means that the bands which bind us to the dominion of sin are broken. ... This breach with the past registers itself in his consciousness in turning from sin unto God. [59]

But biblically, we're emancipated from sin at justification by union into Messiah's death, per Rm. 6:7; and we're enslaved to God by our new legal status at regeneration by our continuing union in Messiah's resurrection, per Rm. 6:18.

> Rm. 6:7-22. He that has died [at justification via union into Jesus' death] has been emancipated from sin. Now if we died with Messiah, we believe that we now also live with him, ... Messiah being raised from the dead. ... Sin won't have rule over you, because you aren't under the law, but under grace. ... 18 Having then been emancipated from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. ... Having been made free from sin, [you've] become servants to God.

Bible: Faith (Rm. 3:22) > Justif. (Emancip. (Rm. 6:7)) > Regen. (Slaves to God (Rm. 6:18))
Calvinism: Regeneration (Emancipation & Slaves to God) > Faith > Justification

57 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 936.
58 Piper, Finally Alive, 56.
59 Murray, Redemption Applied, 118.

5) Indwelling Holy Spirit (Rm. 8:1)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of the indwelling Holy Spirit at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). God promised ... he would bring regeneration to his people. ... I will put my Spirit within you (Ezek. 36:27).[60]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). In Rm. 8:9, ... he is contrasting those who are born again and have the Spirit.[61]
>
> Murray (Calvinist). Regeneration is wrought by the Holy Spirit, ... and by this act ... people ... become indwelt by the Holy Spirit.[62]

But biblically, although we do receive the Holy Spirit at regeneration, regeneration is at Rm. 6:4, after justification at Rm. 6:3. The Holy Spirit isn't mentioned in the section on sanctification (Rm. 6-8a) until Rm. 8:1. So again, Calvinism is claiming we receive a major salvation blessing before being saved.

6) Sanctification (Rm. 8:1)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of sanctification at regeneration before being saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). Regeneration is sanctification begun, and sanctification is regeneration continued.[63]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). 1 John gives at least eleven evidences that a person is born again. We could probably boil them all down to faith and love.[64]
>
> Murray (Calvinist). Sanctification is a process that begins ... in regeneration.[65]

> MacArthur (Calvinist). The believer’s sanctification is linked organically with his new birth - in a sense, regeneration is sanctification begun, and sanctification is regeneration continued.[66]
>
> Murray (Calvinist). Sanctification is a process that begins, we

60 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 931.
61 Piper, Finally Alive, 51.
62 Murray, Redemption Applied, 149.
63 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 942.
64 Piper, Finally Alive, 125.
65 Murray, Redemption Applied, 88.
66 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 942.

> might say, in regeneration.[67]
>
> Frame (Calvinist). Sanctification ... begins in regeneration, and we can think of sanctification as the outworking of the new life given in regeneration.[68]
>
> Grudem (Calvinist). Salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. ... Sanctification is the experience beginning in regeneration.[69]

Notice every one of these Calvinists, except Grudem, has to waffle on their statement that sanctification begins at regeneration. MacArthur: "In a sense." Murray: "We might say." Frame: "We can think." At least they were brave enough to say it, compared to many others. Sanctification does indeed begin at regeneration. But that puts Calvinists in the untenable position that sanctification begins at regeneration, then lapses at justification, and then begins again after justification, because sanctification follows justification, as the order of Romans attests.

Romans: Rm. 1-4 Justification, Rm. 5-8a Sanctification, Rm. 8b-11 Glorification Calvinism: Regeneration (Sanctification) > Justification (gap) > Sanctification

When talking about how the sanctification of the new birth precedes justification by faith, almost all Calvinists refer to the same verses in 1 John.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). The apostle John says, “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God” (1 Jn. 5:1). ... Thus, John declares that everyone who presently believes in Jesus has been born of God. The very same relationship (as evidenced by identical grammatical constructions) exists between the new birth and the practice of righteousness (1 Jn. 2:29), love (1 Jn. 4:7), and overcoming the world (1 Jn. 5:4). Yet none of these [including faith] precedes - and still less, causes - regeneration.[70]
>
> Murray (Calvinist). The priority of regeneration might create the impression that a person could be regenerated and yet not converted [i.e. have faith]. These passages in 1 John should correct any such misapprehension. ... “Everyone who is begotten

67 Murray, Salvation Applied, 88.
68 Frame, Salvation Belongs, 2635.
69 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 1200.
70 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 920.

> of God does not do sin, ... because he is begotten of God" (1 Jn. 3:9). "Everyone who is begotten of God overcomes the world ..." (1 Jn. 5:4). "Everyone who is begotten of God does not sin ..." (1 Jn. 5:18). ... In the other passages the fruits mentioned - doing righteousness [1 Jn. 2:29], the love and knowledge of God [1 Jn. 4:7], believing that Jesus is the Christ [1 Jn. 5:1] - are just as necessarily the accompaniments of regeneration as are the fruits mentioned in 1 Jn. 3:9; 1 Jn. 5:4, 18. ... All of the graces mentioned in these passages are the consequences of regeneration ... which sooner or later follow upon regeneration.[71]

1 Jn. 2:29. Everyone that does righteousness is born of him.
1 Jn. 4:7. Everyone that loves is born of God and knows God.
1 Jn. 5:1. Everyone believing Jesus is the Christ is born of God.
1 Jn. 3:9. Everyone born of God ... can't sin, because he's born of God.
1 Jn. 5:4-5. Everyone born of God overcomes ... and ... believes Jesus is the Son of God.
1 Jn. 5:18. Everyone born of God doesn't sin.

1 Jn. 5:1 and 1 Jn. 5:4-5 make it impossible for regeneration to be before faith chronologically, as some Calvinists believe. And I agree with Calvinists that being born of God causes the not-sinning, doing righteousness, loving, and believing, and not visa versa. This is because all these verses are about after-justification things, i.e. sanctification.

Faith is the only thing with a dual role, both the doorway and the home. "Whatever isn't of faith is sin," Rm. 14:23. Faith that justifies is the choice of man that precedes justification; but faith that sanctifies is forever more the irresistible fruit of regeneration and sanctification after justification by faith. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, ... [sanctification] faith," Gal. 5:22. We will see this dual function of faith many times in John's gospel (like in "John's Gospel vs. John's Epistle" on page 76).

7) New Mind & Spiritual Understanding (Rm. 8:5)

Calvinists claim we receive the salvation blessing of the new mind and spiritual understanding at regeneration before being saved, so that we will then believe and be saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). In regeneration ... the Spirit [replaces] ... the mind of the flesh with the mind of the Spirit (Rm. 8:5-9).[72]

71 Murray, Redemption Applied, 108.
72 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 936.

> Piper (Calvinist). He awakens the life that sees ... the beauty and worth of Christ.[73]

> Murray (Calvinist). When a person is regenerated it is ... impossible for that person not to believe. ... Regeneration is the renewing of the ... mind, and the renewed heart and mind must act according to their nature.[74]

But the Bible says the new mind and spiritual understanding are parts of salvation, not before salvation.

> 1 Tim. 2:4. Who will have all men [1] to be saved, and [2] to come to the knowledge of the truth.

> 1 Cor. 1:18. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us which are saved it is the power of God.

Romans portrays the new mind and spiritual understanding as the pinnacle of sanctification in Rm. 8; but Calvinism puts them before justification by faith, which Romans says is the entrance into salvation, in Rm. 3.

> MacArthur (Calvinist) (Most scripture references omitted to save space). 918 Scripture seems to clearly present faith as the consequence of the new birth. In the first place, because the natural man is dead in sin and thus unable to understand and accept the things of the Spirit of God, he is absolutely incapable of faith until the Spirit quickens spiritual life in him. ... 928 Repentance and faith are impossible for the natural man (Rm. 8:7–8). Apart from regenerating grace, no man will ever repent and believe. ... In his natural state, man is characterized by spiritual death. By nature he is a spiritual corpse, entirely unresponsive to the spiritual truth proclaimed in the external call of the gospel. For this reason, the natural man will always reject the gospel. ... 934 The natural man's mind is blinded; he is darkened in understanding and thus unable to hear or grasp spiritual truth. ... In regeneration, then, the Spirit opens the blind eyes of the mind, replacing, as it were, the mind of the flesh with the mind of the Spirit (Rm. 8:5–9) - indeed, with the mind of Christ himself. ... 943 The natural man's spiritual inability precludes any concept of synergism in regeneration. In his state of spiritual death, man is incapable even of understanding the things of the Spirit, let alone receiving them. The sinner's mind is so hostile to God that he is literally unable to submit to God's law (Rm. 8:7), and thus he cannot please God in any sense (Rm. 8:8), including the exercise of faith.[75]

But biblically, the difference between a natural man and a spiritual man is irrelevant as to how we become justified by faith, but rather as to

73 Piper, Finally Alive, 58.
74 Murray, Redemption Applied, 111.
75 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine.

why already saved men are guaranteed to be sanctified. That's why it's not mentioned before justification by faith in Rm. 3:22, but in proving guaranteed sanctification in Rm. 8. And Rm. 4 shows that the word of God, by itself, without any preceding change in a person, is powerful enough to overcome the spiritual deadness of anyone for faith unto salvation.

> Rm. 4:19-22. [Abraham] being not weak in faith, ... considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, ... being fully persuaded that, what HE had promised, HE was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Bible: Faith (Rm. 3:22) > Justif. (Rm. 3:22) > Regen. (New Mind (Rm. 8:5))
Calvinism: Regeneration (New Mind) > Faith > Justification

It's amazing Calvinists think a "secret call," never mentioned in the Bible, is powerful enough to enable a man to go from totally depraved to believing, but think the word of God isn't powerful enough to enable a man to go from totally depraved to neutral so he make a genuine choice. They think a "secret call" is powerful enough to "create the life it commands," but that the word of God isn't powerful enough to "create the life it commands" for those who, like Abraham, believe it.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). The call itself creates the life that it commands.[76]

Justification & Propitiation (Rm. 3:25)

Calvinists DON'T believe we receive justification and propitiation at regeneration before being saved, because of Rm. 3:25 (though amazingly they still think we receive forgiveness of sins, which is also mentioned in Rm. 3:25, at regeneration before faith, as shown in "Forgiveness of Sins" above).

> Rm. 3:24-25. Being justified freely ... through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood ... for the forgiveness of sins."

76 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 918-921, 1075.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). Numerous passages in Scripture testify that one is justified by faith (e.g., Rm. 3:28). Thus, faith must logically precede justification. ... We see ... in Rm. 3:21-26: God has put forward his Son ... "as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Rom. 3:25).[77]

> Piper (Calvinist). Justification: ... We incur guilt that has to be forgiven, and wrath that has to be propitiated, and a falling short of the righteousness that God requires. ... We must believe in order to be saved.[78]

> Murray (Calvinist). God appeases his own holy wrath in the cross ... that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rm. 3:25-26).[79]

While Calvinists wrongly claim that regeneration is before faith, they're correct that justification and propitiation are after faith. Romans begins the body of the book with "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," Rm. 1:18. This is the main problem of all men, and the one Romans provides the answer for. This wrath is propitiated (satisfied) at justification by faith in Rm. 3:25. So by the first verse of chapter 5, Paul could say, "Therefore, having been justified by faith [past tense], we have peace with God," Rm. 5:1. "Peace with God" meaning the wrath of God toward us was appeased at justification.

Bible & Calvinism: Wrath (Rm. 1:18) > Propitiation at Justif. (Rm. 3:25) > Peace (Rm. 5:1)

MacArthur wrongly thinks though that reconciliation, which is related to propitiation, occurs at both regeneration and justification: that God removed our enmity against him at regeneration, so we could have faith, so God could remove his enmity against us at justification, i.e., we stopped being mad at God before he stopped being mad at us.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). 858 The mutual peace accomplished by the act of reconciliation is experienced ... when the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit overcomes man's hostility to God, ... granting them the justifying faith by which they have peace with God. (Rm. 5:1).[80]

Calvinism: Regeneration (Man Reconciled) > Faith > Justif. (God Reconciled) Calvinism: Regeneration (Most Salvation Blessings) > Faith > Propitiation at Justification

But think of the implications of receiving even one salvation blessing,

77 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 855.
78 Piper, Finally Alive, 73, 107.
79 Murray, Redemption Applied, 27.
80 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine.

like union in Messiah or regeneration, before justification and propitiation, while God still declares us "Guilty," the wrath of God still burns against us, and God's enmity against us hasn't yet been removed! This is to underestimate the wrath of God that caused his Son to cry out, "Why have you forsaken me?" Mt. 27:46.

MacArthur, Piper, & Murray: Regen. (Forgiveness+Union+Life+Emancip.+Spirit+Sanctif.+Understanding) > Faith > Salvation

So Calvinism creates a regenerate man before justification. He's been cleansed, and his sins were forgiven. He has a new heart, and is a new creation. He died and rose with Messiah. He is "in Messiah," seated with him in heavenly places. He is one with God. God dwells in him, and he in God. He was freed from sin, and made a servant to grace and righteousness. He was born again by the Spirit of God. He is regenerate, with a new heart and new nature. He has the mind of Messiah. He is spiritual, indwelt by the Spirit. His desires and thoughts are Spirit led. He understands and desires spiritual things. Sanctification has begun in him. But he's still unsaved, not yet justified by faith. God's wrath still burns unpropitiated against him. This is the unbiblical and logically untenable position Calvinists put us in by putting regeneration before faith so they can make it be the cause of faith.

If, as Calvinism teaches, we received all those salvation blessings before salvation by faith, there would be no reason to get saved. We would already have pretty much everything salvation offered, except a formal declaration of 'not guilty' via justification, for example. By putting all these salvation blessings before justification by faith, so that we're enabled to believe, Calvinism actually teaches faith by salvation, instead of salvation by faith. This doesn't mean Calvinists are unsaved. It means they were saved in spite of, not because of, Calvinism; and usually before they ever heard of Calvinism.

Calvinist Salvation Blessings Before Justification Destroys Romans

Biblically, all the salvation blessings we looked at above happen at, or causally after, justification. That's why Paul covers them in Romans 6-8a, after he covers justification in Romans 3-4. They are part of our sanctification which climaxes in being spiritually minded in Romans 8a.

> Rm. 8:1-9. They which are in Messiah Jesus, ... don't walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... You aren't in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his.

We do receive most of the things Calvinism says we do at our new birth. If Calvinist teachers would respect the Bible more than their Calvinist theology and logic, and move regeneration to after justification where the Bible says it belongs, that would fix most of the errors of Calvinism. The main message of Romans is that "the gospel of Messiah ... is the power of God unto salvation, ... because therein is the justification [not the 'regeneration'] of God revealed," Rm. 1:17. The Bible puts the emphasis on justification; Calvinism puts it on regeneration instead.

> Murray (Calvinist). Regeneration is the beginning of *ALL* saving grace in us.[81]

Calvinism destroys the message and structure of the book of Romans, by putting regeneration before justification, to teach faith by salvation, instead of salvation by faith.

81 Murray, Redemption Applied, 106.

Table 6: Calvinist Regeneration Destroys the Structure of Romans

CALVINIST REGENERATION DESTROYS THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANS					
The Bible				Calvinism	
	Verses	Topic		Verses	Topic
CONDEMNATION	1b-3a	Sin & Condemnation		1b-3a	Sin & Condemnation
			SALVATION BLESSINGS	6:4	Regeneration in His Resurrection
				4:8	Forgiveness of Sins
				6:3	Union in Messiah's Death
				6:4	New Life/Creation/Heart
				6:7	Emancipation & New Master
				8:1	Indwelling Holy Spirit
				8:1	Sanctification
				8:5	New Mind/Spiritual Understandg
SALVATION	3b-4	Justification by Faith	SALVATION	3b-4	Justification by Faith
	3:22	Declared Righteous		3:22	Declared Righteous
	3:25	Propitiation		3:25	Propitiation
	4:8	Forgiveness of Sins			
	6-8a	Sanctification Because of Justif.		6-8a	Sanctification
	6:3	Union in Messiah's Death			
	6:4	Regeneration in His Resurrection			
	6:4	New Life/Creation/Heart			
	6:7	Emancipation & New Master			
	8:1	Indwelling Holy Spirit			
	8:1	Sanctification			
	8:5	New Mind/Spiritual Understandg			
	8b-11	Glorification Because of Justif.		8b-11	Glorification

The Bible Says Faith Precedes Salvation

The Bible says faith precedes salvation causally. So it's unscriptural to order any parts of applied salvation before faith, even if they occur simultaneously. The list of verses below demand a logical order; believe in order to be saved. Calvinism requires parts of salvation to be applied before faith; be saved in order to believe. The difference between what the Bible actually says, and what a Calvinist God would have said, shows Calvinism is unscriptural.

The Gospel vs. Calvinism

Acts 16:30-31. Believe ... and you will be saved.
Calvinism: Be saved (union & regeneration) and you will believe.

Mk. 16:16. He that believes ... will be saved.
Calvinism: He that is saved (union & regeneration) will believe.

Rm. 1:16. The power ... unto salvation to every one that believes.

Calvinism: The power unto faith of everyone that is saved (union & regeneration).

Rm. 10:9-14. If you ... believe, ... you will be saved.
Calvinism: If you are saved (union & regeneration), you will believe.

1 Cor. 1:21. It pleased God ... to save them that believe.
Calvinism: It pleased God to give faith to them that are saved (union & regeneration).

Eph. 2:8. You are saved by faith.
Calvinism: You have faith by salvation (union & regeneration).

2 Thess. 2:13. Salvation through ... belief of the truth.
Calvinism: Belief of the truth through salvation (union & regeneration).

2 Tim. 3:15. Wise unto salvation by faith.
Calvinism: Wise unto faith by salvation (union & regeneration).

1 Pet. 1:9. The outcome of your faith, even ... salvation.
Calvinism: The outcome of your salvation (union & regeneration), even faith.

Calvinists Tend to Mix Works Into the Gospel

Since Calvinists teach salvation before faith, which is not the gospel; and since everything except the gospel teaches self-righteousness instead of justification by faith; it's no wonder Calvinists tend to mix works into every part of salvation.

1) Calvinists mix works into the gospel by saying you have to believe and take Jesus as your Lord to be justified, whereas the gospel says you have to believe to be justified, and then you'll be enslaved to the Lord.

The Bible: Believe = Justification + Servitude Calvinism: Believe + Servitude = Justification

> Rm. 6:16, 18, 22. Don't you know that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey his servants you are? ... Having then been emancipated from sin, you were made the servants of righteousness. ... Now having been emancipated from sin, and having been made servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

These verses aren't saying that at any moment servants can choose to serve one master or another. Servants don't get to choose masters; masters choose and buy servants. Instead these verses are saying don't you know you're guaranteed a new life now that you're under a new

master?

You have no right to take Jesus as your Lord as an unsaved person (lordship salvation). You could say, "I take Jesus as my Lord;" but he won't take you as his servant, because sin separates you from him. You can only believe and be justified, and then God will emancipate you from your previous owner, sin, and make you his servant. And that change of legal status, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, will without fail result in a changed life, and that is the only thing that will.

2) Calvinists mix works into the gospel by examining the quality of their sanctification to try to figure out if their works indicate God chose them; whereas a non-Calvinist knows he's saved because he knows he believed the gospel promise, which is the only way anyone can be saved. He knows he has faith because it was his own choice, not God's choice, not gifted faith. The gospel message isn't "Examine your life to see if you're saved," but rather "Believe on the Lord ... and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

3) Calvinists mix works into the gospel by trying to fight and persevere in good works to reach glorification, see "Calvinist Perseverance of the Saints" on page 151. The gospel message isn't "fight to do good works to stay saved" but rather "believe on the Lord ... and you will be saved [including justification, sanctification, and glorification]" (Acts 16:31).

Everyone Saved by Faith Inherently Understands Calvinism is False

Even babes in Messiah who haven't been indoctrinated by Calvinism know we're saved by faith and receive no salvation or part of salvation before faith. The few people that knew Calvinism before they believed were saved in spite of, not because of, Calvinism.

> Spurgeon (Calvinist). When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it. ... I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this [i.e. Calvinism].[82]

The tragedy is that God provided salvation at the cost of the blood of his own Son so everyone can come by faith, so his house can be full. And then Calvinists tell people salvation isn't *really* available to them,

82 Spurgeon, Defense of Calvinism, 2.

and people can't *really* come. God wants to bring everyone in because of the price he paid to make it possible, and Calvinists resist God's desire and provision by telling everyone it's not possible.

> Lu. 14:23. The lord said to the servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled."

You don't have to study all the various theological issues about Calvinism to know it's false. If you're saved, you already know enough to make a correct evaluation, because no one is saved without believing they're saved by faith. That's the gospel. You know you received salvation AFTER (though instantaneously after) you believed. Stay faithful to the message that got you saved. Don't mess with the gospel.

> Gal. 1:6-7. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Messiah unto another gospel, which is not another, but there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Messiah.

The Gospel According to Calvinism

The gospel says the requirement for salvation is faith, which you can do. Calvinism says the requirement for salvation is regeneration, which you can't do. So Calvinism is anti-gospel. It has different requirements for salvation than the gospel.

Bible: Faith > Salvation Calvinism: Regeneration (Salvation) > Faith > Justification (Salvation)

John Piper wrote a whole book about the new birth, called "Finally Alive," based on Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. Below I've provided excerpts from the 'gospel appeal' parts of his book, to illustrate the tragedy of Calvinism's gospel. You can feel Piper's concern for people. But there's no hope in Calvinism, no good news.

I read one well-known Calvinist say (though I can't find the quote at present), don't preach Calvinism to unsaved men, because the gospel message in the New Testament always takes the form, "Believe, and you'll be saved." That's why the excerpt below from Piper is so refreshing. He's more honest than Calvinism's God, because he comes right out and says, you must be born again to avoid hell, but it's not up

to you. Ryle goes further and says don't teach Calvinism to new Christians either.

> Ryle (Calvinist). Let me entreat every reader of this paper to ... begin ... with simple ... faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and so work his way toward Election. ... It is an old and quaint saying: ... "A man must first go to the little Grammar school of ... Faith, before he enters the great University [barf] of Election and Predestination."[83]

Now if Jesus had said, "Unless a man be born again he can't believe," Calvinism would be true. But after Jesus told Nicodemus he couldn't cause himself to be born again, he told him he could believe, which would result in his being born again. "Whoever believes in him shall not perish," Jn. 3:15. See "Unless a Man Be Born Again" on page 138.

Piper (Calvinist). The new birth ... is not a work of man. No human makes the new birth happen. You can't make it happen to yourself. God makes it happen. It happens *to* us, not *by* us. ... You and I must be born again, or we will not see the kingdom of God. ... We will go to hell. ... Teaching about the new birth is unsettling because it refers to something that is done to us, not something we do. ... God causes the new birth, we don't. ... This means that the new birth is taken out of our hands. It is not in our control. And so it confronts us with our helplessness. ... This is unsettling. We are told that we won't see the kingdom of God if we're not born again. And we're told that we cannot make ourselves to be born again.

If we are going to be born again, it will rely decisively and ultimately on God. His decision about making us alive [or not] will not be a response to what we as spiritual corpses do. ... This [can be] disturbing ... to the tender conscience. ... Apart from the new birth ... we are unable to accept the gospel. Then something happened [to some of us]. The new birth happened. ... Without the new birth ... we will only have suffering forever. ... We won't have eternal joy in fellowship with God, but only eternal misery with the devil and his angels.

One of the most unsettling things about the new birth ... is that we don't control it. We don't decide to make it happen any more than a baby decides to make his birth happen, ... any more than dead men decide to give themselves life. ... That's why we need the new birth, and that's why we can't make it happen. This is one reason we speak of the *sovereign* grace of God. This is one reason why we *love* the sovereign grace of God. ... Submit to that, and be glad.

This is very important - his doing is the decisive cause of your doing. His begetting [or not begetting] is the decisive cause of your believing [or not believing]. ... Because of God's work in begetting, [men] are able to believe the gospel. ... I pray you will receive [these things] with joy. ... There is no hope that the dead will breathe by themselves. ... Therefore, I plead with you, ... believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Receive him as the Savior and Lord and Treasure of your life.

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83 Ryle, Complete Works, 5260.

The biblical truth that saving faith is possible only because God causes unbelievers to be born again may make us feel ... fatalistic, pointless, unmotivated, and paralyzed in our evangelism. ... So if I find myself feeling discouraged ... in my witness to unbelievers because of ... the fact that God's work in the new birth precedes and enables saving faith - then I lift my heart to the Lord and say, "O God, [etc.]." ... Don't let the fact that you can't cause the new birth stop you from telling the gospel.

So if your heartache is for your own personal change, or for change in your marriage, or change in your prodigal children, ... or in the miseries of the poor, ... then you should care supremely about the new birth. ... The kingdom of God will come. ... Jesus himself will be the great all-satisfying Treasure in that new and beautiful earth. But not everyone will enjoy it.[84]

And here's what other Calvinists said about Piper's dismally depressing book.

> D. A. Carson. I cannot too strongly celebrate the publication of this book.
>
> Ian Murray. Many will be thankful that John Piper is addressing the key need of our times.
>
> J. J. Packer. Regeneration ... is a largely neglected theme today, but this fine set of sermons ... goes far to fill the gap. Highly recommended!
>
> Thabiti Anyabwile. One wonders why it's taken so long for a book on the new birth to be written!
>
> Bruce Ware. Finally Alive is a vivid and stirring description of the Bible's teaching on what it means to be born again. The good news of the gospel.

Piper's Calvinist gospel in "Finally Alive" is not the gospel of salvation by faith, but of faith by salvation.

Eph. 2:8. You are saved by faith.

Calvinism Is Unbiblical: Salvation Blessings Can't Determine Who Will Become Saved

The salvation blessings of forgiveness, union, regeneration, emancipation, the indwelling Spirit, sanctification, and the new mind can't precede the salvation they are part of, so they can't determine who

84 Piper, Finally Alive.

will believe and become saved. Therefore, Calvinist predestination that says totally depraved men need these blessings in order to believe and become saved is totally unbiblical.

And Calvinism's false gospel of faith by salvation, instead of salvation by faith, isn't a harmless issue that can be allowed to be taught unopposed by sound teaching, as if it were a valid alternative way of interpreting scripture. Calvinism should have been refuted as soon as it was created, and probably would have been, if Calvinists in positions of power hadn't prevented continuing ongoing discussion about it in their churches. And an additional benefit of refuting Calvinism would be that Calvinist Bible teachers could free up their talents and labors to edify their congregations and the church at large, instead of doing like John MacArthur did when he wasted about half his 1,878 page book, "Biblical Doctrine," on Calvinism's false gospel.

> Jude 1:3-4 [adapted to the current situation]. Beloved, when I [really wanted] to write to you about the common salvation, it was necessary [instead] for me to write to you, and exhort you, that you would earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ... turning the [doctrine of the] grace of our God into [graceless reprobation], and denying the [salvation freely offered to all men which was purchased at an inestimable price by the] only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Messiah.

Chapter 5. JOHN 6: None Can Come; All Can Believe

> White (Calvinist). There is no [known] meaningful non-Reformed exegesis of [John 6:37-45] available. As numerous as the attempts of Arminian exegetes to find some way around the testimony of these verses has been, not even a plausible solution has been offered that does not require the complete dismantling of the text, redefinition of words, or the insertion of utterly foreign concepts.[85]

Hopefully, now there is. But if I knew of one that was already available, I would have directed your attention to it instead of writing this one.

Table 7: Partial Structure of the Gospel of John: Chapters 1-6

PARTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: CHAPTERS 1-6																
Section	**Intro**		**Life**												**Light**	**Love**
Topic			**The Spirit of Life**				**The Word of Life**				**The Bread of Life**					
Chapter	1a	1b	2a	2b	3	4a	4b	5a	5b	5c	6a	6b	6c	6d	7-10	11-12
Narrative/ Discourse	D	N	N	N	D	D	N	N	D	D	N	N	D	D		
Life/ Resurrection			L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R		

The message of John's gospel is: #1) None can receive. #2) All can believe and receive. #3) All who believe will always believe.

Jn. 1. The Word that None Can Know or Receive

> Jn. 1:10-11. The world didn't know him. ... 11 His own didn't receive him. 12 But as many as received him, to them he gave authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, 13 which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The world (the Gentiles) + his own (the Jews) = everybody. Nobody can know or receive him; but anyone can believe and then they receive. Who are these who can't receive him, who do receive him? "Even ... them that believe on his name, " Jn. 1:11.

85 White, Potter's Freedom, 153-154.

No unsaved person can be born of God by "blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man" (Jn. 1:13) to be born of God. Yet some are given "authority to become the sons of God" (Jn. 1:12). Who are these that can't be born of God who are born of God? "Even ... them that believe on his name" (Jn. 1:11).

Jn. 3. Nicodemus Couldn't Ascend or Come

The discourse with Nicodemus is based on the narrative of the water to wine in Jn. 2a. Flesh is like water lying at the bottom of "six pots of stone after the manner of the [outward] purifying of the Jews" (Jn. 2:6). The Spirit is like "water that was made wine" (Jn. 2:9) that gets inside you and affects your behavior.

Nicodemus ... <u>came</u> to Jesus" (Jn. 3:1-2) physically, but couldn't come to him spiritually. Flesh "born of water" (Jn. 3:5) can't enter the kingdom. We need a supernatural transformation like water to wine.

No one can "ascend up to heaven" (Jn. 3:13). But everyone can believe. The Son of man will be "lifted up" (Jn. 3:14) on the cross "so that whoever believes in him" (Jn. 3:15), will be lifted up with "the Son of man which is [always] in heaven" (Jn. 3:13).

No one can "<u>come</u> to the light" (Jn. 3:20), because our "deeds are evil" (Jn. 3:19). The word "come" is used 118 times in the Gospel of John, more than in any other book except Isaiah and Jeremiah. Men can't come to Jesus spiritually by trying to come to him, like by changing religions, or joining a seeker-friendly church, or graduating from a Bible School, etc. But all can believe. And "he that believes on him is not condemned" (Jn. 3:18), and then he will "<u>come</u> to the light" (Jn. 3:21).

Jn. 4a. The Samaritan Woman Couldn't Worship

The discourse with the Samaritan woman is based on the narrative of the cleansing of the temple. The flesh fails at external worship "in the temple [with] those that sold oxen and sheep" (Jn. 2:14). But the Spirit gives inward "zeal ... [that] has eaten me up" (Jn. 2:17).

The efforts of the flesh are like water at the bottom of a well, and "the well is deep" (Jn. 4:11). But the Spirit "within [is] a well of water

springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:24). Trying to worship without the indwelling Spirit will fail even for a ruler of the Jews in the temple. But even a woman can believe when she hears the word, and then be able to worship with "the zeal of your house" (Jn. 2:17) even in Samaria. Many believed on him "because of the saying of the woman ... and many more believed because of his own word" (Jn. 4:41). Jesus will say in chapter 6, "The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life," Jn. 6:63.

Jn. 4b. The Humble Nobleman's Son Couldn't Come

A nobleman's "son was sick at Capernaum" (Jn. 4:46), so he couldn't come to Jesus. So the nobleman went to Jesus "and begged him that he would come down, and heal his son" (Jn. 4:47). But like the Father sent his word, the Son, into the world to heal from afar; Jesus healed the nobleman's son physically from afar with his word by saying, "Your son lives" (Jn. 4:40).

But Jesus couldn't heal the nobleman, standing right there in front of him, spiritually with his word, like by saying, "You now believe." All he could do was help him humble himself, and overcome his obstacles to faith, and encourage him to believe by saying, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you won't believe," Jn. 4:48.

Jesus didn't regenerate or change the nobleman's desires in any way so he would believe. ALL THE CHANGE WAS IN THE NOBLEMAN'S SON WHO WAS FAR AWAY. Yet the nobleman "believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him" (Jn. 4:50), before he saw any sign or wonder, before "he went his way" (Jn. 4:50) and saw that his son had been healed. And when he got back, "his whole household" (Jn. 4:53) believed.

Jn. 5. The Proud Weak Man Couldn't Come

There was a pool in Jerusalem where the first person who stepped in after an angel stirred the water would be healed. And there was a weak man laying there who was so weak he couldn't come into the pool. So Jesus came to him and asked him if he wanted to be healed. His answer was ambivalent. JESUS HEALED THE MAN PHYSICALLY ANYWAY AGAINST HIS WILL, BUT COULDN'T HEAL HIM

SPIRITUALLY AGAINST HIS WILL. The man reported Jesus to the authorities, and "therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to slay him" (Jn. 5:16).

Jesus Can Do Only & Everything God Can Do

The discourse in chapter 5 is about the humble nobleman and the proud weak man. The Jewish leaders accepted the weak man's defense that Jesus was the one that made him carry his bed on the Sabbath, but they didn't accept Jesus' defense that the Father made him do what he did. "Jesus answered, ... "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do; for whatever things he does, these also the Son does likewise," Jn. 5:19. Anyone who can do only and also everything God does, is God. "As the Father raises up the dead [bodies], and gives them life; even so the Son gives [physical] life to whomever he will," Jn. 5:21.

Jesus Can Force Physical But Not Spiritual Resurrection

Someday Jesus will force the physical resurrection of everyone, but he can't make anyone genuinely believe. If you drug a man, you can get him to want to do some things, but it's still not his genuine choice. And if Jesus can't do it, neither can the Father, because Jesus does everything the Father does. Even God can't do everything. "God ... can't lie," Titus 1:2.

> Jn. 5:22-29. The hour is coming and is now, when the [physically] dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear will live [physically, most will be unsaved]. ... The hour is coming, in which all [the bodies] that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth.

The hour that "is coming" (Jn. 5:22), is the future physical resurrection of all. The hour that "is now" (Jn. 5:22), is the physical resurrection of Lazarus a few chapters later.

Why Some People Believe and Some Don't

Calvinists think some people believe and not others, because God forces some to believe and not others.

Sproul (Calvinist). We believers must ask ourselves why we have

> come to faith while many of our friends have not. Did we exercise faith in Christ because we are more intelligent than they? … Are we better or more virtuous than our friends?[86]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). I rarely meet Christians who want to take credit for their conversion. … If I ask … "Why did you believe … when you heard the gospel, but your friends didn't," … very few believers answer that question by saying: "Because I was wiser or smarter or more spiritual or better trained or more humble."[87]

Jesus gave two reasons here why some people believe and some don't, and neither reason was that it's God's choice. First, the weak man, who may have been more intelligent and talented than other people, had been isolated from Jewish society "thirty-eight years" (Jn. 5:5), because of his infirmity, and he wasn't about to ruin his relationship with the Jewish authorities the very day he was finally able to start participating in society and the synagogue (in contrast to the man born blind we'll see in chapter 9).

And the Jewish leaders weren't about to go against their peers and their culture that provided so much of their identity and status. Jesus said, "How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God alone?" Jn. 5:44. He didn't say, "You can't believe," as Calvinists teach, but "How can you believe" (Jn. 5:44) while your goal is for people to like you? Some people spend their money on immediate gratification, while others save for the future. But at any time the self-indulgent person can choose thrift, or the thrifty person choose immediate gratification.

Every unsaved person has a different mix of obstacles that makes faith more difficult, but not impossible. Nicodemus had to realize being a Jewish religious leader was no advantage; the Samaritan woman had to realize not being a Jewish religious leader was no disadvantage. The nobleman had status, but was able to believe because he humbled himself; the weak man was destitute, but he couldn't believe because he craved status. Entering the Kingdom requires a miracle for all (Lu. 18:25, 27), but faith is easier for children than adults (Lu. 18:17), harder for the rich than the poor (Lu. 18:24), but not impossible for the rich (Lu. 19:2). If all were unable to believe, as Calvinism teaches, there would be no degrees of difficulty. We are free to choose. "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's

86 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 177.
87 Piper, Five Points, 249-252.

daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. 11:24-25.

Second, "had you believed Moses, you would have believed me" (Jn. 5:46). Their whole lives, the rabbis had been in the habit of rejecting Moses law for the sake of the so-called 'oral law' (later written down in the Talmud), that God supposedly gave Moses along with the written law on Mount Sinai. For example, instead of writing scriptures on their doorposts where they could read them everyday as Moses commanded, they wrote them on tiny scrolls and put them in little boxes, and nailed them to their doorposts as the rabbis commanded.

And instead of acknowledging the visible part of God who had eaten with Abraham, wrestled with Jacob, and was speaking with them face to face at that moment, they edited the portions about the visible part of God out of their Targum Bibles, written in the vernacular of the people. Over the years they had already made repeated decisions to reject God. That's why more young people accept the gospel than older people. It's not impossible for them to believe, but it's more difficult. "How can you believe" (Jn. 5:44), not "You can't believe."

Jn. 6. The Crowd Couldn't Come

Jn. 6:1-15. Narrative About Feeding the 5000

Because the weak man had betrayed Jesus to the authorities, Jesus had to observe Passover on a desert mountain. He "saw a great company come to him" (Jn. 6:5) physically, and Jesus fed them physically. Jesus even knew exactly how much each person would eat so there would be exactly "twelve baskets" (Jn. 6:13) of food left over, one for each of his twelve disciples, to strengthen their faith for what was coming. Like the manna after the Exodus, "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (Ex. 16:18). But Jesus couldn't feed the crowd spiritually. After they finished eating, they planned to "come and take him by force to make him a king" (Jn. 6:15).

Jn. 6:16-21. Narrative About the Disciples on the Sea

Jesus sent the disciples away by ship. Then he slipped away to join them. A strong wind prevented the disciples from making progress towards their destination. Jesus came to them, walking on the water,

and when he entered the ship, it was instantly teleported to their destination.

Jn. 6:22-58. Discourse About Feeding the 5000: Believe to Come

All the potential difficulties of interpretation in John 6 were already resolved in chapters 1-5. For example, John 1 had already said natural men can't know or receive, but they can believe; and John 3 had already said natural men can't ascend or come, but they can believe. In John 6 we see a crowd trying to come physically without believing spiritually.

Men Can't Come But They Can Believe

When the crowd realized Jesus was gone, they camped overnight on the mountain, and then hired boats to go look for him. When they found him in the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus told them that, though they had done a LOT of work to seek him, more than most people (they were even willing to risk rebellion with Rome to make him king), it's just not possible to <u>come</u> to him spiritually.

> <u>Jn. 6:28.</u> They said to him, "What shall we do so that we can work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered, ... "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent."

The ONLY spiritual work unsaved men can do, is to believe on him, but they CAN do that.

"Come" Isn't Synonymous With "Believe"

> <u>Jn. 6:33-35.</u> The bread of God is he which <u>comes</u> down from heaven, and gives life to the world. ... 35 He that <u>comes to me</u> will never hunger, and he that <u>believes on me</u> will never thirst.

The parallelism between "he that comes" and "he that believes" in verse 35 doesn’t mean they're synonyms. It's like the parallelism in John 1:10-12. "The world knew him not, ... his own received him not, but as many as many as <u>received</u> him [which no one can do], to them he gave power to become the sons of God, <u>even</u> to them that <u>believe</u> on his name [which everyone can do]." It's not that receiving and believing are synonymous. No one can receive, but everyone can believe, and then they receive. Here, no one can come, but everyone can believe, and

then they come.

Remember, no one can "come to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn. 3:20), but "he that believes on him is not condemned" (Jn. 3:18), and then he "comes to the light" (Jn. 3:21). No one can come to Jesus by coming. The gulf between flesh and Spirit is too great. "Between us ... there is a great gulf fixed," Lu. 16:26. The Father needs to "draw" us across that gulf to the Son. So believing and coming aren't synonymous; you have to "believe" before you can "come."

On the other hand, we know "eating" and "believing" are synonymous in John 6, because both their chains mention "eternal life," synonymous with "whoever believes in him will ... have eternal life," Jn. 3:15. And neither chain mentions predestination.

The Believing Chains - Believe and Eat
Jn. 6:40. Every one which sees the Son and believes on him [has] eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jn. 6:54. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Whereas, we know "coming" is synonymous with "being given," and "drawn," monergistically accomplished by the Father. Predestined things are things God does, so their chains don't mention receiving eternal life by faith, and instead skip to glorification.

The Predestination Chains - Given, Drawn, and Come
Jn. 6:39. Of all which he has given me I will lose nothing, but will raise it up again at the last day.

Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me, unless the Father which has sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Faith Determines Predestination; Not Visa Versa

And we know it's the non-predestined eating/believing group, that determines who is in the predestined given/drawn/coming group, because eating joins us into union with Messiah, by which we are foreknown by the Father, and then predestined to glory.

Jn. 6:56-57. He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood, dwells in me and I in him [union in Messiah]. 57 As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he will live by me."

Predestination in John's Writings

John uses different terminology than the other apostles, but has the same message of predestination to holiness and glory.

Eats=Faith
Dwells=Union/Foreknowledge
Chosen=Election (Foreknowledge + Predestination)
Given=Predestined
Drawn=Called
Come=Justification
Taught=Sanctification
Resurrection=Glorification

Election (or Choosing) = Foreknowledge + Predestination

Election is more about choosing 'to' than choosing 'who.' The Father has no choice about choosing 'who.' His righteousness won't allow him to predestine anyone to holiness or glory that won't eventually be justified. And he can't predestine anyone to be justified that won't eventually believe. Not that he looks forward through the corridors of time to see who will believe (though John 6 does say "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn't believe," Jn. 6:64); but that he already intimately knows from the beginning everyone that will ever be in Messiah, since Messiah is eternal and part of the godhead.

If it seems to be a strange way of 'choosing' to choose only and all of those who are in Messiah via their own faith, remember that likewise Jesus 'chose' only and all of those the Father gave him. "I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world, they were yours, and you gave them to me," Jn. 17:6. "You haven't chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit will remain," Jn. 15:16. So in John, "chosen" includes foreknowledge and predestination, but "given" is predestination alone.

Here is a sample of predestination verses in the Gospel of John. None of them are "to faith." There are few more from John in the "New

Testament Predestination Verses" on page 133.

To Justification

Predestined to Justification
Jn. 6:37. All that the Father gives [predestines to] me will come to me.

Called to Justification
Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me [be justified], unless the Father ... draw [call] him.
Jn. 6:45. Every man ... that has heard and has learned of the Father comes to me.

To Sanctification

Chosen to Sanctification
Jn. 15:16. I have chosen you, ... that you would ... bring forth fruit.

Predestined to Sanctification
Jn. 15:16. I have ... ordained you, that you would ... bring forth fruit.

To Glorification

Chosen to Glorification
Jn. 15:16. I have chosen you ... that your fruit would remain.

Predestined To Glorification
Jn. 6:39. All which he gave [predestined to] me, I will ... raise it up ... the last day.

Called To Glorification
Jn. 6:44. The Father ... draws [call] him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Table 8: The Golden Chain of Predestination of Rm. 8:29-30 with John 6

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF PREDESTINATION OF ROMANS 8:29-30 WITH JOHN 6			
Man	**The Father**	**The Son**	**The Spirit**
	#5 Glorification		
Works >			Sanctification
Faith/***Eat*** >	#4 Justification/***Come***	Resurrection ^ Death/Union	Indwelling/Regeneration/***Taught*** ^ Spirit Baptism
Gospel	#3 Calling/***Drawn***		
	#2 Predestination/***Given*** (#1+#2 #1 Foreknowledge/***Chosen*** Election)		

Two Kinds of People Came to Jesus Spiritually

Jn. 6:44-45. No man can come to me, unless the Father which has sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It's written in the prophets, "And they will be all taught of God." Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes to me.

There were two types of people who came to Jesus spiritually. 1) Individuals who were unsaved, but believed, and the Father miraculously drew them across the great gulf from spiritual death to spiritual life in Jesus. 2) Those who were part of the group of all believers under the Old Covenant, who were already taught of God and accepted the new message that Jesus is the Messiah as soon as they heard it. (See page 77, "Other Sheep," about OT believers like Lydia coming to faith in Jesus.)

By "prophets" (Jn. 6:45) Jesus was referring to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc., as in Is. 54:13, Jer. 31:34, and Ezek. 20:35,40. It's a major theme of the OT prophets that all ethnic Israel will some day be taught of God. Isaiah 54, for example, says even though ethnic Israel will go through a period of being "desolate" (Is. 54:3), having "shame" (Is. 54:4), being "forsaken" (Is. 54:6), experiencing God's wrath physically (Is. 54:8), and being "afflicted" (Is. 5:41), unlike anything the NT church has ever gone through; yet in the future they will "stretch forth the curtains of your habitations" (Is. 54:2) because "with great mercies I will gather you" (Is. 54:7), and "all your children will be taught of the Lord (Is. 54:13).

Romans 11:26 says, "All [ethnic] Israel will be saved," all ethnic Jews who endure to the end of the Tribulation Period. God won't cause every Jewish person alive at that time to believe, but rather eliminate all who don't. Then, already saved and taught by the Father, they will all "come to Jesus" in Jerusalem at the second and last worldwide regathering of Israel. (See page 122 about Rm. 11:26.)

John's message is not only #1) None can receive, and #2) All can believe and receive, but also #3) All who believe will always believe. Union in Messiah gives the indwelling Spirit; so once a person believes, he believes forever, is taught of God forever, forever comes, and can't leave. "The anointing [of the Holy Spirit] which you received of him abides in you, and you don't need that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, ... and even as it has taught you, you will abide in him," 1 Jn. 2:27.

Jn. 6:59-71. Discourse About the Disciples on the Sea: Predestined Glorification

The third part of John's message is that all who believe will always believe. He talks a lot about abiding and remaining. The key to

perseverance isn't will power or good works but simply having ever believed.

All That Have Believed Will Attain Glorification

Jn. 6:59-63. He said these things in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Therefore many of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said to them, "Does this scandalize you? 63 It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life."

The crowds couldn't receive the spiritual words Jesus taught, because they hadn't been born again, because they hadn't believed.

Jn. 6:64-65. "But there are some of you that don't believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn't believe, and who would betray him. 65 And he said, "Therefore I said to you that no man can come to me unless it was given to him of my Father."

Notice Jesus said they can't be taught spiritual things because they "don't believe" (Jn. 6:64), not they "can't believe," because they're not taught of the Father, as Calvinism teaches. They had wanted to be Jesus followers; but you can't get saved by being a Jesus follower. It's impossible for unsaved men to follow Jesus. This is the tragedy of modern-day, seeker-friendly churches whose goal is to make "More and Better Jesus Followers," instead of more believers, and more mature believers.

We can't come to Jesus. We can't follow Jesus. And we can't stay with Jesus. He is from above, we are from below. But everyone can believe on Jesus, and then they will be miraculously and effectively drawn by the Father, and come, and follow, and they won't be able to stop following. Predestination isn't about God picking some people for heaven and some for hell, as Calvin taught. It's about the joyous certainty of predestined holiness and eternal security.

Jn. 6:66-69. From that time many of his disciples went back, and no longer walked with him. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also go away?" 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure

that you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

The twelve didn't understand at that time what Jesus meant when he talked about eating his body, but they still followed him, and couldn't leave him. They remained because they were guaranteed to persevere and reach their destination, despite the storms, like when they were teleported to Capernaum in their ship the day before.

Judas: The Result Was Predestined, Not the Means

Jn. 6:70-71. Jesus answered them, "Haven't I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for it was he that would betray him, being one of the twelve.

God didn't control Judas' choices. Even this warning from Jesus was an opportunity for him to change direction. But if that were going to happen, God, in his foreknowledge and providence, would have predestined someone else to have been there to be able to betray the Son. The betrayal of Jesus was predestined, "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23), but not every detail of that betrayal was predestined.

> Lu. 22:2-6. The chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then ... Judas ... communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him to them. ... And he ... sought opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of the multitude.

There was plenty of room for free will. It's not as Calvinists teach, that predestination is some great, illogical mystery where man's choices and God's predestination are about the same thing, like different sides of the same coin. There's no contradiction between predestination and free will because they're about different events: predestined to glory, but whosoever will may believe.

John 6 Never Once Specifically Says What Calvinists Say It Says

Not once does John 6 specifically say any of the things Calvinists say it says. If Calvinism were true, you would think at least once John would have said, "No man can believe on me unless my Father draw him," or "no man can believe on me unless it was given to him of my Father,"

etc., especially since the word believe is used nine times in the chapter. The difference between what the Bible actually says, and what a Calvinist God would have said, shows Calvinism is unscriptural.

Jn. 6:37. All that the Father gives me will come to me.
Calvinism. All that the Father gives me will believe on me.

Jn. 6:39. Of all which he has given me I will lose nothing.
Calvinism. All which he has given me will believe on me.

Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me unless the Father ... draw him.
Calvinism. No man can believe on me unless the Father ... draw him.

Jn. 6:45. Every man ... that ... has learned of the Father comes to me.
Calvinism. Every man ... that ... has learned of the Father believes on me.

Jn. 6:65. No man can come to me unless it were given to him of my Father.
Calvinism. No man can believe on me unless it were given to him of my Father.

Jn. 9. The Man Born Blind Was Already Saved

Table 9: Partial Structure of the Gospel of John: Chapters 7-21

PARTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: CHAPTERS 7-21														
Section	**Life**	**Light**								**Love**		**Love**	**Light**	**Life**
Topic		**The Light of the World**				**Judgment by the Light**								
Chapter	1-6	7a	7b	8a	8b	9a	9b	10a	10b	11	12	13 - 17	18 19	20 21
Narrative/ Discourse		N	D	N	D	N	D	N	D					

Jesus healed "a man which was blind from his birth" (Jn. 9:1). Afterwards, the man defended Jesus against the religious authorities, in contrast to the weak man whom Jesus had only been able to heal physically, who reported Jesus to the authorities. So they excommunicated the man born blind out of the synagogue, proving their blindness. "And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, ... so that they which see can be made blind. ... You say, 'We see,' therefore your sin remains,'" Jn. 9:39-41.

The man born blind could already see. The man born blind was already spiritually saved under the Old Covenant before Jesus healed his

physical blindness. He showed signs of spiritual maturity by defending Jesus against the religious leaders, and tried to convert them. "Will you also be his disciples?" (Jn. 10:27). All he needed was to hear the new part of the message, that Jesus is the Messiah, for him to accept it.

Jn. 9:35-38. Jesus heard that they had cast him out [of the synagogue], and when he had found him, he said to him, "Do you believe on the Son of God?" 36 He answered and said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" 37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen him, and it's he that talks with you." 38 And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshipped him.

Jn. 10. Jesus' Sheep Were Already Saved

The Elect vs. Jesus' Sheep

Jn. 10:2-4. The shepherd of the sheep ... leads them out, and when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them.

After the Jewish leaders excommunicated the man born blind out of the synagogue, Jesus told him within the hearing of the religious leaders, that the religious leaders were illegitimate shepherds. Jesus himself had already suffered persecution and been kicked out of the temple (in chapter 5) and had returned "not openly, but as it were in secret" (Jn. 7:10). He assured the man born blind that if he had been cast out it was because Jesus his Shepherd had gone before him and led him out.

Jn. 10:4. The sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

Jesus' sheep ALWAYS act like Jesus' sheep. They always follow and always know his voice. There is no scriptural description of any time in the lives of Jesus' sheep where they don't know his voice or follow him. That means they aren't his sheep before they're justified. It's not like the elect, who are elect even before they're justified and start acting elect. "We all had our behavior in times past in the lusts of our flesh, ... and were by nature the children of wrath," Eph. 2:3. But "the sheep follow him, for they know his voice" (Jn. 10:4). So Paul wasn't one of Jesus' sheep when he was persecuting Jesus before he was saved. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Acts 9:4. Calvinists get John 10 wrong.

MacArthur (Calvinist). Jesus declares that he lays down his life

> for his sheep (John 10:14–15), which are defined as those whom the Father has given him (John 10:29), thus making "sheep" simply another designation for the elect. Add to that Jesus's remark to the Pharisees, "But you do not believe because you are not among my sheep" (John 10:26).[88]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). In Jn. 10:26 ... Jesus says, "You do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep." In other words, being a sheep enables you to believe, not vice versa. So the sheep do not first make themselves sheep by believing; they are able to believe because they are sheep.[89]

The Parable of the Good Shepherd Isn't About Getting Saved

Jesus' sheep follow the shepherd out of the sheepfold every morning for pasture, and then back into the sheepfold every night for safety. The good shepherd parable isn't about becoming saved, because then it would be about a person continually losing and regaining his salvation as he "goes in and out" (Jn. 10:9). There is one verse about a person getting saved, but it's a man that goes through the door and becomes a sheep; not a sheep that gets saved.

Jn. 10:9. I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he will be saved, and [from then on as one of Jesus' sheep] will go in and out, and find pasture.

So this passage isn't talking about who will initially believe for justification, the first two points of John's message, #1) None can receive, and #2) All can believe and receive; but about John's 3rd point, #3) All who believe will always believe. All Jesus' sheep will always continue to act like Jesus' sheep. Since there's no exceptions to that, if you see someone who doesn't believe, you know for sure they're not one of Jesus' sheep. That's how Jesus knew the religious leaders weren't his sheep.

Jn. 10:26. But you don't believe, because you're not of my sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, 28 and I give to them eternal life, and they will never perish.

Notice he said they "don't" believe, not "can't" believe, as Calvinism teaches. Almost certainly, some of those very men Jesus was speaking

88 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 882.
89 Piper, Five Points, 41.

to then, later believed. "Among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they didn't confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue," Jn. 12:42. "There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed," Acts 15:5.

John's Gospel vs. John's Epistle

John said the purpose of his gospel is to show that all who believe will receive eternal life. "These are written so that you can believe, ... so that ... you will have life," Jn. 20:31. But he said the purpose of his epistle is to show evidence of who has already believed and been born again. "These things I have written ... so that you can know that you [already] have eternal life," 1 Jn. 5:13.

John's gospel was written so we can know how to pass "from death to life" (Jn. 5:24). Whereas John's epistle was written so we can "know that we have [already] passed from death to life, because we love the brethren," 1 Jn. 3:14. Calvinists fail to distinguish between the purpose of John's gospel which tells us how to get saved, and John's epistle which tells us how we're guaranteed to walk after we get saved.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God" (1 John 5:1). The verb tenses in this verse are significant. “Everyone who believes” (Greek: Pas ho pisteuōn) is a present participle, which describes present, continuous action. “Has been born of God” (Greek: ek tou theou gegennētai) translates a perfect indicative, which describes an action in the past whose results continue into the present. Thus, John declares that everyone who presently believes in Jesus has been born of God. The very same relationship (as evidenced by identical grammatical constructions) exists between the new birth and the practice of righteousness (1 John 2:29) [and] love (1 John 4:7). Yet none of these precedes - and still less, causes - regeneration.[90]

John's epistle says there's three proofs a person has been born again: faith, obedience, and love. So MacArthur's correct that "everyone who presently believes in Jesus has been born of God." But faith is unique in that it both gives entry into justification, and then also forever after is part of our sanctification and proof we've already been justified. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, ... faith," Gal. 5:22. Initial faith comes from the person who hears the word and believes: "if any man

90 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 919.

enter in he will be saved" (Jn. 10:9a). But subsequent faith comes from the new life the Holy Spirit gives him after he becomes one of Jesus' sheep via justification: "and will go in, and out, and find pasture" (Jn. 10:9b).

The Other Sheep Were Already Saved

Calvinists can't explain why some of the elect have to hear the gospel many times before they believe, if "my sheep hear my voice" (Jn. 10:27), means getting saved as Calvinists claim. But understanding that the elect don't become Jesus' sheep until after they believe allows Jesus statement to always be true. That's why Jesus' other sheep, who were already saved but who weren't in the land of Israel, always believed the new message about Jesus the first time they heard it.

Jn. 10:16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice; and there will be one fold, and one shepherd.

The other sheep that would eventually be brought into the fold were the already-saved diaspora Jews; and the already-saved, God-fearing, synagogue-attending Gentiles, that met with them. Many people were already justified before Jesus was born. "There was a [Jewish] man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him," Lu. 2:25. Also, Cornelius, a Gentile, "one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people" (Acts 10:1).

The evangelistic preaching of the early church wasn't so astonishingly successful because "these all continued with one accord in prayer" (Acts 1:14), or something like that; but because so many they preached to were already saved. The already-saved didn't lose their salvation when Jesus came, but only needed to hear the new gospel message that Jesus is the Messiah to unfailingly accept it. "They [the already-justified, already-sheep] will [without fail] hear my voice," Jn. 10:16.

That's one reason Paul always preached in the synagogues first in every city. "They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, as his manner was, went in to them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, ... that this Jesus, whom I

preach to you, is Messiah. And some of them believed, ... and of the devout Greeks a great multitude," Acts 17:1-4. The other reason is that, in God's eyes, even today, "the gospel ... is ... to the Jew first" (Rm. 1:16).

When God opened Lydia's heart to accept the new message the first time she heard it, it was because she was already a believer, already a sheep, and already "taught of God" (Jn. 6:45), under the old covenant, before Paul ever reached her. He found her at the regular prayer meeting. "On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was regularly made, ... and a certain woman named Lydia, ... which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened ... to the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts 16:13-14), the new message that Jesus is the Messiah and Savior.

Jn. 11. Lazarus Was Already Saved

Jesus proved he could force people to be resurrected physically by raising Lazarus in fulfillment of his prophecy about "the hour is coming, and is now" (Jn. 5:25). We saw back in chapter 5 that both the Father and Jesus, could only forcibly resurrect and heal men, like the weak man, physically, but not spiritually. The raising of Lazarus is an example of Jesus resurrecting a saved man, not a picture of God regenerating an unsaved man.

Lazarus and his two sisters were already saved. They were Jesus' best friends. Lazarus was described as "he whom you love" (Jn. 11:3) three times in this one chapter, as many times as John, the author of the gospel, was so described in the whole book. If Lazarus was in a tomb because he was unsaved, why weren't the other unsaved people there also in tombs. "Some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done," Jn. 11:46.

Lazarus was sick before he died. Are unsaved men merely spiritually sick before they become spiritually dead? Jesus told the disciples he was "glad for your sakes that I wasn't there, to the intent you may believe" (Jn. 11:15), because they would soon be facing the possibility of death. Would Jesus be glad when a spiritually sick man became spiritually dead?

After Lazarus died, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go, that

I may awake him out of sleep" (Jn. 11:11). It's only the bodies of the saved that 'sleep,' the unsaved die.

Physical Resurrection Is an Important Topic

> Ryle (Calvinist). Our Lord tells us that "the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live." It seems most unlikely that these words were meant to be confined to the rising of men's bodies, and were fulfilled by such miracles as that of raising Lazarus from the grave. It appears far more probable that what our Lord had in view was the quickening of souls, the resurrection of conversion. (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13.) The words were fulfilled in not a few cases, during our Lord's own ministry. They were fulfilled far more completely after the day of Pentecost, through the ministry of the Apostles.[91]

Ryle was wrong that Jesus was prophesying Pentecost in Jn. 5:24-29, and wrong to minimize the importance of physical death and resurrection. Our own impending death, and the deaths of loved ones, are some of the greatest challenges we will ever face. The disciples needed encouragement to face the possibility of physical, not spiritual, death in a few days.

> Jn. 11:8-16. His disciples said to him, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone you, and are you going there again?" ... 16 Then said Thomas ... "Let us go also, so that we may die with him."

Believing in the certainty of physical resurrection helps us face possible death. "If ... I have fought with beasts [in the arena] at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me, if the dead don't rise?" 1 Cor. 15:32. By misinterpreting the raising of Lazarus as a picture of spiritual resurrection, Calvinists miss the encouragement this chapter was actually written to provide.

Jesus also needed encouragement to face death and burial in a few days because of his love for the lost. He would soon be wrapped in grave clothes and lying on the other side of a stone that sealed a tomb. Joseph of Arimathaea placed Jesus' body in a "tomb ... hewn out in the rock, and he rolled a great stone to the door," Mt. 27:60.

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91 Ryle, Gospel of John, 1388-3395.

Gifted Faith Can't Save You

Kristian Stanfill's upbeat song "Glorious Day" with the lyrics, "you called my name, and I ran out of that grave," is widely sung in all kinds of churches, but it's doctrinally wrong. Lazarus was already a saved man. His physical resurrection wasn't a picture of spiritual regeneration. Jesus told Martha, "Didn't I tell you, that, if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?" (Jn. 11:40). Could our faith count for someone else so they could be justified by our faith? Of course not. Likewise, if God gave a person faith by changing their desires so they wanted to believed, that faith would be no more genuinely theirs than the desires and decisions of a drugged man.

Though the bodies of men who are physically dead can't do anything, the spirits of men who are spiritually dead do many things. To unsaved scribes, Jesus said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" Mt. 9:4. Even after unsaved men die physically, their spirits still do things. “In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment, ... and he cried, ... ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me,’” Lu. 16:23-24. And biblically, the spiritually dead spirits of physically alive men can believe when they hear "the gospel, ... the power of God to salvation" (Rm. 1:16).

Chapter 6. ROMANS 9: Predestination to National Glorification

Israel, My Elect (Is. 45:4)! Israel, My Glory (Is. 46:13)!

Rm. 1-4. Justification

Rm. 1:1. The Topic: The Gospel

> Rm. 1:1. Paul, ... separated unto the gospel of God.

The "gospel [εὐαγγέλιον, euaggelion, good news] of God" (Rm. 1:1), is the topic of the book of Romans. But if God created the vast majority of men for the purpose of tormenting them for ever to manifest his power, per Calvinism, that would be the worst possible news ever, even if you weren't in that group, but were compassionate.

Rm. 1:2. The Structure: All Men, Then Israel

> Rm. 1:2-3. Which he had promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures, 3 concerning his Son Jesus Messiah our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

The whole structure of Romans is based on the concept that the gospel confirms, not contradicts, the Old Testament. Every major section of Romans is dealt with first from the perspective of the gospel and all men; and then from the perspective of the Old Testament and Israel.

Table 10: The Outline of Romans - All Men & Israel

THE OUTLINE OF ROMANS - ALL MEN & ISRAEL		
Romans Topics & Chapters	**The Gospel & All Men**	**The OT & Israel**
Justification		
Condemnation	1b-2a	2b-3a
Justification	3b	4
Justification Guarantees Sanctification & Glorification	5a	5b
Sanctification	6	7-8a
Glorification	8b	9-11

Rm. 1:16-17. The Message: Guaranteed Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 1:16-17. I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Messiah, because it's the power of God to salvation [all of salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification] to every one that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, 17 because therein is the righteousness of God [i.e. justification] revealed.

If Calvinism were true, then the gospel would not be the real power of God unto salvation. You would need something else, much more powerful than the gospel, to be saved. Calvinism says pre-faith regeneration is the real "power of God."

The main message of Romans is that the gospel is "the power of God to [all of] salvation because" (Rm. 1:16) it's the power of God to only the first part of salvation, justification, i.e. receiving "the righteousness of God" (Rm. 1:17). The gospel is the power of God to all of salvation, because justification by faith is the doorway into salvation as a whole, including sanctification and glorification.

So the main message of Romans is the certainty of sanctification and glorification. Stating the main message in other ways:

Justification always results
in sanctification and glorification.

All who have been justified,
are being sanctified,
and will be glorified.

Irresistible Grace Is After Faith

Rm. 5. Justification Guarantees Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 5:1-2. The Three Tenses of Our Salvation

Rm. 5:1-2. Therefore having been justified by faith [justification], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Messiah, 2 by whom also we had our access by faith into this grace in which we stand [sanctification], and rejoice in hope of the glory of God [glorification].

Table 11: The Three Tenses of Our Salvation

THE THREE TENSES OF OUR SALVATION		
Past Spiritual Event	**Present Spiritual Process**	**Future Physical Event**
Justification	Sanctification	Glorification

Salvation Past: The "peace" mentioned in Rm. 5:1 isn't talking about feeling peace in our hearts. It's saying "the wrath of God ... against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rm. 1:18), was appeased by "propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rm. 3:25) when we were justified, so now we are at peace with God. The wrath of God is the biggest problem anyone can ever have in their life.

Salvation Present: Justification always results in sanctification because justification gave us "access by faith into this [irresistible] grace" (Rm. 5:2). How do we know this grace is irresistible? Because it's "this grace in which we stand" (Rm. 5:2), and in which therefore, we never fall. If it wasn't irresistible, some of us would stand and some of us would fall. Notice justification by faith gave us our access into irresistible grace; not irresistible grace gave us access into faith, as Calvinism teaches.

Bible: Faith > Irresistible Grace
Calvinism: Irresistible Grace > Faith

Salvation Future: Justification always results in glorification, or it would be presumptuous of us to "rejoice [καυχάομαι, kauchaomai, boast] in hope" (Rm. 5:2).

Rm. 5:3-10. Justification Frees God's Love for Sanctif. & Glorification

Rm. 5:5. Hope doesn't disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.

God loves unsaved men (Jn. 3:16; Mk. 10:21-22). But his love to them is limited by his justice. Only after the legal problem is removed by justification, is God free to love a person without measure, and "shed abroad" (Rm. 5:5) his love in them, primarily by giving them his indwelling "Holy Spirit" (Rm. 5:5).

Rm. 5:6-9. ... because ... 8 while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by his blood, we will be

saved from [future] wrath [guaranteed glorification] through him, ... [and] much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [guaranteed sanctification].

The only thing God's justice allows his love to do for sinners is to send Messiah to die for them. But that's the 'hardest' thing a holy God could possibly do! "Messiah also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, so that he could bring us to God," 1 Pet. 3:18. Since God did that for us then, and now that he's free to love us without limit, he much more certainly will ensure our future glorification, even against our will. Blessed irresistible grace!

Rm. 5:11-21. Union in Messiah Ensures Sanctification & Glorification

Rm. 5:18-19. As by the offense of one [man] judgment came on all men to sinful living [κατά-κριμα, kata-krima, the result of condemnation vs. KJV 'condemnation']; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came on all men to righteous living [δικαίωσις ζωή, dikaiosis zoy, vs. KJV 'justification of life']. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made into men that sin [καθίστημι ἁμαρτωλός, kathistymi amartolos, KJV 'made sinners'], so by the obedience of one will many be made into men that do righteousness [καθίστημι δίκαιος, kathistymi dikaios, KJV 'made righteous'].

Just as our original union in Adam caused us to be born as sinners, people who sin; even more certainly our union into Messiah causes us to be made into people who walk in righteousness. In Rm. 5:18, the KJV says "justification of life," but the Greek word used there, "dikaiosis," means "righteous living." It's only used one other time in the Bible, in the last verse of Romans 4. "Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our righteous living (dikaiosis, KJV has 'justification')," Rm. 4:24-25. The concept is that it's faith in Jesus' death that justifies us, putting us into union with Jesus in his death; but it's union in Jesus' life that sanctifies us. "Much more, having been reconciled [via his death], we will be saved by his life [guaranteed sanctification]," Rm. 5:10.

Union in Messiah also provides glorification, i.e. eternal security, because we can't go in and out of Messiah at will. It took someone outside ourselves to provide redemption as a way for us to go into

Messiah, and it would take another action outside ourselves to enable us to go out of Messiah.

> Rm. 5:20-21. Where sin abounded, grace much more abounded, so that as sin has reigned to death, even so grace will reign through righteousness [sanctification] to eternal life [glorification] by Jesus Messiah our Lord.

Grace now reigns over us "as sin has reigned" (Rm. 5:21) over us. How did sin reign over us? With unavoidable, inescapable results. It didn't cause us to sin every moment, but it did guarantee we would live a sinful life in general.

Likewise, grace doesn't make us take every step in righteousness. We still make our own decisions, but there's no way we can avoid a righteous walk because of grace's powerful influence. Grace reigning over us is like a wind so powerful a sailboat can't tack against it. The fact of our sanctification is guaranteed, but the amount of our sanctification, our level of fruitfulness and maturity, is determined by our own efforts, "some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Mt. 13:8).

Rm. 6-8a. Sanctification

Rm. 6. Under a New Master: the Father

So justification guarantees our sanctification and glorification because of the way in which we were justified, by union into Messiah's death, which freed us from our old master, and by resurrection with him which put us under new management. "Being now emancipated from sin, and having become servants to God, you have your fruit to holiness (sanctification), and the end everlasting life (glorification)," Rm. 6:22. Romans chapters 5-8a don't say we 'ought' to live a holy life; they say we 'will' live a holy life, because we have a new master.

Rm. 7. Under a New Husband: the Son

Our Jewish brethren were also delivered from their old husband, the law, by having died with Messiah; and their new husband, Messiah, guarantees them a walk in the Spirit. "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit to death; but now we are delivered from the law,

having died to that wherein we were held, so that we will [now] serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rm. 7:5.

Rm. 8:1-13. Under a New Power: the Spirit

Rm. 8:1-9. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Messiah Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... 3 God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin. ... 9 You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his.

This isn't saying there's a subset of Christians in Messiah who walk after the Spirit and that they're not under condemnation. It's describing all Christians. By dying to take away our condemnation via justification, Jesus freed God to give us his Spirit, and so now all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and are thus "in the Spirit" (Rm. 8:9). By this means, our justification ensured our sanctification.

Rm. 8:4-5. So that the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh think about the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Since all Christians are indwelt by the Spirit, and are thus in the Spirit; all Christians also think spiritually, and therefore walk after the Spirit. Guaranteed sanctification! And guaranteed resurrection and glorification.

Rm. 8:11. And if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Messiah from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

Rm. 8b. Individual Glorification

Rm. 8:14-27. Sonship Ensures Individual Glorification

Rm. 8:14-23. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ... 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. ... 23 And [we] which have the firstfruits of the

> Spirit, ... groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Calvinists say they're confident they'll be glorified because they didn't make the decision to believe on Messiah in the first place, so they can't decide to stop believing either. That reason isn't found in the Bible. The Bible teaches our confidence is based on the certainty of our sanctification and glorification, because God's love was freed and we were united into Messiah through our justification, and we are under new management, and have the indwelling Spirit, - and because we were predestined to glory per Romans 8!

Rm. 8:28 - Them That Love God and Are Called

> Rm. 8:28a. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, ...

The first half of this verse goes with the first half of this chapter about how the sons of God walk, synergistically influenced by the indwelling Holy Spirit. God doesn't predestine our sufferings, but he does cause "all things to work together for good" (Rm. 8:28) for us. He is big enough to handle all the free choices of his creatures. He doesn't need to play both sides of the chessboard to win.

> Rm. 8:28b. ... to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The second half of this verse goes with the second half of this chapter about God's monergistic work in us. "Them that are the called" (Rm. 8:28) will one day be "glorified" (Rm. 8:30) because nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rm. 8:39) towards us.

God predestines specific things like our glorification, which means not everything is predestined. And the experience of man in the present in Rm. 8a, meets that which was predestined by God in the past in Rm. 8b, at the time of calling; they are "the called according to his purpose" (Rm. 8:28).

Rm. 8:29-39 - Predestination Ensures Individual Glorification

Rm. 8:29-30. For whom he foreknew [#1 foreknowledge], he also predestined [#2 predestination] to be conformed to the image of his Son [#5 glorification], so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestine, them he also called [#3 calling]: and whom he called, them he also justified [#4 justification]: and whom he justified, them he also glorified [#5 glorification].

Rm. 8:29-30 is the Golden Chain of Predestination. It's comprised of five unbreakable links of God's monergistic works in our salvation: #1) foreknowledge, #2) predestination, #3) calling, #4) justification, and #5) glorification. Notice faith isn't one of them!

In Rm. 8:29 we see who, what, to, why, and how.

Foreknowledge

Who? Rm. 8:29. For whom he foreknew [#1 foreknowledge] ...

The "who" is "whom he foreknew" (Rm. 8:29). It's an 'inconvenient truth' for Calvinists, that the Golden Chain of Predestination in Rm. 8:29-30 begins with foreknowledge. Predestination wasn't based on arbitrary choice, as Calvinism teaches. It was based on those whom the Father already intimately knew from the foundation of the world, because they were in Messiah ("in Christ"), a favorite phrase of Paul, Rm. 6:1, Rm. 16:7, etc.), because Messiah is eternal.

And so God wrote their names in the "book of life from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:8) to ensure their future glorification, not their faith. "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord," (Rm. 16:13), not "chosen to be in the Lord." "He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4), not "chosen us to be in him."

God's foreknowledge didn't cause anything, or it would be identical to predestination. If foreknowledge was determinate, the word ‘determinate’ would not need to have been added in Acts 2:23, “delivered by the determinate [ὁρίζω, oridzo] counsel and foreknowledge [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God.” Peter gave the churches foreknowledge that false teachers would arise, but that didn’t cause them to arise. "There will come in the last days scoffers. ... Seeing you foreknow [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] these things, beware," 2 Pet. 3:3, 17. Also, the Jews knew Paul’s background, but they didn’t

cause it. "My manner of life from my youth … all the Jews know, which foreknew [πρό-γνωσις, pro-gnosis] me from the beginning," Acts 26:4-5.

Predestination to Glorification

What? Rm. 8:29. He also predestined [#2 predestination] ...

Foreknowledge determines who is chosen, and predestination speaks their future glorification into existence by writing specific names into the Lamb's book of life, like Isaac was spoken into existence by the word of God. "For this is the word of promise, 'At this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son,'" Rm. 9:9. Think of that! Your name was known and written down thousands of years before you were born. Perhaps each entry includes the time of birth in nanoseconds, or some other way to avoid duplicates.

As mentioned in the section on John 6 on page 68, election is foreknowledge plus predestination, links 1 and 2. Calling and election thus equals the first three links in the Golden Chain. "Brethren, give diligence to make your calling [#3] and election [#1 foreknowledge + #2 predestination] sure," 1 Pet. 1:10. Also, Acts 2:23, combines foreknowledge and predestination regarding Messiah being “delivered by the determinate [#2] counsel and foreknowledge [#1] of God.”

To? Rm. 8:29. ... to be conformed to the image [εἰκών, eikon] of his Son [#5 glorification], ...

The "to" is "to the image [εἰκών, eikon] of his Son" (Rm. 8:29). The Greek word translated "image" here is the same as in Matthew 22. "They brought to him a penny, and he said, ... 'Whose is this image [εἰκών, eikon]?' ... They said, ... 'Caesar's,'" Mt. 22:19-20. Currently, the image, the appearance, of Jesus' physical body is shining brightly like when Peter, James, and John saw him on the mountain, when he "was transfigured before them, and his face shone as the sun," Mt. 17:1. And like when Paul saw him on the road to Damascus, when Paul "could not see for the glory [KJV for "brightness"] of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me," Acts 22:11. And as John saw him in Revelation when "his face was as the sun shining in its strength" (Rev. 1:16).

So the ultimate goal of predestination is the physical glorification of the saints in Messiah, the last link in the Golden Chain. We're predestined with all certainty for our physical bodies to be made immortal and shining brightly like his glorified body, not to believe.

Why? Rm. 8:29. ... so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren.

The "why" is "so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rm. 8:29). This is the ultimate purpose of God.

> Eph. 1:9-12. Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance [glorification], being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that we would be to the praise of his glory [in us], who first trusted in Messiah.

All creation will marvel at his glory (brightness) he puts on our bodies. And God has spoken the certainty of that into future existence for each of the elect personally from the foundation of the world. Hallelujah!

Calling

How? Rm. 8:30. Moreover whom he predestined, them he also called [#3 calling] ...

The how is by effectual calling. Foreknowledge and predestination (and election, which is both combined), all took place before the foundation of the world. But Calling takes place chronologically at the same time as justification, and logically just prior to justification. The call is by the gospel, but it's not to faith; it's to glory. "He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory" (2 Thess. 2:14).

As for faith, "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts 28:24). And since God's calling doesn't determine who believes, faith is man's choice alone, and man determines the "who" that is saved. Which means all the "whosoever will" offers of salvation to men in the Bible are genuine offers according to the normal

meaning of language (which people naturally use until they're taught Calvinism).

The call is to glorification. "The hope of his calling ... [is] the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Eph. 1:18. But it's also to sanctification. "To them that are sanctified in Messiah Jesus, called to be saints [ἅγιος, agios, holy, sacred, set apart]," 1 Cor. 1:2.

Justification

Rm. 8:30. And whom he called, them he also justified [#4 justification], ...

You might think, "Ah, here we have faith mentioned at last, because justification is by faith." But faith isn't actually mentioned, is it? Like we saw in the Gospel of John, there are many things men can't do because they take a miraculous action of God, like to be born again, to come to the light, etc. But what John emphasizes over and over is that the one thing unsaved men can do, is believe. And then God does the predestined, miraculous part, and justifies, joins with Messiah, and regenerates.

Faith is 100% the choice of man enabled by hearing the gospel, that results in justification which is 100% the miraculous work of God. No one can directly justify himself, enter into union with Messiah, or regenerate himself; but all can believe, and then God will simultaneously do his work in them. Justification is predestined because God foreknows all who are in Messiah and makes sure they're born, and don't die of an accident or disease before they hear the gospel, etc., but he doesn't cause their faith.

Justification and regeneration are two parts of the same act of union in Messiah - justification via his death; and then regeneration, logically subsequent to justification, via his resurrection; though chronologically simultaneous. Union in Messiah and regeneration aren't listed in the Golden Chain of Predestination because they're included in justification.

> Rm. 4:25. Jesus our Lord, ... who was delivered for our offenses [i.e. justification via his death], and was raised again for our righteous living [regeneration and sanctification via his life, δικαίωσις, dikaiosis, KJV has "justification", as we saw

regarding Rm. 5:18 on page 84].

> Rm. 5:10. If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son [justification via his death] , much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

> Rm. 6:3-4. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death [justification via his death]. Therefore we are [also] buried with him by baptism-into-death, so that as Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also will walk in newness of life [regeneration and sanctification via his life].

Table 12: The Golden Chain of Predestination of Romans 8:29-30

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF PREDESTINATION OF ROMANS 8:29-30			
Man	**The Father**	**The Son**	**The Spirit**
	#5 Glorification		
Works >			Sanctification
Faith >	#4 Justification	Resurrection ^ Death/Union	Indwelling/Regeneration ^ Spirit Baptism
Gospel	#3 Calling		
	#2 Predestination (#1+#2 Election) #1 Foreknowledge		

God isn't free to do the following four things for us until after the legal problem of our sin is solved via justification, because they all require the Holy Spirit.

1) Give us his indwelling Spirit. ["He will be in you," Jn. 14:17.]
2) Baptize us by his Spirit into union with Messiah. [By one Spirit ... baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12:13.]
3) Regenerate us by his Spirit into new birth. ["Born of ... the Spirit," Jn. 3:5.]
4) Sanctify us by his Spirit into a holy walk. ["The spirit of holiness," Rm. 1:4.]

And the Holy Spirit can't be given until our legal obstacle is removed via justification.

> Rm. 5:5-6. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us, because ... Messiah died for the ungodly, ... [we] being now justified by his blood.

Glorification

Rm. 8:30. And whom he justified them he also glorified [#5 glorification].

So Paul brings us back to the same ultimate goal he taught in verse 29. "Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son [#5 glorification]," Rm. 8:29. This is the final link in the Golden Chain, the ultimate purpose of every link in the chain, and the ultimate purpose of the plan of God. "So that [his Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren," Rm. 8:29. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," Heb. 2:10.

Rm. 9a. National Glorification: Only A Remnant Will Be Saved (Rm. 9:27)

Finally, we're ready to look at Romans 9-11. Remember the structure of Romans is that every topic is first presented from the perspective of "All Men" and then from the perspective of "Israel." Romans 8 was about the certainty of individual glorification in the church. Romans 9-11 is about the certainty of the national glorification of Israel.

Table 13: Romans 9-11 Within the Outline of Romans

ROMANS 9-11 WITHIN THE OUTLINE OF ROMANS		
Topics & Chapters	**The Gospel & All Men**	**The OT & Israel**
Justification		
Condemnation	1b-2a	2b-3a
Justification	3b	4
Justification Guarantees Sanctification & Glorification	5a	5b
Sanctification	6	7-8a
Glorification	8b	9-11

The future glorification of the nation of Israel is just as certain as the future glorification of every individual in the church. Or stated another way, if Israel can fail to be glorified, so can individuals in the church. If God won't keep his promises to ethnic Israel, the people he gave them to according to all the normal meanings of language, then there's no

reason to believe he will keep his promises to the church, according to the normal meanings of language either. But he will keep his promises to both, in the way he made them, because he is able and faithful.

> Piper (Calvinist). The necessity for Rom 9–11 in this: the hope of the Christian, with which Rom 1–8 came to a climax, is wholly dependent on God's faithfulness.

Rm. 9:1-6. The Issue: Why Hasn't Israel Accepted Jesus as Messiah?

> Rm. 9:1-3. I say the truth in Messiah, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites.

Paul starts Romans 9 by saying the topic is Israel. Paul had to insist he wasn't lying about having special sorrow for unsaved Jews, because even by the time he wrote Romans, the number of Gentiles in the church had dwarfed the number of Jewish believers. Gentiles, as Gentiles (vs. proselytes or synagogue associated God-fearers), didn't enter the church until Paul's first missionary journey in Antioch Psidia in Asia Minor. "The next sabbath day almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God," Acts 13:44. But by the time Paul wrote Romans, from Corinth, at the end of his third missionary journey, the multitude of saved Gentiles were eroding the Jewishness of the church.

In contrast to Paul, the Bible, and God; Reformed Theologians, Calvinists, and their forerunner Augustine, give no special place to Israel today, which is why they can't possibly interpret Romans 9-11 correctly. They misinterpret "you are all the children of God by faith in Messiah Jesus. ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, ... male nor female, ... in Messiah Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28). To be spiritually saved "by faith in Messiah Jesus," there's no difference; but in the physical realm it still matters that there is Jew and Gentile, male and female, or homosexuality wouldn't be sin, for example.

Romans 9 is about ethnic Jews, Paul's "kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rm. 9:3). This gives us our first **INTERPRETATION RULE #1. ROMANS 9a IS ABOUT ETHNIC ISRAEL ONLY; THE WORD "GENTILES" ISN'T MENTIONED UNTIL VERSE 24!** This first

rule already invalidates all Calvinist interpretations of Romans 9, because they try to make the chapter be about how God chose all who will become saved and who won't. Ishmael and the Arabs, Esau and Edom, Pharaoh and Egypt, are mentioned before the word "Gentiles" is mentioned in verse 24, but none of them are chosen for anything good, and they are only mentioned as an allegory for the non-remnant part of Israel.

Rm. 9:4-5. To whom pertains [present tense], [1] the adoption, and [2] the glory, and [3] the covenants, and the giving of [4] the law, and [5] the service of God, and [6] the promises; 5 whose are [7] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh [8] Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

The following eight things still "pertain" (Rm. 9:4), present tense, to ethnic Israel, even during this present time:

1) The adoption = national adoption of Israel at the Exodus
2) The glory = the Shekinah glory
3) The covenants = Abrahamic (Gen. 12), Land (Deut. 28), Davidic (2 Sam. 7), and New (Jer. 31)
4) The law = the Mosaic Law
5) The service of God = the temple service
6) The promises = a land, a nation, a blessing (Gen. 12:1-2)
7) The fathers = Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, & his twelve sons
8) And as concerning the flesh, Messiah

Rm. 9:6a. Not as though the word of God has failed.

Why does Paul raise the implied question, "Has the word of God failed?" Because although Israel accepted all those other seven things; the shekinah glory, the temple service, the Law, etc.; they rejected the climax of God's promises to them, the Messiah. That's why Paul wrote Romans 9. Not because Israel is unsaved; Israel has always been unsaved. That's why they gave God and Moses so much trouble in the wilderness. Calvinists approach Romans 9 as though Paul is writing because Israel remained unsaved after Messiah came, and then they proceed to say that's because God only chooses some men to become saved.

> Sproul. Although [Paul's] kinsman had been given the ... promises, they had missed out on the redemption brought to them

> by Messiah, ... the promises of salvation. ... The majority of professing evangelicals ... deny the doctrine of unconditional election. ... [But] unless the Holy Spirit opens our eyes and ears, we will never believe in or choose Jesus.[92]
>
> Piper (Calvinist). We clarified the question Paul is trying to answer in Rm. 9-11: Since Israel is the real heir of God's promises which include personal, eternal salvation (Rm. 9:4,5), how is it that most of the Israelites of Paul's day are accursed and cut off from Christ (Rm. 9:3)? Why are only "some" being saved (Rm. 11:14)?[93]

Piper took seven years to write a book on Romans 9. He said he devoted "a whole chapter to Rm. 9:1–5 ... [because] Paul's argument ... is so tightly woven that understanding one stage depends on understanding the others," and then he proceeded to misinterpret the first stage. He got it so wrong he had expound on Rm. 9:4-5 first (§2.1 on page 19) about "the glorious privileges [that] belong to unbelieving Israel;" and only afterwards expound on Rm. 9:1-3 (§2.2 on page 43) about how "Paul's kinsmen ... are accursed, ... doomed to eternal destruction," so it would feed into his misinterpretation that Rm. 9 is about why some people become saved and others don't.

Which brings us to **INTERPRETATION RULE #2: ROMANS 9a IS ABOUT WHY ISRAEL DIDN'T ACCEPT JESUS AS MESSIAH; NOT ABOUT WHY ISRAEL DIDN'T ACCEPT HIM AS SPIRITUAL SAVIOR.** A nation can't accept Jesus as spiritual savior; only individuals can accept Jesus as spiritual savior. Individuals were unsaved before Israel rejected their Messiah, and after Israel rejected their Messiah. That's not the thing that changed that caused Paul to write Rm. 9. Like the previous seven things, Israel could have accepted Jesus as the Messiah while being unsaved. They could have just added him to their other external cultural traditions and been like all the other so-called 'Christian' nations today that aren't actually Christian. But the word of God hasn't failed, because when God created Israel, he predestined part of Israel for eternal inheritance and the rest for temporal wrath.

Rm. 9:6b. For they are not all Israel, which are [descended] from Israel [i.e., Jacob].

92 Sproul, Romans, 282-283.
93 Piper, Justification of God, 47.

If you know about Jewish things, you know that not all Abraham's children were 'Jewish,' Ishmael became the Arabs; and not all Isaac's children were 'Jewish,' Esau became the Edomites; but ALL Jacob's children were 'Jewish.' That's the biblical definition of who is a Jew; everyone descended from Jacob, whom God renamed 'Israel.' "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel [יִשְׂרָאֵל, 'yisrael', 'he will rule as God'], because as a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed," Gen. 32:28. But Paul says there's a division that continues after Jacob, that the division before Jacob provides an allegory of.

Rm. 9:7-9. Isaac & the Jewish Remnant: Called to Eternal Inheritance

Rm. 9:7. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, "In Isaac your seed will be called."

Isaac was "called" to inherit the Abrahamic Covenant and it's promises. "As for Ishmael, ... I will make him a great nation, but my covenant I will establish with Isaac," Gen. 17:20-21. There are three promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. Saved Gentiles in Messiah only share in the blessings promise, not in the land or nation promises.

Table 14: The Three Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

THE THREE PROMISES OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT		
Promise	**Genesis 12:1-3**	**Heirs of the Promise**
LAND	"Get out of your country ... to a land that I will show you"	Ethnic Jews
NATION	"and I will make of you a great nation"	Ethnic Jews
BLESSING	"and I will bless you, ... and in you will all families of the earth be blessed"	Ethnic Jews & Gentiles

Isaac was called to inherit everything. Sarah told Abraham, "the son of this bondwoman will not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (Gen. 21:10), and God confirmed this. "Hearken to her voice, for in Isaac will your seed be called" (Gen. 21:12).

Rm. 9:8-9. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these aren't the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, "At this time I will come, and

Sarah will have a son."

"That is" (Rm. 9:8) means Paul is using an allegory and now we come to its application. It's an allegory like the rabbis in the Talmud use, and like the one Paul used in Gal. 4. "Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. And he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise, which things are an allegory. ... For the son of the bondwoman will not be heir with the son of the free woman," Gal. 4:22-24.

The application is that among Israel today, only those who are supernaturally born again by the "word of promise" (Rm. 9:9) are the "children of God" (Rm. 9:9). Isaac is like a direct child of God, because he was spoken into existence by the word of God, whereas Ishmael had only a natural birth, and even then only because Abraham and Sarah tried to help God out when they were getting old and still had no heir.

Ishmael was just as truly the seed of Abraham as Isaac was, but only Isaac was "counted" (Rm. 9:8) for the seed. Everyone descended from Jacob is truly ethnic Israel, but only those supernaturally born again are "counted" as the ethnic Israel God made the promises to. The word of God hasn't failed because the remnant of Israel does accept Jesus as the Messiah, and will inherit everything. "Unless a man be born again he can't see the [future Messianic] kingdom of God," Jn. 3:3.

This brings us to **INTERPRETATION RULE #3. ROMANS 9 IS ABOUT PREDESTINATION TO INHERITANCE, NOT TO WHO WILL BELIEVE AND BECOME SAVED. FAITH ISN'T MENTIONED UNTIL VERSE 30!** Once again, this invalidates every Calvinistic interpretation of Rm. 9, who teach it's about why some people believe and others don't.

Rm. 9:10-14. Edom & Israel: Chosen to Temporal Wrath

Rm. 9:10-12. And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, so that the purpose of God according to election [choosing] would stand, not of works, but of him that calls, 12 it was said to her, "The elder will serve the younger."

Jacob and Esau had the same mother and father. Esau was chosen to

serve Jacob before they were born or had done any works. Esau never personally served Jacob. The prophecy was actually about Esau's descendants, the nation of Edom, being chosen to serve Jacob's descendants, the nation of Israel. "Two nations are in your womb, and two manner of people, ... and the one people will be stronger than the other people, and the elder will serve the younger," Gen. 25:23. The application of the allegory is that the unsaved majority of Israel has been chosen and called to serve a different purpose than the saved remnant.

Rm. 9:13. As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

Not only was Edom not chosen to inherit the covenant and promises like Isaac was, but Edom was chosen to wrath. The more complete quote from Malachi is, "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. ... And they will call them, 'The people against whom the Lord is angry with for ever.'" (Mal. 1:2-4). While Israel reigns over the other nations in the future Messianic Kingdom, Edom won't even have a place there, except as an object lesson. "For my sword ... will come down on Edom, and on the people of my curse. ... And the land of it will become burning pitch; ... the smoke of it will go up for ever. From generation to generation, ... none will pass through it for ever and ever," Is. 34:5-10.

The doctrine of Edom is an important doctrine in the Old Testament, that no one hears about today because of the influence of Reformed Theology. Edom is the place Jesus will return to to save the tents of Judah first (Zech. 12:7), that are in Edom because Jesus warned them to go there for protection (Mt. 24:15-20; Is. 34:5), before Jesus rides a cherub in the sky from Edom to Jerusalem destroying the Gentile armies with rays from his hand and brimstone (Rev. 19:11-15; Ps. 18:9-13; Hab. 3:3-5), before his feet touch down on the mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4). There's a whole book in the Bible about Edom, though a short one, Obadiah.

This doesn't mean no individual descendants of Esau will enter the future Messianic kingdom; but they won't enter it as part of a nation of Edom. Nevertheless, being predestined to such a national fate certainly had consequences in terms of suffering and lack of opportunity for Esau's descendants. And more significantly for our purposes, the application of the allegory is that Israel was predestined for a similar

fate.

A few years after Paul wrote Romans, Israel, lost its nation and was expelled from the land for almost 1800 years, in the 70 AD destruction and the 132 AD diaspora that had been prophesied by Jesus. "They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," Lu. 21:24. "Then the lord of the vineyard said, ... 'I will send my beloved son.' ... But ... the husbandmen ... killed him. Therefore what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard [temporarily] to others. And when they heard it, they said, 'God forbid!'" Lu. 20:13-14.

The rabbis of Paul's day understood the concept of a continued division within Israel after Jacob, but they thought it was based on works.

> Talmud. All Israel has a portion in the world to come, for it says, "Your people, all of them righteous, shall possess the land for ever" ... (Isaiah 60:21). ... And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come: He who maintains that resurrection is not a biblical doctrine, that the Torah was not divinely revealed, and a heretic. ... Also one who pronounces the divine name as it is spelled. ... The generation of the wilderness have no share in the world [to come]. [And many other things, like insulting someone in public.][94]

But when God created Israel, he predestined the nation to be used as an object lesson to the world, not because of their works, but because of his purpose in choosing them to this service.

Rm. 9:14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!

In the spiritual realm, it would be unrighteous of God to create some people to believe and become spiritually saved for eternity, and others to suffer eternal wrath they can do nothing to avoid, as Calvinism teaches. "We are sure that the [eternal] judgment of God is according to truth," Rm. 2:2. In the spiritual realm, God always judges individually to "render to every man according to his deeds, ... eternal life ... and wrath" (Rm. 2:6-8). That's why God couldn't just forgive our sins

94 Mishnah Sanhedrin 10. Nezikin, Bava Metzia 58b.

without Messiah going through the judgment for us "so that [God] would be just [while also still being] the justifier of him which believes in Jesus," Rm. 3:26.

Only in the physical, and temporal realm, can God predestine nations or other groups of people to blessing and cursing. The righteous people in a group suffer along with the unrighteous; and the unrighteous people in a group share in the blessings along with the righteous. There is often temporary unfairness in the physical realm, but all will eventually be made right, because all will be taken into account in eternity. Saved men will receive additional rewards for things suffered in this life, and lost men will receive less punishment because of things suffered in this life. So it's always beneficial to do good and to avoid doing evil, whether saved or unsaved.

Table 15: The Eternal Results of Suffering & Doing Good and Evil in This Life

THE RESULTS OF SUFFERING & DOING GOOD AND EVIL		
	The Saved	**The Lost**
Good Deeds & Suffering	More Rewards	Less Punishment
Evil Deeds	Less Rewards	More Punishment

Rm. 9:15-16. Moses & the Jewish Remnant: Gifted Eternal Glorification

Rm. 9:15. For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Even a just God can give extra good to a man who deserves good. In Jesus' parable of the householder, "He answered one of them, and said, 'Friend, I do you no wrong. didn't you agree with me for a penny? Take that is yours and go your way. I will give to this last even as to you. Isn't it lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good?" (Mt. 20:15). That's the nature of grace.

After Aaron and the Jewish people sinned regarding the golden calf, God wanted to destroy the people. "Let me alone, so that my wrath may wax hot against them, and so that I may consume them, and I will make of you a great nation," Ex. 32:10. But Moses interceded for the people. "Moses besought the Lord his God, ... and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do to his people, ... and ... said to Moses, 'I will do

this thing also that you have spoken, for you have found grace in my sight, and I know you by name.'" Ex. 32:11; 33:17. Then, summoning all the Jewish chutzpah Moses could muster, he went further and asked to see God's glory.

> Ex. 32:18-19. And [Moses] said, 'I beg you, show me your glory.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, ... and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

God graciously gave Moses a foretaste of our future glorification. "The skin of his face shone, and ... Moses ... put a vail on his face," Ex. 34:30-33. God wasn't obligated to forgive Israel's sin. He could have killed them physically and restarted the nation from Moses. And God could give Moses blessings he didn't give to the rest of Israel, including a foretaste of glorification. And God will give the elect of ethnic Israel future eternal glorification with all certainty. "In Him the tribes of Adam boast, more blessings than their father lost."[95]

After Adam and Eve sinned, God could have killed them and started over; or let them live, and have children that are slaves to sin, but also provide redemption for both them and their children. It would have been unrighteous of him to create men through birth that can't avoid sin and also not provide salvation that they can actually accept. God had preferred that Adam and Eve pass their test, but he knew the salvation he would provide would raise all who accept it to a higher place "in Messiah" than could ever have been achieved through the mere obedience of Adam and Eve.

Rm. 9:16. So then it's not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.

Isaac and Jacob didn't get the custodianship of the covenant because they outperformed Ishmael and Esau, since one was chosen before conception, and the other before birth. God didn't have to give Moses a foretaste of glory. I wouldn't want Paul's job, including being stoned; or Ezekiel's, including laying on one side for over a year; or Jeremiah's, including being carried away to Egypt when he advised the opposite. But even if I did want their jobs, God's gifts can't be purchased or won. He chooses his own servants for his own purposes. And he chose for the remnant of Israel to inherit the rule over all the Gentile nations in

95 Isaac Watts, Jesus Shall Reign, 1719 AD.

the future Messianic Kingdom.

Additionally, the example of **MOSES SHOWS THAT NOT EVERYTHING IS PREDESTINED**, and therefore men have simple, genuine free choice in the things that aren't predestined. There's no need to appeal to some logically contradictory, mysterious 'compatibilism' where God controls and man freely chooses the same thing.

Moses was predestined to succeed at bringing the Jewish people out of Egypt to Canaan because that's what he was called to do. "I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt," Ex. 3:10. Moses had no choice about that because God's prophets always accomplish the purpose God calls them to. Moses was obligated to intercede for Israel, and God was obligated to make Moses succeed in his ministry. But Moses' request to see God's glory was something optional, something beyond what was prophesied, promised, or predestined; yet graciously granted.

The free will of both God and man are free to act within boundaries. Even God can't do everything. He can't lie - not because anything he could say would then redefine truth, but because he is holy and doesn't sin. Once God makes a promise, he has to keep it, for his name's sake, because he is righteous by nature. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that can't lie, promised before the world began," Titus 1:2. Man has genuine free choice in the things that aren't predestined, and God can handle all the possible outcomes of every choice men might make, so that what he promises he still brings to pass.

Rm. 9:17-19. Pharaoh & Israel: Hardened for Temporal Wrath

> Rm. 9:17-18. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I have [1] raised you up, so that I can [2] show my power in you, and so that [3] my name will be declared throughout all the earth." 18 Therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens.

Calvinists get the 'to' wrong about Pharaoh's hardening. God hardened Pharaoh's heart to stop him from giving in about letting the people go, so God could perform all ten plagues, so God's name would be "declared throughout all the earth" (Ex. 9:16, Rm. 9:17); not to stop

him from believing. (Besides, if Calvin's view of total depravity were true, God wouldn't need to harden anyone's heart to stop them from believing.)

Because Sproul wrongly thinks God hardens people to prevent them from believing and becoming saved, he also has to try to defend God by saying God didn't 'actively' harden Pharaoh. Sproul: "In the act of passive hardening, God makes a decision to remove the restraints; the wicked part of the process is done by Pharaoh himself. God does no violence to Pharaoh's will, ... he merely gives Pharaoh more freedom."[96] But it's obvious from the verses below that Sproul was wrong and God actively hardened Pharaoh's heart, not to faith, but to letting the people go.

As a side note, the word "hardened" in the KJV is translated from three different Hebrew words: חָזַק, chazaq, strengthened; קָשָׁה, kashah, stubborned; and כָּבַד, kavad, hardened, which I've distinguished in the verses.

> Ex. 4:21. I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] his heart, so that he will not let the people go.
>
> Ex. 7:2-4. Speak to Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden [kashah, stubborn] Pharaoh's heart, ... so that I may lay my hand on Egypt, and bring ... my people ... out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.
>
> Ex. 7:13-14. And he hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, ... and ... said, ... "Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuses to let the people go."
>
> Ex. 8:32. And Pharaoh hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.
>
> Ex. 9:7. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened [kavad, hardened], and he did not let the people go.
>
> Ex. 9:12-16 KJV. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not to them. ... "Stand before Pharaoh, and say, ... 'Let my people go, so that they may serve me. For I will at this time send ALL my plagues ... so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. ... For

96 Sproul, Chosen by God, 118.

> now I will stretch out my hand, so that I may smite you and your people with pestilence; and you will be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause I have raised you up, to show in you my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.
>
> The NIV interprets the end of this passage a little differently: Ex. 9:15-16. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have spared you for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.
>
> Ex. 9:34-35. Pharaoh ... hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened [chazaq, strengthened], neither would he let the children of Israel go.
>
> Ex. 10:1-3. I have hardened [kavad, hardened] his heart, and the heart of his servants, so that I might show these my signs before him, and so that ... you may know how that I am the LORD. And Moses ... came in to Pharaoh, and said to him ..., "Let my people go."
>
> Ex. 10:20. But the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.
>
> Ex. 10:27. But the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.
>
> Ex. 11:10. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

The first time Moses asked Pharaoh to let the people go, Pharaoh gave a genuine heartfelt denial, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I don't know the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Ex. 5:1-2). And Pharaoh never changed his opinion about that, though he was always free to do so. Nevertheless, multiple times Pharaoh would have let the people go in order to avoid pain. Before the eighth plague of locusts Pharaoh's advisors told him, "Let the men go so that they may serve the Lord their God. Don't you yet know that Egypt is destroyed?" (Ex. 10:7).

God not only hardened Pharaoh's heart, but also the hearts of all the

Egyptians; not to keep anyone from believing, but so they would pursue after the Israelites - a very illogical thing for them to do after Egypt was destroyed, and every house had lost it's firstborn son. Pharaoh and the Egyptians could still believe, and people of Egyptian descent today can still believe, and inherit the Abrahamic blessings promise along with all the families of the earth.

> Ex. 14:4. And I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] Pharaoh's heart, so that he will follow after them; and I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host, so that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.
>
> Ex. 14:8. And the Lord hardened [chazaq, strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel.
>
> Ex. 14:17. I will harden [chazaq, strengthen] the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow them, and I will get myself honor on Pharaoh and on all his army.

God made the Egyptian army, the most powerful on earth at the time, pursue after Israel so they would be destroyed in the sea, so the Canaanites and other surrounding peoples would hear about it. Forty years after the Exodus, when Rahab hid Israel's spies, she said, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and your terror is fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when you came out of Egypt" (Josh. 2:9-10). Over 400 years after that, the "Philistines were afraid, for they said, ... 'Woe to us! Who will deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues,'" 1 Sam. 4:7-9.

Additionally, **PHARAOH SHOWS THAT PREDESTINED THINGS CAN BE FULFILLED IN MORE THAN ONE WA**Y, and that men have simple, genuine free choice as to how things that are predestined become accomplished. There were three limited things Pharaoh was predestined to per Ex. 9:16. 1) To become Pharaoh, "for this cause I have raised you up," 2) to manifest God's power, "to show my power in you," and 3) to manifest God's name in the whole world, "that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." He wasn't chosen 'not to believe,' as Calvinism teaches, or to be hardened about letting the people go, or to be plagued, or to be destroyed in the Sea. Pharaoh could have made different choices which would have

accomplished the three things that were predestined in an alternative way.

What should Pharaoh have done when Moses first revealed the one true God to him and validated his message with miracles? He should have humbled himself and asked Moses to teach him about God. Then he should have used his army to escort Israel to Canaan, like Joseph's Pharaoh sent his army to escort Jacob's bones to Hebron. This would have accomplished God's purpose that his name would have been declared throughout the whole earth.

> Gen. 50:7-13. Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, ... and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ... and ... both chariots and horsemen, ... a very great company. ... And ... they mourned with a great ... lamentation. ... And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning, ... they said, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians."

But instead God's power and name was proclaimed via Egypt's destruction rather than via Pharaoh's submission. (For a more complete consideration of the contest between Moses and Pharaoh see "The Exodus You Almost Passed Over," by Rabbi David Fohrman.)

If Israel had accepted Jesus as Messiah, the Romans would have come and crucified him as a rival, and he would have risen and ascended to heaven; and instead of Titus, it would have been the Antichrist that destroyed Jerusalem (which might end up being the resurrected Titus, Dan. 9:26, Rev. 17:8-11), and then Jesus would have returned and set up the kingdom, as prophesied in Zech. 14, and we would have been born during the Messianic Kingdom, when birth rates will be increased. So the predestined establishment of the Messianic Kingdom could have been accomplished during that generation, or, as it will be, during a future generation of Israel. What God predestines he always accomplishes, and yet he allows the free will of men to determine via what means what he predestines is accomplished.

If Adam had found the tree of life, whose location he didn't know, before he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, whose location in the center of the garden he did know, Adam's test would have been over, and his descendants would have been born into a perfect environment, and faced their own tests, like during the future

thousand-year Messianic Kingdom. Everyone there in their natural bodies who pass the test will live to the end of the thousand years and be glorified, but those that haven't passed the test by the young age of one hundred will die. "For the child will die a hundred years old," Is. 65:20.

God is sovereign enough to give up some of his sovereignty. Or stated another way, he's still sovereign when he gives men limited free choice within boundaries. Like a man who puts fish in a pond is still sovereign over them even though he doesn't control every gill movement. "The LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, [Job] is in your hand; but save his life'" Job 2:7. God wouldn't have had to limit Satan's choices if God was actually making all Satan's choices for him anyway.

This is just common sense, and the normal understanding of the language in scripture throughout the centuries, until Calvin popularized Augustine's stoic Greek philosophy of meticulous determinism. Which version of God is more powerful and more sovereign; the one who needs to play both sides of the chessboard to win, or the one that can handle all the free will choices of men and still accomplish his purposes?

And the application of the allegory is that God is hardening Israel to make his name and power known throughout the earth. Like Pharaoh genuinely and freely refused to let Israel go, before God hardened him and the Egyptians; so also Israel's rulers freely rejected Jesus' ministry in Matthew 11 and 12, before Jesus started speaking to them in parables to hide the truth from them in Mathew 13. If God had allowed them, Israel could have eventually accepted Jesus as Messiah, simply adding him to their cultural heritage, while still being mostly unsaved, like the Gentile, so-called "Christian," nations today.

God prevents that from occurring because of obstacles he's allowed to develop over the years. Like the doctrine of the trinity, which is found throughout the Old Testament, beginning with the first two verses in the Bible in Genesis 1:1-2, "In the beginning God [the Father] created the heavens and the earth, ... and the Spirit of God [the Spirit] moved on the face of the water, and God said [the Son, the Word]." But the rabbis have suppressed that doctrine. Another obstacle is the "Christian-in-name-only" persecution of Jewish people throughout the centuries, during the crusades, the inquisition, the pogroms, the holocaust, etc. But if Israel had added Jesus as Messiah to their Judaism and kosher

rules, etc., that would have been an obstacle for the Gentiles to be able to hear and accept the gospel as Gentiles.

Like Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Israel is being used today by God to make his name and power known throughout the earth. Because of the Jewish diaspora, all the world knows, and must come to an opinion about the story of the Jews, the people of God; and about their book, the Bible. (All the Bible was written by Jews, even the New Testament. Luke wasn't a Gentile. "Luke" was just the name he used among the Gentiles; like his hero Saul, used his Gentile name "Paul" among the Gentiles. "Unto [the Jewish people] were committed the oracles of God," Rm. 3:2.)

Rm. 9:19. You will say to me then, "Why does he yet find fault? For who has resisted his will?"

Why does God punish for what he causes? In the spiritual realm, where there's no ability, there's no responsibility. God doesn't find fault with anyone, or reward anyone, for anything he himself causes or prevents (contrary to Calvinism). Paul said he won't receive any reward for preaching the gospel through the grace given to him in his apostleship (because the grace made him do it), so he preached for free so he would get a reward for his own choices and actions.

> 1 Cor. 9:16-18. For though I preach the gospel, ... necessity is laid on me; yes, woe is to me if I don't preach the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me [anyway]. 18 What is my reward then? Truly that, when I preach the gospel, I may [at my option] make the gospel of Messiah without charge.

But even in the physical realm, why did God destroy Pharaoh in the Red Sea for pursuing after Israel, after hardening Pharaoh's heart to pursue after Israel? And why did God bring the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem that Jesus prophesied in Mt. 24:2 and Lu. 23:28, and the worldwide diaspora, on Israel for rejecting him as Messiah, while also hardening Israel to continue to reject him as Messiah?

Rm. 9:20-23. The Remnant a Vessel to Eternal Glory; Israel to Temporal Wrath

Rm. 9:20-21. No, but O man, who are you that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, "Why have you made me this way?" 21 Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?

The "same lump" (Rm. 9:21) is Israel, because the Gentiles aren't mentioned until verse 24. And only two vessels are mentioned, "one [ő, o] vessel to honor and one [ő, o] to dishonor" (Rm. 9:21). These verses can't be talking about God choosing from the foundation of the world to create some men to believe and become saved, and others to remain lost, as Calvinism teaches, unless you think he did this only for Jewish people.

The vessel to honor is the saved Jewish remnant God has called to share in the eternal glory Moses previewed. The vessel to dishonor is unsaved Israel being used of God during our time to make his power and name known throughout the world. Both Israel, and the saved remnant within Israel, must fulfill God's predestined purposes for the two vessels without fail.

In the physical realm, some children are born with debilitating diseases, while others are born healthy; some men are born poor, some rich. But all things will be made right in eternity. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator [and Potter]," 1 Pet. 4:19. The temporary inequalities in the physical realm will be taken into account at the final judgment. "He that knew not, and committed things worthy of stripes, will be beaten with few stripes, for to whomever much is given, of him will be much required," Lu. 12:48. And God can righteously temporarily punish for hardness he causes in the physical realm, because all will be taken into account in eternity.

Rm. 9:22. What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

The vessels of wrath include the individual Jewish vessels that comprise the vessel to dishonor. They weren't predestined as vessels of wrath, but since they are part of the predestined vessel to dishonor, they are individually "fitted" to the purpose of the vessel they are part of. "Fitted" (Rm. 9:22) is from the verb "καταρτίζω, katartidzo" meaning "equipped," or "adjusted," having to do with the later stages of a thing;

and it's in the perfect tense, focusing on the present condition. Thus they weren't predestined to wrath from the foundation of the earth.

The noun "destruction [ἀπώλεια, apoleia]" of Rm. 9:22 might usually mean eternal spiritual destruction, but it can also mean physical destruction like its verb form in Mt. 2:13, "Herod will seek the young child to destroy [ἀπόλλυμι, apollumi] him." So in parallel with Edom, Pharaoh, and Israel, earlier in Rm. 9, I take it to mean physical death and suffering.

But it's still true that all the individual vessels of wrath, so long as they remain outside the saved remnant, are also accumulating eternal wrath for the day of wrath. "You treasure up to yourself wrath, for the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rm. 2:5. God doesn't tell people in Rm. 2 they're treasuring up wrath to tell them there's nothing they can do about it, but to urge them to be saved in Rm. 3-4. The vessels of wrath can become vessels of mercy (though not visa versa).

Every vessel of mercy started out as a vessel of wrath, just like all the "children of God" started out as "children of wrath." "We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, ... and were by nature the children of wrath, like everyone else," Eph. 2:3. Earthly potters can remake a vessel so long as the clay hasn't hardened; but God can remake a vessel even after it has hardened, like he can save a rich man, like making a camel go through the eye of a needle. "It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. ... Who then can be saved? ... With men it's impossible, but ... with God all things are possible," Mk. 10:25-27.

Rm. 9:23. And so that he would make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory.

As for the vessels of mercy, "before prepared" is the verb "προ-ετοιμάζω, pro-etoimadzo" which points back to the past with the prefix (προ, pro, before) like in the word predestination (προ-ορίζω, pro-oridzo). And it's in the aorist tense, also pointing to the past. The vessels of mercy were individually predestined from the foundation of the world, not to mercy, but to glory.

The Jewish remnant vessels of mercy are accumulating differing

amounts of glory in their vessels based on their efforts to produce good works, and their efforts to "let patience have her perfect work" (Jas. 1:4) during suffering. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, [proportionally] produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17. The more suffering now, the more future glory (physical brightness) proportionally later. "Joint heirs with Messiah, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together," Rm. 8:17. "If we suffer, we will also reign with him," 2 Tim. 2:12.

"The riches of his glory" (Rm. 9:23) is a phrase also found several times in Ephesians.

> Eph. 1:16-20. Making mention of you in my prayers, ... that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

And the vessels of mercy aren't only predestined to inherit glorification in the future, but also to good works now. The only other place the word "before prepared, προ-ετοιμάζω, pro-etoimadzo" is found is in, "we are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus to good works, which God has before prepared that we would walk in them" Eph. 2:10. This is the double joy of predestination: the certainty of present sanctification, and of future glorification!

In the earlier allegories of Rm. 9, Paul put the glory first and the wrath second: Jacob and Edom; Moses and Pharaoh; the Vessel of Honor and Vessel to Dishonor. But here he reverses the order; vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy, so that he can bring the Gentiles in as part of the vessels of mercy, and lead into that topic.

Rm. 9:24-29. The Gentiles Share in the Eternal Glory

Saved Ethnic Jews Belong to Both Israel and the Church

Rm. 9:24. Even us, whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

Finally, the Gentiles are brought in, though Calvinists, ignoring the context and details of scripture, teach Rm. 9:1-22 as though God had been talking about all men, including the Gentiles, all along.

> Rm. 9:25-29. As he says also in Hosea, "I will call them my people, which were not my people [saved Gentiles]." ... 27 Isaiah also cries concerning Israel, "Though the number of the children of Israel [saved and unsaved Jews] be as the sand of the sea, [only] a remnant [saved Jews] will be saved." 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make on the earth. 29 And as Isaiah said before, "Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah."

We see three basic groups here: saved Gentiles, saved Jews (the remnant of Israel), and unsaved Jews (the non-remnant part of Israel). Saved Jews have a dual identity. They are part of both the church spiritually, along with saved Gentiles; and also part of Israel physically, along with unsaved Jews. The following verse mentions a fourth basic group, unsaved Gentiles. "Give no offense, neither to the Jews [unsaved Jews], nor to the Gentiles [unsaved Gentiles], nor to the church of God [saved Jews and Gentiles]," 1 Cor. 10:32.

The question the early church struggled with wasn't, "do ethnic Jews still matter;" but "do Gentiles matter?" Uncircumcised Gentiles didn't enter the church until Acts 10, and in Acts 15 the church was still wrestling with the question of whether or not they could enter uncircumcised, 'as Gentiles.' "My sentence is, that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God," Acts 15:19. So the complete picture during this present time is:

Table 16: Saved Ethnic Jews Belong to Both Israel and the Church

SAVED ETHNIC JEWS BELONG TO BOTH ISRAEL & THE CHURCH		
	The Church	**Non-Christians**
Israel	Saved Jews (The Remnant)	Unsaved Jews
Gentiles	Saved Gentiles	Unsaved Gentiles

In Israel, the rabbis look derogatorily towards Messianic Jews, ethnic Jews who believe Jesus is the Messiah. But ironically, they are the only thing preserving the nation of Israel from destruction. "Thus says the Lord, 'As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, 'Destroy it not because a blessing is in it,' so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains, and my elect [Jews] will inherit it, and my servants will dwell there,'" Is. 65:8-9.

Rm. 9b-10. National Glorification: Requires Justification by Faith

Rm. 9:30. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

Finally faith is mentioned in verse 30, though Calvinists, ignoring the context and details of scripture, teach Romans 9:1-29 as though God had been talking all along about who will and who won't believe.

God never mixes predestination and faith as Calvinism does. Rm. 9a (vs. 1 -29) is about predestination and doesn't mention faith even once. Rm. 9b-10 is about faith and doesn't mention predestination even once. (It does mention the word "call" three times talking about us "calling upon" God in faith, not God "calling" us to anything.) And then Rm. 11 will be about predestination again, and doesn't mention faith (except to explain the group event of temporarily grafting Gentiles into Israel's tree.)

So Rm. 9a isn't about anyone being predestined or not predestined to believe as Calvinism teaches. And Rm. 9a and 11 show ethnic Israel is just as predestined to inherit their national glorification as individual Gentile believers are to inherit their personal glorification.

Table 17: God Doesn't Mix Predestination & Faith

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">GOD DOESN'T MIX PREDESTINATION & FAITH</th></tr>
<tr><th>Section</th><th>Rm. 9a</th><th>Rm. 9b-10</th><th>Rm. 11:20-23 & 11:30-32</th><th>The Rest of Rm. 11</th></tr>
<tr><th>Topic</th><th>Predestination</th><th>Faith</th><th>A One-Time Group Event</th><th>Predestination</th></tr>
<tr><td>Foreknowledge</td><td></td><td rowspan="3">no mention of predestination</td><td rowspan="3">no mention of predestination</td><td>1 mention</td></tr>
<tr><td>Election</td><td>1 mention</td><td>3 mentions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Calling</td><td>5 mentions</td><td>1 mention</td></tr>
<tr><td>Faith</td><td rowspan="2">no mention of faith</td><td>4 mentions</td><td>1 mention</td><td rowspan="2">no mention of faith</td></tr>
<tr><td>Believe</td><td>8 mentions</td><td>6 mentions</td></tr>
</table>

* "Call upon" (epi-kaleo, ἐπι-καλέω) is found 3 times in Rm. 10, but it's talking about us calling upon him in faith. It has nothing to do with him calling (kaleo, καλέω) us to something in predestination.

Rm. 9:31-33. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hasn't attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they

stumbled at that stumbling block, 33 as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling block and rock of offense: and whoever believes on him will not be ashamed."

Israel is predestined to inherit the promises but not every individual Jew is predestined to have a part in that, and none are predestined to believe. Each one will have to do that on his own through hearing the Word. Although Israel was able to accept the shekinah glory, and the temple, and the Law while being unsaved, no one will enter the Messianic Kingdom unless they've been justified by faith.

Rm. 10:8-17. The word of faith, which we preach; 9 that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and will believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture says, "Whoever believes on him won't be ashamed [or, 'disappointed']." 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek [regarding this], for the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon him. 13 For whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. ... 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? ... 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

"Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord [and only they] will be saved," Rm. 10:13. No one has ever been saved by gifted faith, because it doesn't exist. "He that believes on the Son has eternal life," Jn. 3:36; not "he that has been gifted faith to believe on the Son has eternal life." Calvinists have to personally believe. YOU have to believe. And if you do, you can be sure, based on God's word, you'll instantaneously receive eternal life. If you're not sure if you've ever believed, believe now, so you know you believe. We're saved by faith in God's promise that we'll be saved by faith, not by examining our lives to see if God might have monergistically regenerated us.

> Rm. 4:20-24. [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it wasn't written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it will be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Rm. 11. National Glorification: All Israel Will Be Saved (Rm. 11:26)

Rm. 11:1-10. The Remnant Is Predestined; the Rest Are Temporarily Hardened

> Rm. 11:1. I say then, 'Has God cast away his [ethnic] people?' God forbid. For I also am an [ethnic] Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Some Reformed expositors say the church is spiritual Israel. But Paul not only says, "I ... am an Israelite," but also "of the tribe of Benjamin" (Rm. 11:1). If you, as a Gentile, think you're part of a supposed 'spiritual Israel,' which tribe are you from? Some Reformed expositors say Paul is merely saying he is proof that Jews can still believe, just like all ethnicities can believe, but that would be saying nothing, just repeating what is found elsewhere; "the righteousness of God ... is by faith of Jesus Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rm. 3:22). Instead, Paul is saying he is proof God isn't done with the special plans he has for ethnic Israel, which he prophesied for them from the beginning. God's righteousness requires him to keep his promises as he made them, and to the people he made them to.

> Rm. 11:2-6. God hasn't cast away his [ethnic] people which he foreknew. Don't you know what the scripture says of Elijah? ... 4 I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who haven't bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a[n ethnic Jewish] remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work.

Notice the repeated use of beloved Calvinist predestination terms being used about ethnic Israel to show that Israel's future national glorification is just as certain as our individual glorification: "foreknew," "election," "grace." The election here is that there will always be a saved Jewish remnant in each generation. How does God ensure this? Not by controlling who believes, but by foreknowing everyone who is in Messiah, and using his providence to determine who is born an ethnic Jew, and during which generation.

Ethnic Israel was chosen by grace. So Calvinists, above all other men,

should insist there's nothing ethnic Israel can do to lose their election. "If by grace, then it's no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace," Rm. 11:6. But Calvinists "always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51), and claim God is done with ethnic Israel as a unique group. But Israel was chosen "not of him that wills, or of him that runs" (Rm. 9:16), but by election. There's no way to break out of grace, because, the more sin, the more grace. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Rm. 5:20. So, "thus says the Lord, 'If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, [then and then only] I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all [the bad things] that they have done'" (Jer. 31:37).

Rm. 11:7-10. What then? Israel [as a whole] hasn't obtained that which it seeks for; but the election [among ethnic Israel] has obtained it, and the rest were hardened [πωρόω, poroo], 8 according as it's written, "God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they would not see, and ears that they would not hear, unto this day." 9 And David said, "Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense to them. 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always.

The unsaved majority within Israel are hardened about the Messiahship of Jesus, not to faith; like Pharaoh was hardened about letting the people go, not to faith. God isn't preventing any Jewish individuals from believing and being saved. The fact that only a minority of Israel believes is nothing new. What's changed is that God doesn't allow the nation as a whole to externally take Jesus as Messiah, merely adding him to their cultural heritage, like the other Jewish things he's given them, while also rejecting him as spiritual Savior.

Rm. 11:11-24. Israel's Hardening Is Temporary

Rm. 11:11-15. I say then, "Have they [ethnic Jews] stumbled so that they would fall?" God forbid! But rather through [#1] their fall [#2] salvation has come to the Gentiles, [#3] to provoke them [ethnic Jews] to jealousy. 12 Now if [#1] the fall of them be [#2] the riches of the world, and the [#1] diminishing of them [#2] the riches of the Gentiles, how much more [#3] their fullness? ... 15 For if the [#1] casting away of them be the [#2] reconciling of the world, what will the [#3] [future] receiving of them be, but [#4] life from the dead [resurrection].

The salvation that "has come to the Gentiles" (Rm. 9:11) obviously

doesn't mean that now all Gentiles are saved, but that salvation is easily accessible to them, and they can believe as Gentiles, without becoming proselytes or synagogue-associated. Israel's stumbling and diminishing is temporary, and not for the purpose of destruction, but to help the Gentiles, which in turn will help Israel. Israel's diminishing > brings salvation to the Gentiles > which brings salvation to Israel > which brings about the resurrection and Messianic Kingdom for all men.

Table 18: The Temporary Diminishing of Israel

THE TEMPORARY DIMINISHING OF ISRAEL		
Step	**God's Actions**	**Rm. 9:11-15**
#1	God Diminished Ethnic Israel	"they stumbled" "through their fall" "the fall of them" "the diminishing of them" "the casting away of them"
#2	Salvation Came to the Gentiles	"salvation has come to the Gentiles" "the riches of the world" "the riches of the Gentiles" "the reconciling of the world"
#3	All Ethnic Israel will Believe	"to provoke them to jealousy" "their fullness" "the receiving of them"
#4	The Messianic Kingdom	"life from the dead"

The present "casting away of them" (Rm. 11:15) will be followed by a future "receiving of them" (Rm. 11:15), when Israel will nationally acknowledge Jesus as Messiah, which will result in the second coming. "You [ethnic Israel] will not see me henceforth, until you will say, 'Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord," Mt. 23:39. And the second coming when Israel sees Messiah again, will result the resurrection and the Messianic Kingdom.

Calvinists have a hard time with this passage. Some Calvinists say Israel here is the church, but when did the church stumble, fall, be diminished, and be cast away? Some Calvinists say it just means all men, Jew and Gentile, can continue to believe; but this passage talks about a diminishing followed by a fullness, not things just continuing as always. Some Calvinists say this passage shows there will be an increase of Jews saved at the end of the age, but we'll see in verse 26 it's more than an increase! ALL Jews living at the end of the age will be saved.

Rm. 11:16-18. For if the [best] firstfruit [offering of ethnic Israel] is holy,

the [rest of the dough] lump [the Gentiles] is also holy; and if the root [ethnic Israel] is holy, so are the [Gentile] branches. 17 And if some of the [ethnic Jewish] branches were broken off, and you [Gentiles], being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 boast not against the [ethnic Jewish] branches. But if you boast, you don't bear the root [ethnic Israel], but the root you.

Paul says Gentiles should humbly accept their role, and not diss the present and future importance of Israel, like Reformed Theologians and Calvinists do. "Some of the branches were broken off" (Rm. 11:17), refers to the unbelieving Jewish majority being broken off, leaving only the believing Jewish remnant. Being broken off didn't mean losing their salvation, because they never had it. They were on Israel's olive tree for more than a thousand years as unbelieving Israelites. And they weren't broken off one at a time, but all at once, after Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah in Mt. 11-12.

Rm. 11:19-22. You [Gentiles] will say then, "The branches were broken off, so that I could be grafted in." 20 Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not you. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in his usefulness; otherwise you will also be cut off.

The unbelieving Jewish majority was broken off because of unbelief. The believing Gentile branches will never stop believing, but their criteria isn't to continue believing but to "continue in his usefulness [χρηστότης, chrystotys], otherwise you also will be cut off" (Rm. 11:22). And like the past breaking off of the unbelieving Jewish branches, the future breaking off of believing Gentile branches, doesn't mean a loss of salvation, and doesn't happen one branch at a time, but all at once, as God once again puts Israel center stage.

How can believing Gentiles lose their usefulness? Remember, God's purpose in Israel's stumble was so the gospel could go out freely to the Gentiles. But his purpose in temporarily promoting the Gentiles, was to help win the Jews. "Have they stumbled so that they would fall? God forbid! But rather through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke them [ethnic Jews] to jealousy [so they'll be saved!]," Rm. 9:11.

Gentiles are losing their usefulness more and more each day, 1) by not giving the Jewish people priority in the gospel, "to the Jew first" (Rm. 1:16), 2) by not maintaining the equality of influence between the Jewish and Gentile believers in the church ("to make in himself of two one new man," Eph. 2:15), 3) by turning against the regathered nation of Israel like the rest of the world, and 4) by replacing the gospel with Catholicism, Ecumenism, Calvinism, Charismaticism, Egalitarianism, Nicolaitanism (pastors ruling over the laity vs. 1 Cor. 14:26), Social Justice, and Antisemitism. Jesus said eventually the whole doctrine of the church would become "leavened" (Mt. 13:33), and Paul said the time would come when even the church "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3). Gentiles can help evangelize Israel by supporting OneForIsrael.com and other Jewish ministries. "For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their [the ethnic Jews'] spiritual things, their [the Gentiles'] duty is also to minister to them in carnal things," Rm. 15:27. "The gospel of Messiah ... is ... to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile," Rm. 1:16.

Rm. 11:23-24. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you [ethnic Gentiles] were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more will these [ethnic Jews], which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

After the unbelieving natural Jewish branches were broken off, and the believing wild Gentile branches were grafted in, what we have on the tree today is the church. But that doesn't make the church Israel. Gentiles don't become Jews, or part of Israel in Messiah. They are still Gentiles after being grafted in by faith. The "two house" theology is wrong, and saved Gentiles aren't encouraged to become Torah observant. The tree isn't Israel, but "the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. 2:12), with saved Gentiles now sharing in the purposes and knowledge of God and the mission to make him known in the world. "You which were far off ... are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," but still not Jews. My Jewish friends are surprised to find that born again Gentiles who attend church regularly know more about their own Jewish scriptures, and have more genuine zeal for God than they do, which hopefully will make them jealous to turn to God.

Believing Jews and Gentiles are added to the tree individually as soon as they believe, but all the believing Gentiles will be broken off all at once when their usefulness is done. Israel will take center stage during the 7-year tribulation period. The word "church" isn't mentioned between Rev. 3-22, only "saints;" and the main evangelists will be the 144,000 and the two witnesses. The gentiles of that time will later be judged on how they treated the Jewish people being persecuted by the Antichrist. This doesn't mean they'll be saved by good works, but the saved by faith among the Gentiles will be the ones willing to associate with the Jewish people.

> Mt. 25:31-41. When the Son of man will come in his glory, ... then he will sit on the throne of his glory, and before him will be gathered all the [ethnic] Gentiles, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats, and he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to them on his right hand, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry, and you gave me food, ... I was a stranger, and you took me in, ... I was in prison, and you came to me. ... Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my [ethnic Jewish] brethren, you have done it to me." Then he will say also to them on the left hand, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. ... Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me." And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Does it sound like Paul believes there's no difference between Jews and Gentiles today as Calvinism teaches? He said ethnic Jews, even unsaved ones, are still the natural branches, and it's still their olive tree. You don't think God can remove the Gentiles and put Israel back in the spotlight??? He's already brought the Jewish people back to their homeland after almost 2000 years.

> Amos 9:8-15. I will destroy [the sinful kingdom] from off the face of the earth, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob. ... I will sift the house of Israel among all nations. ... [But] in that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen, ... and I will build it as in the days of old, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Gentiles which are called by my name. ... And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they will build the waste cities, and inhabit them. ... And I will plant them on their land, and they will never again be

> pulled up out of their land which I have given them, says the Lord your God.

Rm. 11:25. For I wish not, [Gentile] brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that hardness in part [PARTIAL] is happened to Israel, until [TEMPORARY] the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

Oh, the wisdom "in your own conceits" (Rm. 11:25) of the Gentile Reformed theologians who say God has "cast away his [ethnic] people [Israel] whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the scripture says?" (Rm. 11:2). Don't be "ignorant of this mystery ... that [Israel's national hardness is only partial] in part ... [and only temporary] until" (Rm. 11:25). Only partial, because some Jews, like Paul, believe even during this present age of national hardness; and only temporary, until 100% of ALL ethnic Jews that survive to the end of the tribulation period will be saved.

Rm. 11:25-32. All Israel Will Be Saved

Rm. 11:26-27. And so ALL Israel will be saved, as it is written, "There will come out of Zion the Deliverer, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 For this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins."

God won't force any Jews of the generation when Jesus returns to believe. Instead he will eliminate all that don't so that "all Israel will be saved" (Rm. 11:26).

> Zech. 13:8-9. It will come to pass, that in all the land [of Israel], ... two parts therein will be cut off and die; but the third will be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and ... I will say, 'It is my people,' and they will say, "The Lord is my God."

Calvinists almost never believe "all" means "all." But when you combine Paul's use of the phrase "all Israel" with it's prophetic use in the Old Testament that talks about a time when every Jew will be a believer, it has to mean literally all Israel alive at that time.

> Ez. 20:34-44. I will ... gather you out of the countries [worldwide] in which you are scattered, ... and I will purge out from among you the rebels. ... I will bring them forth out of the

> country where they sojourn, but they will not enter into the land of Israel. ... For in my holy mountain, ... there will ALL the house of Israel, ALL of them in the land, serve me. ... And you will know that I am the Lord when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways.

God will fulfill his promises to the ethnic nation of Israel for his name's sake, which means there's no sin ethnic Israel could possibly do that could cause them to lose their national predestination.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). Since God has planned a successful kingdom reign on earth (Is. 52:13), God will use Israel as a nation, under her Messiah, to carry out a representative role to the nations (Is. 2:2–4). ... The prophets ... [gave] promises of a glorious kingdom in which Israel would be restored under her Messiah and the nations of the earth would be blessed (e.g., Is. 19:24–25; Amos 9:11–15). ... The picture of Israel that the prophets offered as a prominent nation in an earthly reign of the Messiah is yet future (see Is. 60). In Mt. 19:28, Jesus said that during the coming time of cosmic renewal ("the new world"), he would "sit on his glorious throne" and the apostles would "also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ... Paul declared a future salvation of Israel when he stated, "All Israel will be saved" (Rm. 11:26). ... When Israel is saved, blessings to the world will be even greater than they are now. Then the world will see the cosmic renewal that the Old Testament prophets foretold (Is. 11; Is. 65:17–25). ... Israel is currently experiencing a temporary hardening and facing the consequences for rejecting the Messiah. Jesus declared that Israel missed its time of "visitation." ... The nations will come against Jerusalem for her destruction, but the returning Lord Jesus will rescue the inhabitants of Jerusalem and establish his kingdom on the earth (Zech. 14:1–9). The nations will then stream to Jerusalem and experience the blessings of ... the Messiah who reigns from Jerusalem (Is. 9:7). God will fulfill all promises and biblical covenants with Israel just as he said. He will do so not because Israel is so great but because God is impeccably true to his name and his promises to the patriarchs of Israel (Deut. 7:6–9).[97]

> Jer. 31:31-37. Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they will be my people. And they ... will ALL know me, from the least of them to

97 MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, 1407-11.

> the greatest of them, ... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus says the LORD, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, ... if those ordinances depart from before me, ... then [and only then] the seed of Israel will also cease from being a nation before me for ever. ... If heaven above can be measured, ... I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.

Most Calvinists might think they are the new "house of Israel" (Jer. 31:31), but are they the "house of Judah" (Jer. 31:31) too? And the last time I checked, the sun, moon, and stars were still there, and we don't yet have an accurate measurement of the universe.

The "new covenant" of Jer. 31:31, was referred to by Jesus at the passover meal, when "he took the cup, ... saying, ... 'This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins'" (Mt. 26:28). But Jesus was only referring to his purchase of the spiritual blessings of the third promise of the Abrahamic Covenant, that all the families of the earth share in, including remission of sins. The new covenant will actually be made with the house of Israel and Judah in a future, organized assembly, as described in "The Seven Prophetic Feasts of Israel" on page 131.

Rm. 11:28-29. As touching the election [of ethnic Israel], ... 29 the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

More predestination terms: election and calling. Israel's future national glorification is just as certain as our future individual glorification. If Israel's predestination to glory can fail, then so can ours; but neither can.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rm. 11:29). Israel, therefore, is essential to God's purposes and may not be dismissed without denigrating the faithfulness of God to his promises.

The Israel of 1948 Is the Israel of Prophecy

The second worldwide regathering of Israel will also be the last and final one, because it will be after Jesus returns and the Messianic Kingdom is set up.

> Is. 11:6-11. The wolf also will dwell with the lamb, ... and the calf and the young lion. ... They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. ... And it will come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of his people, which will be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

The return from the 70-year Babylonian captivity wasn't a worldwide regathering. It was just to and from Babylon. Since the final and complete worldwide regathering after Jesus' return will be the SECOND one, per Is. 11:11; that means the 1948 worldwide regathering was the FIRST one, and there can't be another in between (or the last would be the third one). Therefore, the present nation of Israel has to be the returned Israel of prophecy, that all end time prophecies are about. About one third of the Jewish people living in Israel now will endure to the end of the tribulation period and enter the Messianic Kingdom in their natural bodies.

Chapter 7. EPHESIANS 1: God Chose Us In (Not to Be In) Messiah

Eph. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Messiah.

A key phrase of Paul's is “in Messiah” (Eph. 1:3), referring to our union with him. We enter into union with him in his experience at the point of his death for us (Rm. 6:3, spiritually "baptized into his death"), and we enter into union with him in our experience when "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13) at the point of our faith in him.

Eph. 1:4. According as he has chosen [ἐξελέξατο, ekseleksato] us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without blame before him in love.

Whom did God choose? Everyone he "foreknew" (Rm. 8:29) "in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). Not "to be in him." “Rufus, chosen in the Lord” (Rm. 16:13), not "chosen to be in the Lord." "Chosen ... that we would be holy" (Eph. 1:4), not "chosen to believe." Piper needs to keep rereading the verse until he can say "he has chosen us in him" (Eph. 1:4), instead of having to say "to be in him."

> Piper (Calvinist). This election before the foundation of the world was ... an election of which individuals would ... be in Christ. ... Verse 5 suggests the election of people to be in Christ.[98]

It might seem a strange way of ‘choosing,’ for God to ‘choose’ all who are foreknown in Messiah. But similarly Jesus ‘chose’ all the Father gave him. “I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me,” Jn. 17:6. So Jesus didn’t really do any choosing as to “who.” The important thing is what he chose them to. “I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would go and bring forth fruit [sanctification, not faith], and that your fruit would remain [glorification, not faith],” Jn. 15:16. Likewise, what's important in Ephesians 1:4, is what God has chosen us to, "that we would be holy and without blame before him in love," not to believe.

98 Piper, Five Points, 676.

Eph. 1:5-6. Having predestined [προορίσας, proorisas] us to the sonship by Jesus Messiah to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.

According to Romans 8, “the sonship” (Eph. 1:5) refers to our future glorification: “waiting for the sonship, that is, the redemption of our body” (Rm. 8:23). The “good pleasure of his will” (Eph. 1:5) is “the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he has given me I would lose nothing, but would raise it up again at the last day [glorification]" (Jn. 6:40). To be “accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6), ultimately means to be “conformed to the [resurrected and glorified] image of his Son” (Rm. 8:29) that we are predestined to in Messiah.

The climax of his grace, his ultimate goal for us, is our future glorification, the “glory of his grace” (Eph. 1:6). "[God] has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, [for the purpose] so that in the ages to come [during our future glorification] he could show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus," Eph. 2:6-7.

Eph. 1:7-8. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

In the Bible, justifying faith is never a work, but instead is always associated with grace, and contrasted with works. Faith is to trust in the work of God, in which he provided “redemption through his blood ... according to ... his grace” (Eph. 1:7), rather than trusting in one's own works. The prodigal son had nothing to brag about in forsaking his own works, and returning and accepting the generosity of his father. "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet," Lu. 15:22.

Eph. 1:9-10. Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure [εὐδοκίαν, eudokian] which he has purposed before [προ-έθετο, pro-etheto] in himself; [not ‘that we would believe,’ but rather] that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah [glorification], both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

Rm. 8:18-23. [Regarding] the glory which will be revealed in

> us, ... the earnest expectation of creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, ... because creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, ... waiting for the sonship, that is, the redemption of our body.

This is God's ultimate purpose for us and for the rest of creation.

Eph. 1:11-12. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined [προ-ορισθέντες, pro-oristhentes] according to the purpose [πρόθεσιν, prothesin] of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will; that we would be to the praise of his glory, who had hoped before in Messiah.

His purpose is that we who "trusted in Messiah" (Eph. 1:12) are predestined to our future "inheritance" (Eph. 1:11) of sharing in Messiah's "glory" (Eph. 1:12). We aren't predestined 'to trust in Messiah.'

Eph. 1:13-14. In whom you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also after you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.

"After you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," (Eph. 1:13). Calvinism teaches the Spirit regenerates us before we believe, so that we will believe. But Paul says it's after we believe that we receive the Spirit, which is the down payment that guarantees "the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14), the future glorification of our bodies. Our redemption is incomplete until our bodies are glorified.

Eph. 1:15-16. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

"Your faith" (Eph. 1:15), not "the faith God gave you" per Calvinism, results in justification, and justification always results in sanctification, "love to all the saints" (Eph. 1:15).

Eph. 1:17-18. That the God of our Lord Jesus Messiah, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the

knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling [κλήσεως, klyseos], and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

One of the most important things God and Paul want us to know as Christians, is that we are called to a certain and sure future "hope of his calling, ... the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18), not to faith. It's important to our present decision making, "wisdom ... knowledge ... understanding ... being enlightened" (Eph. 1:17), and to our fruitfulness.

Some Guarantees of Our Future Glorification in Ephesians 1
1) We're in Messiah. vss. 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
2) We're predestined to glory. vss. 5, 11 (Rm. 8:23)
3) It's God's purpose and will. vss. 5, 9-11
4) It's our inheritance. vss. 11, 14, 18
5) We're sealed with the Spirit. vs. 13
6) The Spirit is the down payment. vs. 14
7) We're called to glory. vs. 18
8) His power will ensure it. vss. 19-20

Additional Information

About This Book

The purpose of this book is to defend the gospel, biblical predestination, and the character of God: 1) by showing Calvinism is unscriptural and anti-gospel, 2) by showing Biblical predestination is the joyful certainty of sanctification and glorification, and, 3) by providing better expositions of the three main Bible passages that cause good men to think they have to believe in Calvinism: Romans 9, John 6, and Ephesians 1.

I wrote this book in response to some mentions during the teaching of Pastor Jim Murphy, of First Baptist Church of Johnson City, NY, about the potential difficulty of reconciling the inestimable value and responsibility of every human being with the sovereignty of God. I thought the resolution would be quick and easy using, 1) Moses to show not all things are predestined (Rm. 9:15-16), and 2) Pharaoh to show predestined things can be accomplished in more than one way (Rm. 9:17-18), thus giving man genuine, limited, free choice.

Instead, it turned into a complete rewrite of my previous book, "Predestination is to Glory, Not to Faith," last published April 2020. In turn, that book was written in response to a passing comment about predestination to glory by my Systematic Theology professor at Veritas Evangelical Seminary in 2017.

My passion to promote the certainty of sanctification and glorification came from reading D. M. Lloyd-Jones' commentaries on Romans 5-8 while living in Honolulu in 1980. And my passion to defend the pure gospel message that "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life" (Jn. 3:36), came from my salvation experience after hearing Bobby Muir preach on that verse at a Word of Life church basketball tournament outreach in Danville, PA. in 1972.

In this book I used the KJV with my own replacements of antiquated words, replaced "Christ" with "Messiah" throughout, and transliterated Greek using the modern Greek pronunciation (no aspirated 'h'). Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from Kindle.

The Meaning of "Glory" in the Bible

Since biblical predestination is to glory, we should know the word "glory" in the KJV usually means "brightness," not "renown." The 1928 Webster's dictionary defined "glory" as "1. Brightness; luster; splendor." The shekinah glory was called that because "the glory [fiery brightness] of the Lord appeared in the cloud" (Ex. 16:10). The future holy city will have "no need of the sun ... to shine in it, for the glory of God lit it up, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23). Paul said, "there is one glory [brightness] of the sun, and another glory [brightness] of the moon, and another glory [brightness] of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory [brightness]" (1 Cor. 15:41).

As stars differ in brightness, so our bodies will one day be glorified to different degrees based on the amount of our good works and suffering. "Our light [in comparison] affliction, ... produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17. Likewise, for the Old Testament saints, "[the bodies of] many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, ... and they that are wise will shine ... as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:2-3).

Peter, James, and John saw a preview of Jesus' glorified body on the mountain, when he "was transfigured before them, and his face shone as the sun" (Mt. 17:2). Paul saw Jesus' glorified body on the road to Damascus and "could not see for the glory [brightness] of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me," Acts 22:11. John saw Jesus' glorified body while writing the book of Revelation, and said his "face was as the sun shining in full strength" (Rev. 1:16). And when Jesus returns for his church at the rapture, he "will change our vile body, so that it will be fashioned like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). Listen to D. Martin Lloyd-Jones' sermon on Rm. 5:2 about glory at https://mljtrust.org/sermons/book-of-romans/glory-begun-below.

The Seven Prophetic Feasts of Israel

The Four Spring Feasts Were Fulfilled at the First Coming

Jesus fulfilled the four spring feasts of Leviticus 23 during his first coming within 52 days exactly on the feast days. He died on Passover (Lev. 23:5); he was proven sinless while in the tomb for three days during the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6-8); he rose

on Firstfruits (Lev. 23:10-14); and he created the church from two leavened (sinful) loaves, Jews and Gentiles, on Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-21).

The Three Fall Feasts Will Be Fulfilled at the Second Coming

And Jesus will fulfill the three fall feasts of Leviticus 23 after his second coming within 15 days exactly on the feast days.

Trumpets: Israel's second and final regathering will begin on the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashana) on the 1st of Tishrei (Lev. 23:24-25), sixty days after Jesus returns.[99]

> Mt. 24:13, 29-31. He that will endure to the end [of the tribulation period], the same will be saved. ... Immediately after the tribulation of those days ... they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect [Israel, Rm. 11:5, 7, 28; Is. 45:4; 65:9, 22] from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Israel won't be teleported "in the air" (1 Thess. 4:17) "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52), after the tribulation, like the church will be at the rapture before the tribulation. Instead, Israel will be gathered on "ships" (Is. 60:9), "swift beasts" (Is. 66:20), carried by Gentiles (Is. 49:22), and with the help of the "angels" (Mt. 24:31) Jesus will send to find them (Jer. 16:16). ALL Jews who survive "to the end" (Mt. 24:13) of the tribulation period and the second regathering will be saved. There are many references to "ALL Israel" with this meaning in the Old Testament (like Ez. 20:34-44 I quoted above).

Atonement: Ten days later, Israel will receive national forgiveness during an official, organized day of national repentance on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) on the 10th of Tishrei (Lev. 23:27-32).

> Zech. 12:9-13:1. It will come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the Gentile nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of

99 Jesus returns 1260 days ("a time [1 year], times [2 years], and an half [a year]," Dan. 12:7) after the abomination of desolation in the middle of the Tribulation Period, and the Kingdom starts 75 days later (1335-1260 "blessed is he that waits and comes to the 1335 days," Dan. 12:12), and the Feast of Trumpets is 45 days before the Kingdom starts on the Feast of Tabernacles. See "Footsteps of the Messiah" by Arnold Fruchtenbaum for more information about the 75 days.

> Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him. ... And the land will mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart, [etc.]. ... All the families that remain [to the end of the tribulation period], every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

Tabernacles (Tents): And five days after that, the Messianic Kingdom will begin with the 7-day marriage feast of the Lamb, and everyone living in tents because there won't be enough hotel rooms in Jerusalem for the multitude of people, both saved Jews and Gentiles, gathered there from the whole world on the Feast of Tents (or Tabernacles, Sukkot) on the 15th of Tishrei (Lev. 23:34-36).

New Testament Predestination Verses

Here's a list of 88 New Testament verses about Christians being predestined, elected, chosen, or called to something, excluding calls to specific service, like apostleship. They show we're only predestined to 'after-faith' things: justification, sanctification, and glorification. If predestination is to faith, as Calvinism claims, why doesn't God say so?

These verses show biblical predestination isn't about God choosing some people to save and others to damn, as Calvinism teaches, but about ensuring the certainty of our sanctification and glorification! As you read each of these verses, you can rejoice God has predestined your current walk in holiness and your eternal security, because whatever God predestines comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

To Faith (0 Verses). Why is That?

Why are there so many verses about predestination to justification, sanctification, and glorification; but not a single verse about predestination to faith? Because God doesn't touch our faith, directly or indirectly. It's not in the chain of God's causation from foreknowledge, through predestination and calling, to justification, sanctification, and glorification.

To Justification (12 Verses)

Justification is still after faith. It's the part God does after we believe. Union in Messiah is part of justification.

Chosen to Justification (3 verses)
Rm. 11:5-7. "Remnant [per] election [ἐκλογή], ... election obtained it [Rm. 9:31]."
1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Your work of faith, ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."
1 Pet. 1:2. "Elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

Predestined to Justification (3 verses)
Jn. 6:37. "All that the Father gives [predestines to] me will come to me [be justified]."
Jn. 6:65. "No man can come to me [be justified], unless given [predestined] to him."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], them he also ... justified."

Called to Justification (6 Verses)
Jn. 6:44. "No man can come to me, unless the Father ... draw [i.e. call] him."
Rm. 1:5-6. For obedience to the faith, ... you are ... called [κλητός] of Jesus."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he called [καλέω], them he also justified."
1 Cor. 1:9. "Called [καλέω] to the fellowship [κοινωνία, koinonia, union] of his Son."
1 Cor. 1:26, 30. "You see your calling [κλῆσις] ... in Messiah Jesus."
1 Cor. 7:18. "Called [καλέω] being circumcised? ... Called in uncircumcision?"

To Sanctification (32 Verses)

Chosen to Sanctification (6 Verses)
Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you, ... that you would ... bring forth fruit."
Jn. 15:19. "You are not of the world, ... I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you out of the world."
Eph. 1:4. "He has chosen [ἐκλέγω] us in him, ... that we would be holy."
Col. 3:12-14. "Put on ... as the elect [ἐκλεκτός] of God, holy and beloved, ... love."
1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Your ... labor of love, ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."
1 Pet. 2:9. "You are a chosen [ἐκλεκτός] generation, ... a holy nation."

Predestined to Sanctification (5)
Jn. 15:16. "I have ... ordained [τίθημι] you, that you would ... bring forth fruit."
Jn. 17:2. "Eternal life to ... [those] given [predestined to] him, ... [to] know ... God."
Jn. 17:6. "I have manifested your name to the men ... you gave [predestined to] me."
Jn. 17:11. "Keep ... those you have given [predestined to] me, that they be one."
Eph. 2:10. "Before ordained [προετοιμάζω] that we would walk in [good works]."

Called to Sanctification (21 Verses)
Acts 2:38-39. "The Holy Spirit ... is to ... as many as ... God will call [προσκαλέω]."
Rm. 1:7. "Called [κλητός] to be saints."
1 Cor. 1:2. "Paul, to them that are sanctified, ... called [κλητός] to be saints."
1 Cor. 1:26-30. Your calling [κλῆσις], ... in Messiah, ... sanctification."
1 Cor. 7:15. "God has called [καλέω] us to peace."
Gal. 1:6. "Him [Paul] that called [καλέω] you into the grace of Messiah."
Gal. 5:13. "You have been called [καλέω] to liberty."

Eph. 4:1. "Walk worthy of the calling [κλῆσις] to which you are called [καλέω]."
Phil. 3:14-15. "I press toward ... the high calling [κλῆσις], ... be perfect."
Col. 3:15. "Peace of God ... to the which ... you are called [καλέω] in one body."
1 Thess. 2:12. "Walk worthy of God, who has called [καλέω] you."
1 Thess. 4:7. "God has ... called [καλέω] us ... to holiness."
1 Thess. 5:23. "God ... sanctify you; he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."
2 Thess. 1:11. "We pray ... God will count you worthy of this calling [κλῆσις]."
2 Tim. 1:8-9. "God ... called [καλέω] us with a holy calling [κλῆσις]."
1 Pet. 1:15. "As he which called [καλέω] you is holy, so you be holy."
1 Pet. 2:9. "He who has called [καλέω] you out of darkness to his ... light."
1 Pet. 2:21. "Suffer ... patiently, ... for even hereto you were called [καλέω]."
1 Pet. 3:8-9. "Love as brethren, ... knowing that you are thereto called [καλέω]."
2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to ... virtue."
Jude 1:1. "Jude, ... to them that are sanctified, ... and called [κλητός]."

To Glorification (44 Verses)

Salvation is comprised of justification, sanctification, and glorification, so I included verses about predestination to salvation if they seemed to emphasize the glorification part of salvation. Eternal life is both a kind of life, like John emphasizes; and a duration of life, like Paul emphasizes so some predestination to eternal life verses are included here. I also include the verse about predestination to adoption because Rm. 8:23, says we are "waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body," i.e. glorification. But in any case, they're not predestination to faith.

Predestined To Glorification (9 Verses)
Jn. 15:16. "I have ... ordained [τίθημι] you, ... that your fruit would remain."
Acts 13:46-48. "Eternal life, ... salvation, ... appointed [τάσσω] to eternal life."
Rm. 8:29. "Predestined [προορίζω] ... to be conformed to the image of his Son."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], ... them he also glorified."
Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy, ... before ordained [προετοιμάζω] to glory."
1 Cor. 2:7. "Predestined [προορίζω] before the world to our glory."
Eph. 1:5-6. "Predestined [προορίζω] us to the adoption of children ... to ... glory."
Eph. 1:11. "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestined [προορίζω]."
1 Thess. 5:9. "Not appointed [τίθημι] us to [future] wrath, but to [future] salvation."

Chosen To Glorification (14 Verses)
Jn. 6:37. "All that the Father gives me, ... I will in no wise cast out."
Jn. 6:39. "All which he has given me, I will ... raise it up ... the last day."
Jn. 15:16. "I have chosen [ἐκλέγω] you ... that your fruit would remain."
Jn. 17:11. "Keep ... those whom you have given me."
Jn. 17:12. "Those that you gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost."
Jn. 17:24. "Whom you have given me, [will] be with me ... [to] behold my glory."
1 Thess. 1:3-4. "Patience of hope [of glory], ... knowing ... your election [ἐκλογή]."
2 Thess. 2:13-14. "God has ... chosen [αἱρέω] you to salvation, ... to ... glory."

2 Tim. 2:10. "The elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... obtain ... salvation ... with eternal glory."
Titus 1:3. "God's elect [ἐκλεκτός] ... eternal life ... promised before the world began."
2 Pet. 1:10-11. "Election [ἐκλογή] ... to the ... [future] kingdom."
Jas. 2:5. "Hasn't God chosen [ἐκλέγω] the poor ... heirs of the kingdom."
Rev. 17:14. "They that are with him are ... chosen [ἐκλεκτός]."
Rev. 21:27. "Enter into it ... they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Called To Glorification (21 Verses)
Jn. 6:44. "The Father ... draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."
Rm. 8:28. "Called [κλητός] ... to the image of his Son."
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he called [αἱρέω], ... them he also glorified."
Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy ... to glory, even us, whom he has called."
Eph. 1:18. "The hope of his calling [κλῆσις], ... the glory of his inheritance."
Eph. 4:4. "Called [καλέω] in one hope of calling [κλῆσις] [hope of glory Col. 1:27]"
1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called [καλέω] you to his [future] kingdom and glory."
1 Thess. 5:23. "Preserved ... to the coming, he that calls [καλέω] you ... will do it."
2 Thess. 1:10-11. "He will come to be glorified in his saints, ... this calling [κλῆσις]."
2 Thess. 2:14. "He called [καλέω] you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."
1 Tim. 6:12. "Lay hold on [future] eternal life, to which you are also called [καλέω]."
2 Tim. 1:9. "Calling [κλῆσις] ... in Messiah before the world began ... immortality."
Heb. 2:10; 3:1. "Many sons to glory, ... the heavenly calling [κλῆσις]."
Heb. 9:15. "They who are called [καλέω] will receive the ... eternal inheritance."
Heb. 11:8. "Abraham ... was called [καλέω] to ... an inheritance."
1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called [καλέω] us to his eternal glory."
2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to glory."
2 Pet. 1:10-11. "Calling [κλῆσις] ... to the ... [future] kingdom."
Jude 1:1. "Jude, ... to them that are ... preserved, ... and called [κλητός]."
Rev. 17:14. "They that are with him are called [κλητός]."
Rev. 19:9. "Blessed are they ... called [καλέω] to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Table 19: Distribution of 88 New Testament Predestination Verses

DISTRIBUTION OF 88 NEW TESTAMENT PREDESTINATION VERSES				
Total Number of Verses (88)	**Faith (0)**	**Justification (12)**	**Sanctification (32)**	**Glorification (44)**
Chosen/ Elected (27)	0	3 Verses Rm. 11:5-7 1 Thess. 1:3-4 1 Pet. 1:2	6 Verses Jn. 15:16 Jn. 15:19 Eph. 1:4 Eph. 2:10 Col. 3:12-14 1 Pet. 2:9	14 Verses Jn. 6:37 Jn. 6:39 Jn. 15:16 Jn. 17:11 Jn. 17:12 Jn. 17:24 1 Thess. 1:3-4 2 Thess. 2:13-14 2 Tim. 2:10 Titus 1:3 Jas. 2:5 2 Pet. 1:10-11 Rev. 17:14 Rev. 21:27
Predestined (13)	0	3 Verses Jn. 6:37 Jn. 6:65 Rm. 8:30	5 Verses Jn. 15:16 Jn. 17:2 Jn. 17:6 Jn. 17:11 Eph. 2:10	9 Verses Jn. 15:16 Acts 13:46-48 Rm. 8:29 Rm. 8:30 Rm. 9:23 1 Cor. 2:7 Eph. 1:5-6 Eph. 1:11 1 Thess. 5:9
Called (48)	0	6 Verses Jn. 6:44 Rm. 1:5-6 Rm. 8:30 1 Cor. 1:9 1 Cor. 1:26, 30 1 Cor. 7:18	21 Verses Acts 2:38-39 Rm. 1:7 1 Cor. 1:2 1 Cor. 1:26-30 1 Cor. 7:15 Gal. 1:6 Gal. 5:13 Eph. 4:1 Phil. 3:14-15 Col. 3:15 1 Thess. 2:12 1 Thess. 4:7 1 Thess. 5:23 2 Thess. 1:11 2 Tim. 1:8-9 1 Pet. 1:15 1 Pet. 2:9 1 Pet. 2:21 1 Pet. 3:8-9 2 Pet. 1:3 Jude 1:1	21 Verses Jn. 6:44 Rm. 8:28 Rm. 8:30 Rm. 9:23 Eph. 1:18 Eph. 4:4 1 Thess. 2:12 1 Thess. 5:23 2 Thess. 1:10-11 2 Thess. 2:14 1 Tim. 6:12 2 Tim. 1:9 Heb. 2:10; 3:1 Heb. 9:15 Heb. 11:8 1 Pet. 5:10 2 Pet. 1:3 2 Pet. 1:10-11 Jude 1:1 Rev. 17:14 Rev. 19:9

Potential Problem Verses

Jn. 3:3. Unless a Man Be Born Again

> Jn. 3:3. Jesus answered ... him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a man be born again, he can't see the kingdom of God. ... Unless a man be born ... of the Spirit, he can't enter into the kingdom of God."

Jesus didn't ask Nicodemus, "Do you know how to go to heaven?" like we might ask today to begin witnessing to someone. He basically asked, "Do you know if you're going to have a place in the future Messianic Kingdom?"

The Jews hope to enter the Messianic Kingdom in the age to come. "Many will come from the east and west, and will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven," Mt. 8:11. "Blessed is he that will eat bread in the kingdom of God," Lu. 14:15. "I say to you, I won't drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," Mt. 26:29.

The 'Kingdom of God' and the 'Kingdom of Heaven' are synonyms terms, both referring to the time when "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom" (Dan. 2:44). When the God of Heaven sets up a Kingdom, the full name of the kingdom is, "The Kingdom of the God of Heaven," which can be shortened to "The Kingdom of God," or "The Kingdom of Heaven," or "The Kingdom."

Notice the same event is described in Matthew and Mark, but Matthew says Jesus began announcing the Kingdom of Heaven while Mark says he began announcing the Kingdom of God. Two ways of referring to the same future Messianic Kingdom.

> Mt. 4:12, 17. Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee. ... From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," ... preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

> Mk. 1:14-14. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ... "The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel."

Or it's just called "the kingdom."

> Mt. 6:10. Thy kingdom come. [Why are you still praying for a spiritual kingdom to come if you think it's already here? Jesus said, "I will not drink again of this wine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," Mt. 26:29. Has he drank wine with us yet?]

The future Messianic Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom even though it will be physical, because it's source will be from God; like the manna was spiritual food (1 Cor. 10:3) even though it was physical enough to beat in mortars (Num. 11:8); and like Jesus' body is a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44) even though it's physical, not a spirit. His tomb was empty because his physical body left it (Jn. 20:7-8), and he still has physical flesh and bones, and can eat.

> Lu. 24:39-43. Jesus himself stood in the midst of them. ... But they were terrified ... and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said to them, ... "Handle me, and see; for a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have. ... Do you have any food here? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and ate before them.

See also the chapter on "The Spirituality of the Kingdom", in "The Greatness of the Kingdom," by Alva McClain, available to borrow free online at the Internet Archive.

Calvinists think Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom, present even when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, or maybe established at Jesus resurrection, or at Pentecost, or something. So they think you get born again first, and then you believe and enter the spiritual kingdom.

> Murray. Surely seeing the kingdom of God is the act of faith and, if so, such faith is impossible without regeneration. ... When our Lord says that the supernatural birth spoken of is indispensable to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God he surely means by “seeing,” the spiritual discernment of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 2:14, and by “entering into,” he refers to that by which we become actual members of the kingdom of God.[100] [When anyone says "surely" he probably means, "I don't have any proof for this, but maybe by saying "surely" you'll be believe me anyway."]

100 Murray, Redemption Accomplished, 87, 100.

What Jesus was actually Nicodemus was that unless he was born of the Spirit wouldn't have a place in the future Messianic Kingdom. We do become citizens of the kingdom now though, even though it's not yet established on earth. And Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about entering the realm of the Spirit right then through new birth so you could enter the Messianic Kingdom later.

As John went on to say in John 3, to enter into the spiritual realm you simply need to come to the light, which no man can do because our deeds are evil (Jn. 3:19); but everyone can believe and receive forgiveness of sins (Jn. 3:18), and then they instantly come to the light (Jn. 3:21). No one can be born again by deciding to be born again (Jn. 1:13), but everyone can believe, and then they can be, and are, born again (Jn. 1:12).

Acts 18:27. Apollo Helped Those Who Had Believed By Grace

> Acts 18:27. [Apollo], when he was come, helped them much which had believed, through grace.

Some would have the grace having gone to the Corinthians to enable them to become believers long before Apollo got there. Others would have the grace going to Apollo to help him help them while he was there. "God’s kindness enabled him to help the believers a great deal," Acts 18:27, Names of God Bible. My opinion is that Apollo's help was God's grace to the Corinthians to reinforce them against the Jewish opposition after Paul left.

When Paul came to Corinth he faced such intense Jewish opposition that Jesus had to tell him in a vision to stay instead of fleeing like he had done at Thessalonica and Berea. "Don't be afraid, ... no man will set on you to hurt you. And he continued there a year and six months," Acts 18:9-11. At one point "the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat" (Acts 18:12), but he escaped harm. When Paul left Corinth, saying, "I must by all means keep this upcoming [Jewish] feast in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21), the believers left behind became vulnerable to the Jewish opposition. But while Paul was away, God graciously sent Apollos, who "mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Messiah," Acts 18:28. What a gracious provision for the Corinthian believers after Paul left.

Acts 13:48. As Many As Were Ordained to Eternal Life Believed

> Acts 13:48. "I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles, so that you would be for salvation to the ends of the earth." And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

I think the eternal life mentioned here is glorification, but in any case, it doesn't say, "As many as were appointed to believe, believed." If it did, Calvinism would be true. Appointing isn't mentioned before believing because it causes believing, but because it precedes believing chronologically. It would be misleading to say, "As many as believed were appointed to eternal life," since all those foreknown in Messiah were appointed to glorification from the foundation of the earth. The two groups, those ordained and those believing, have the same members, and so one definitely causes the other, but this verse doesn't explain which causes the other.

Eph. 2:8-9. Saved By Faith, the Gift of God

> Eph. 2:5-9. By grace you are saved. ... For by grace [χάρις, charis, feminine noun] you are saved [σωτηρία, sotyria, feminine when in noun form] through faith [πίστις, pistis, feminine noun], and that [or 'this,' τοῦτο, touto, neuter pronoun] not of yourselves; it [not in the Greek] is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.
>
> Stott (Calvinist). 'This' (touto) is neuter, whereas 'faith' is a feminine noun. We must therefore take 'this' as referring to the whole previous sentence: 'By God's grace you are people who have been saved through faith, and this whole event and experience is … God's free gift to you.' ... Salvation is God's gift, lest any man should boast.[101]
>
> Bloomfield (Editor of Calvin Commentaries). It has been not a little debated, among both ancient and modern commentators, to what noun τουτο [this] should be referred. Some say, to πιστωες [faith]; others, to χαριτι [grace]. ... The reference seems, however, to be neither to the one nor to the other, but to the subject of the foregoing clause, salvation by grace, through faith in Christ and his gospel; a view, I find, adopted by Dr. Chandler, Dean Tucker, Dr. Macknight, and Dr. A. Clarke. And to show that this interpretation is not a mere novelty, I need only refer the

101 Stott, Ephesians, 83.

> reader to Theophylact, who thus explains: ... 'He does not say that faith is the gift of God; but to be saved by faith, this is the gift of God.' Such also is the view adopted by Chrysostom and Theodoret.[102]

> Hunt (Non-Calvinist) The Greek in Ephesians 2:8–10 makes it impossible for faith to be the gift. Such is the verdict of many Greek authorities, including Alford, [New Testament for English Readers, 3:216], F. F. Bruce, ... W. E. Vine, Scofield, ... [cited in Samuel Fisk, Divine Sovereignty, 32–36]. Vance notes that "A witness to the truth of Scripture against the Calvinist 'faith-gift' interpretation can be found in the Greek grammarians." He lists W. Robertson Nicoll, [Expositor's Greek Testament, 3:289], Kenneth S. Wuest, [Ephesians and Colossians, 69], Marvin R. Vincent [Word Studies, 3:376] and others [Vance, Other Side, 517.] ... The grammar ... [will not] "permit 'faith' to be the antecedent of 'it.'" [MacDonald, Grace Unlimited, ed 87; quoted in Samuel Fisk, Calvinistic Paths Retraced, 22].[103]

Phil. 1:29. To You It's Given to Believe and to Suffer

> Phil. 1:29. For to you it is given for the sake of Messiah, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

God doesn't directly 'give' you suffering, but rather the responsibility to suffer. "Hereunto you were called, because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps," 1 Pet. 2:21. And the opportunity to suffer. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17). "If we suffer, we will also reign with him," 2 Tim. 2:12. Likewise, he doesn't give you faith, but only the responsibility and opportunity to believe. And God wouldn't give you faith, "for the sake of Messiah." The ISV translates, "For you have been given the privilege for the Messiah's sake not only to believe in him but also to suffer for him" (Phil. 1:29).

1 Thess. 1:3-4. Your Work of Faith, Knowing Your Election

> 1 Thess. 1:3-4. Remembering without ceasing your 1) work of faith [evidence of justification], and 2) labor of love [sanctification], and 3) patience of hope [glorification] in our

102 Bloomfield, in Calvin, Complete Commentaries, 651698-651725.
103 Hunt, in Hunt & White, Debating Calvinism, 200-1.

> Lord Jesus Messiah, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, ... as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake, ... having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.

Paul isn't saying justifying faith was given to the Thessalonians via their election, but that their after-justification works of faith, hope, and love; and how they had received the preaching by Paul, Silas, and Timothy, with joy despite affliction from opposition, are evidence they are truly saved and elect.

1 Thess. 5:9. God Has Appointed Us to Salvation

> 1 Thess. 5:2-3, 8-9. You yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night, for when they will say, 'Peace and safety,' then sudden destruction comes on them, as travail on a woman with child; and they will not escape. But let us ... be sober, putting on ... for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hasn't appointed us to wrath, but to obtain [future] salvation by our Lord Jesus Messiah.

The 'salvation' in this passage is actually talking about eternal security, salvation future. It mentions the "hope" (1 Thess. 5:8) of salvation, and hope is future. "For what a man sees, why does he yet hope for?" Rm. 8:24. It's about future glorification in contrast to future wrath at "the day of the Lord." But even if it were talking about all of salvation - justification, sanctification, and glorification - they're all still after faith, and so predestination to salvation can't determine who will be saved.

2 Thess. 1:10-11. Calling, and the Work of Faith With Power

> 2 Thess. 1:10-11. When he will come to be glorified in [not 'by'] his saints [glorification], and to be admired in [not 'by'] all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed, in that day. Wherefore, we also pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

The "calling" was to glorification at Jesus' return, not to faith. The "work of faith" refers to after-justification good works, like how "we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, ... that

you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which you also suffer" (2 Thess. 1:4-5).

2 Thess. 2:13. Chosen to Salvation Through Belief

> 2 Thess. 2:8-14. Then will that Wicked [one] be revealed ... with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deception of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God will send them strong delusion, so that they will believe a lie, so that they all would be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But ... God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through [ASV has "in"] sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Messiah.

Those "who had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:12) will believe the Antichrist, and those who have "salvation in [ASV] sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thess. 2:13) won't. Since we aren't saved "through sanctification," the belief of the truth is probably talking about how saved people won't be duped by the Antichrist.

But even if it were talking about being saved by faith, the choosing is to salvation, not to faith. Not, "God has from the beginning chosen you to believe." If it said that, Calvinism would be true, but the scripture is careful never to say that. And the calling is to glory, not to faith. "He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory," 2 Thess. 2:14. If the call were to faith, everyone who was called would believe. But since the call is to glory, not faith, "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not" (Acts 28:24).

Titus 1:1-2. For the Faith of God's Elect

> Titus 1:1-2. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Messiah, for the faith of God's elect [justification], and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness [sanctification]; in hope of eternal life [glorification], which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but has in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.

Paul is saying his ministry is to bring the gospel to the elect for their justification; and then to increase their knowledge about sanctification and glorification. He didn't say "for those who were elected to faith," or "for those who will believe because they're elect." All the elect will eventually believe, but this verse says nothing about whether they believe because they're elect, or if they're elect because God foreknew them in Messiah because of their eventual faith. Alternatively, he might be talking about ministering to their after justification faith; "Now abides faith [after justification], hope [glorification], and love [sanctification]" (1 Cor. 13:13).

Jas. 2:5. The Poor of This World Chosen to be Rich in Faith

> Jas. 2:5. Hasn't God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith [justification], and heirs of the kingdom [glorification] which he has promised to them that love him [sanctification]?

If God had chosen the poor of this world to have faith, they would all have faith, but they don't. God's way of salvation, by faith, not works, is an obstacle to rich people because they're more tempted to be self-sufficient and proud. "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" Mk. 10:24. Poor people have less obstacles to humbling themselves, and thus a higher percentage of them are saved. And God in his divine providence chooses who is born poor and rich, but doesn't choose who believes.

Rev. 17:14. Those With Him Are Called, Chosen, and Faithful

> Rev. 17:14. He is ... King of Kings, and they that are with him [glorification] are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Not, "they that are with him are called and chosen to faith." Faithful can mean having faith or being trustworthy. If the order was "chosen and called and faithful," it might indicate an 'ordo salutis.' But either way, probably means faithful "martyrs" (Rev. 17:6) in contrast to the mother of harlots who slew them and the evil beast she rode.

Caveat: The Gate is Still Wide

I currently believe that whether God unconditionally elected a small number of people to faith, per Calvinism; or whether men have genuine

free choice and he predestined all he foreknew in Messiah whom they entered into via their own faith, per the Bible; about same number of people will suffer damnation, because "wide is the gate ... that leads to destruction, and many there are which go in by it" (Mt. 7:13). But it might be different individuals in hell and for a different reason; their own choices, per the Bible, or the 'arbitrarily' choice of God, per Calvinism. I don't think that even under free choice God will allow our evangelistic failures to result in anyone going to hell.

But we don't have to understand everything to know Calvinism is false, because the Bible simply and clearly says predestination and irresistible grace are to glory, not to faith; and because we know the gospel message is salvation by faith, not faith by salvation (regeneration).

Augustine & Catholicism

We know Augustine is unsaved because he believed in salvation by works. That's why the Roman Catholic Organization (RCO), the works salvation organization par excellence, counts him as a saint, one of their own, with his feast day on August 28. He is one of their four Western 'doctors.' He was the primary one who devised a way for the RCO to go on teaching salvation by works despite Paul's teaching salvation by faith.

Catholicism says you have to be good to go to heaven, as even most nonreligious Catholics know.

> RCO Council of Trent. 6th Session on Justification: If anyone says that men are justified [and thus merit eternal life] ... by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of ... [works of] love, ... let him be damned ['anathema,' since "outside the Roman Catholic Church there is no salvation," see below]. (Canon XI) If any one says ... no one is truly justified except he who believes himself justified ... by this faith alone, ... let him be damned. (Canon XV) If any one says, ... the Gospel [is] a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be damned. (Canon XX) If any one says that ... good works ... [do] not truly merit ... the attainment of ... eternal life, ... let him be damned. (Canon XXXII) 7th Session on the Sacraments: If any one says, that the [Roman Catholic] sacraments ... are not necessary for salvation, ... and that ... men obtain of God through faith alone ... justification, ... let him be

> damned. (Canon IV) 7th Session on Baptism: If any one says, that baptism ... is not necessary for salvation, let him be damned. (Canon V). RCO Catechism. Outside the [Roman Catholic] Church there is no salvation. ... Hence they [can] not be saved who, ... would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it. (Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Article 9, Paragraph 3, III)

When Augustine and Catholicism say you can't be saved without good works, they don't mean like Protestants mean, that good works are a necessary evidence of true faith.

> RCO Council of Trent. If anyone says ... those works are merely fruits and signs of justification obtained, ... let him be damned. (6th Session)

Catholicism says that 'initial justification,' by which they mean baptism, is by faith alone, from then on, 'subsequent justification,' by which they mean righteous living wherein you earn eternal life, not being 'declared' or 'counted' righteous, is by good works of love. They base their doctrine on passages like the following:

> Rm. 2:5-9. God ... will render to every man according to his deeds: to them ... in well doing, ... eternal life; but ... indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man that does evil.

That's why if you commit a mortal sin in Catholicism after baptism you have to go to confession before you die or you'll go to hell. Here's what Augustine believes about how good works merit you eternal life, and visa versa.

> Augustine. Eternal salvation will not be given except to those who lead a good life. ... I do not see why the Lord said, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments," [and then] listed those which one must keep in order to live a good life if one can obtain eternal life without keeping the commandments, by faith alone. ... And then, too, how will the Lord be able to say to those whom He will place on His left hand: "Go you into everlasting fire." ... For it is evident that He rebukes them, not because they did not believe in Him, but because they did not perform good works. ... "They that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Notice that he does not say here "they who have believed" and "they who have not believed," but they

> that have done good things and they that have done evil. (On Faith and Works, 15.25, 23.42)

While reading the following verses from Romans, remember that for Augustine, "justification" means "doing good works;" and "justification by faith" means "doing good works by faith."

> Rm. 1:16-17. I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Messiah, for it's the power of God to salvation to every one that believes, ... 17 for therein is the righteousness [justification] of God revealed from faith to faith.
>
> Augustine. It is called "the righteousness of God," because by His bestowal of it ... [we] shall have more and more the ability of living righteously. (Complete Works, On the Spirit and the Letter, Kindle 48078)
>
> Rm. 3:24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.
>
> Augustine. [Justification] is bestowed on us ... that we may be able to do them [good works], ... that we may be able to fulfill the law. ... "Being justified [doing good works] freely by his grace." (Complete Works, On the Spirit and the Letter, Kindle 75640)
>
> Rm. 3:27-28. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.
>
> Augustine. The "law of faith" ... led him to believe that ... whatever good life he leads he has from the grace of God. ... By the law of works then, the Lord says, 'You shall not covet;' but by the "law of faith" He says 'Without me you can do nothing.' (Complete Works, On the Spirit and the Letter, Kindle 75769)
>
> Rm. 4:5. 5 But to him that doesn't work, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.
>
> Augustine. "Who justifies the ungodly" [means] "Of the ungodly makes pious." ... Having obtained that grace of faith, you shall be just [do good works] by faith, ... and you shall obtain the favor of God by living by faith, and having obtained favor from God by

> living by faith, you shall receive immortality as a reward, and life eternal. (Complete Works, Tractates on the Gospel of John, Kindle 109537)
>
> Rm. 6:23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Messiah our Lord.
>
> Augustine. The faith by which the just man lives [is] the faith which works by love in such wise, that God recompenses it according to its works with eternal life. But inasmuch as we have even our good works from God, ... [he] has designated "eternal life" itself as His gracious "gift." ... Eternal life is rendered to good works, as the Scripture most openly declares: "Then He shall reward every man according to his works" [Mt. 16:27]. ... How, then, is eternal life by grace, when it is received from works?... Even those good works of ours, which are recompensed with eternal life, belong to the grace of God. ... As your good life is nothing else than God's grace, so also the eternal life which is the recompense of a good life is the grace of God, ... "grace [eternal life] is for grace [good works]" [Jn. 1:16], ... in order that it may be true, because it is true, that God "shall reward every man according to his works." ... Now, when it was in his power to say, and rightly to say: "But the wages of righteousness is eternal life," he yet preferred to say: "The grace [gift] of God is eternal life. (Complete Works, On Grace and Free Will, Kindle 87320; see also The Enchiridion, Kindle 48078)
>
> Rm. 10:4. For Messiah is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.
>
> Augustine. Then are we still in doubt what are those works "of the law" by which a man is not justified, if he believes them to be his own works, as it were, without the help and gift of God? Is (Complete Works, On the Spirit and the Letter, Kindle 75943)

Augustine, the father of Calvinism, was an unsaved, natural man that couldn't understand the things of the Spirit, like justification by faith. Born-again believers need to stop going to him for doctrine!

As for Catholicism, the entrance procession of each Mass includes a cross bearer and several torch bearers, as a reenactment of the night Jesus was arrested (Jn. 18:3; Mt. 27:32). The Mass has an altar to sacrifice Jesus on, like the altar in the Jewish temple. The communion bread is thought to literally become Jesus when the priest says the

magic words ...

> RCO Roman Missal. "For this is my body." [Then] the priest ... elevates Our Lord for the faithful to venerate and adore, each saying silently to themselves ... "My Lord and my God!" [to a piece of bread!] The priest places Our Lord on the corporal and kneels ... to adore Him. ... Then the priest asks that the angels bear the body and blood to the altar in heaven (as per Jn. 20:17; Heb. 8:5; 9:23). (Lee, Kindle 338-342, 2569-2571)
>
> RCO Sacrosanctum Concilium. It is in the liturgy, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist [bread], that the work of our redemption is accomplished.
>
> RCO Council of Trent. Forasmuch as in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass, that same Christ is contained and sacrificed ... who once offered Himself ... on the altar of the cross, the holy Synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory [atones for sins]. (22nd Session on the Sacrifice of the Mass, Chapter 2)
>
> RCO Council of Trent. If any one shall deny, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist [bread], are verily, really, and substantially contained the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but shall say that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be damned. (13th Session on the Eucharist, Canon I)

Kneel and pray to a piece of bread, calling it "Lord?!" If that's not idolatry dressed up in Bible words, what is? The Jews never had a physical representation of God in their temple. He dwelt invisibly "above the mercy seat ... between the two cherubim [angels] which are on the ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25:22). The second commandment is, "You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of any thing. ... 5 You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them [like by calling them 'Lord']," Ex. 20:4-5. Tragically, "idolaters ... will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. 21:8. Evangelical pastors don't need to make up stuff like anything you value more that God is an idol. The world is full of actual idolatry all around us, if those pastors had the courage to preach about it.

No one who believes Roman Catholic doctrine can be saved, because

the doctrine is salvation by works. Born-again believers need to stop treating the RCO as just another denomination, and not share any ministry with them, who in history are red with the blood of believers, and not only during the inquisition. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness?" 2 Cor. 6:14-15.

Calvinist Perseverance of the Saints & Limited Atonement

Both Calvinists and non-Calvinists believe faith and good works after justification are evidence a person has genuinely believed. "Though a man claims he has faith, and has not works, can [that kind of] faith save him?" Jas. 2:14. But Calvinists also believe faith and good works are necessary after justification to hold onto one's salvation and to merit eternal life in the final judgment when "God will render to everyone according to his deeds, ... eternal life ... [or] tribulation," (Rm. 2:5-12).

In contrast, predestination to glory guarantees 1) all who have been justified will be glorified, 2) once saved always saved, and 3) eternal security. That's the whole point and purpose of predestination. But all three are different from Calvinist 'Perseverance of the Saints.'

> Pink (Calvinist). We have no sympathy whatever with the bald and unqualified declaration 'Once saved always saved.' ... Though the saint be "kept by the power of God" yet he himself has to fight every step of the way. ... In Scripture 'eternal life' is presented both as a 'gift' and as a 'reward' - the reward of perseverance.[104]

> Calvin (Calvinist). God will render to everyone according to his deeds, ... eternal life ... [or] tribulation. [Rm. 2:5-12]. Christ enumerates the works for which he bestows heaven as a recompense. ... Augustine is wont to give the name of grace to eternal life, because, while it is the recompense of works, it is bestowed by the gratuitous gifts of God.[105]

No, Pink, Calvin, and Augustine; eternal life is not the recompense of works, not even of gifted works. Predestination to sanctification includes a walk of love, good works, and post-justification faith as a gift of the Spirit. But we're "justified by faith," not by sanctification. So

104 Pink, Eternal Security, 13, 2129, 2304.
105 Calvin, Institutes, Feaster 2021, 948-953.

we can neither hold onto nor lose our justification based on our sanctification, including our sanctification faith.

Many or most Calvinists believe in Limited Atonement which claims God only paid the redemption price for those he predestined to believe, but that's impossible since he doesn't predestine anyone to believe. Also, God can't look forward in time to see who will believe, and then pay the redemption price only for them, because men can't believe unless they have the gospel promise of provided redemption to believe. The only way men can be the determinants of who believes and who doesn't (which they are) is if redemption is provided for all, so the gospel can truthfully be announced to all, so all can believe.

> Rm. 3:23-25. All have sinned, ... being justified freely ... through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

> 1 Jn. 2:2. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The Immorality of Calvinism

For the best book about the immorality of Calvinism see "What Love is This" by Dave Hunt.

Calvinism Dulls Compassion and Morality

Calvinism dulls the compassion of Calvinists because they rejoice God supposedly chose them to be saved by faith while choosing (directly or indirectly) the majority of people for eternal torment. Calvinism obligates them to believe God does things, which in any other context, would be obviously immoral.

> Hunt (Non-Calvinist). We protest that this doctrine is an outrageous misrepresentation of God. The God-given conscience of every person, saved and unsaved, recoils at the thought of creating beings simply in order to predestine them to eternal torment [or in order to fail to predestine them to non-torment]! Tragically, Calvinism forces its adherents to reject the normal human compassion that is otherwise held in common with all mankind. ... Why would the God of love and truth plead with those whom He had already predestined to doom [or failed to

> predestine to non-doom] to repent and believe the gospel? Calvinism turns most of the Bible into a pretense, a mere charade.[106]
>
> C. S. Lewis (Non-Calvinist). If God's moral judgment differs from ours so that our 'black' may be his 'white,' we can mean nothing by calling him good.[107]

Calvinism Dulls Evangelistic Fervor

> Pink (Calvinist), We are bidden to preach the gospel to every creature. It is not for us to reason about the consistency between this and the fact that "few are chosen." It is for us to obey.[108]

Calvinists preach the gospel because God commands it. Yes, that's evangelism, but at what level of sacrifice and urgency? Contrast Pink's matter-of-fact preaching of the gospel with Paul's. "We are ambassadors for Messiah, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Messiah's stead, be reconciled to God. For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, so that we can be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5:20-21.

> Pink (Calvinist). If it be true that I am powerless to reverse the tendency of my nature, what then can I do? ... If I cannot come to Messiah except the Father 'draws' me, then my responsibility is to beg the Father to 'draw' me.[109]

Can you imagine an altar call in Pink's church? "Come and beg the Father to look forward from the beginning of creation to hear your prayer and predestine you to believe." But if God supposedly created most men so he can manifest his power and glory by punishing them forever, even though it's impossible for them to live a sinless life or believe to be saved, you would be wishing to reduce the glory of God by wanting all men to be saved.

Paul is more loving than Calvinism's god. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they would be saved," Rm. 10:1. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could [were it possible] wish myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rm. 9:2-3. If Paul was

106 Hunt, What Love, 7727-7737, 12057-12059.
107 Lewis, Problem of Pain, 28 - 29.
108 Pink, Does God Love Everyone, 163-173.
109 Pink, Gospel of John, 5808-5814.

willing to give up the salvation of his soul for unbelieving Jews (were it possible), he was certainly also willing to sacrifice all the physical things of this life to preach the gospel. Imagine how the church's outreach to the world would be revolutionized if it could free itself of Calvinism and Reformed Theology.

Calvinism Slanders the Character and Glory of God

The God of the Bible is holy, righteous, and loving. He doesn't eternally torment people he created for not doing what they can't do, nor for doing what they can't avoid doing. He doesn't eternally torment people for what he himself causes or fails to cause. He doesn't command us to love our enemies, and then not love the majority of people in the world. Calvinists often call their version of predestination "the doctrines of grace." But if something like nine out of every ten people were created to be damned, Calvinists should more accurately call their version of predestination "the doctrines of damnation."

> Pink (Calvinist). It is true that a dead man cannot believe, yet he ought to. [?!] … Let any unsaved one who reads these lines thoughtfully ponder this solemn word of the Lord Jesus: … John 3:18, "But he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed."[110]

> Murray (Calvinist). The fact that regeneration is the prerequisite of faith in no way relieves us of the responsibility to believe ... as Christ and his claims are pressed upon us in full and free overtures of his grace. Our inability is no excuse for our unbelief nor does it provide us with any reason for not believing.[111]

To say God punishes men forever for something they can't do is like a heartbreaking crime that took place in Hawaii when I lived there many years ago. A father threw his little daughter repeatedly onto the kitchen floor in a sitting position until she died because she had wet the bed. His previous punishments certainly caused anxiety that hindered rather than helped her learn. Can you imagine her terror when she woke up that morning and found she had wet the bed, not knowing it would be her last day on earth because of the father that was supposed to love and protect her? But that evil father is more righteous than Calvinism's God, because at least the abuse of his daughter wasn't eternal. Calvinism portrays "the Father of glory" (Eph. 1:17) as a monster,

110 Pink, Gospel of John, 11686.
111 Murray, Redemption Applied, 117.

slandering "the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:6), and is antithetical "to the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12, 14). So it's important and urgent to rid the church of it.

Even we who don't believe in Calvinism, can't escape having our view of God tainted by it, because so many good men mistakenly believe in it, and make it seem acceptable instead of obviously abhorrent. Like even we who abhor abortion, are not nearly as appalled by it as we ought to be, because the majority of our society normalizes it.

Calvinism Pollutes the Gospel

> Spurgeon (Calvinist). It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel (underline in original), and nothing else.[112]

No, Spurgeon, Calvinism is the anti-gospel. Catholicism teaches salvation by works, and Calvinism teaches salvation by predestination, but the Bible teaches salvation by faith. Calvinists that are saved are saved in spite of Calvinism, and usually before they ever heard of Calvinism. That's why the newest believer knows Calvinism is false, before intense indoctrination like R. C. Sproul went through (described in "Why Good Men Think They Have to Believe in Calvinism" on page 162).

> Spurgeon (Calvinist). Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the doctrines of grace in a single instant. ... I can recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths in my own soul. ... I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man - that I had made progress in Scriptural knowledge, through having found, once for all, the clue to the truth of God.[113]

Calvinism is a higher-knowledge, false second-blessing experience more tempting to the intellectually inclined; like the baptism of the Spirit or sinless perfection is a false second-blessing experience more tempting to the emotionally inclined. Calvinism is a very successful attack by Satan on the purity of the faith-alone gospel which Messiah provided at the cost of his own blood. Calvinism's gospel is salvation by predestination, and faith by salvation, instead of salvation by faith. Thus Calvinism's error strikes at the very heart of the gospel, salvation, and the Bible.

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112 Spurgeon, Defense of Calvinism, 99.
113 Spurgeon, Defense of Calvinism, 222.

So how has Calvinism persisted so long, even and especially among born-again, conscientious expositors of the word? 1) Because "Reformed" means "Reformed Roman Catholic," and too much weight is given to religiosity and tradition, like the synods and cannons. 2) There's a connection between Reformed Theology's replacement theology (that the church has replaced ethnic Israel), and predestination. A Gentile, antisemitic unwillingness to accept the special position God continues to give Israel even today, combined with a non-literal interpretation of the Old Testament, and the belief that everything in the Bible is always about spiritual instead of physical things, makes it almost impossible for Reformed Christians to escape the Gentile-focused, self-centered misinterpretation of Romans 9 that Calvinism is based on. And 3) for the minority of Calvinists that have a biblical view of Israel's ethnic priority, they just haven't yet heard a good non-Calvinist interpretation of Romans 9.

The Calvinist doctrine that God changes a person's desires so that he wills to believe, is not genuine belief, any more than the decisions of a drugged man are genuine. YOU must believe for God's provision of redemption to count for you. There is no such thing as predestined or gifted faith; so don't rely on such a thing.

But thank God you can believe! The true gospel message is a simple and genuine offer of "whosoever will," according to the normal meaning of language. God isn't trying to trick people by saying "come" to people who can't come. It's true you can only come by believing: "Everyone who believes in him ... will have eternal life," Jn. 3:16 CEB. But you can do that. The Bible ends with this invitation. Believe the word of God and be saved!

> Rev. 22:17. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that hears say, "Come." And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

What Non-Calvinists Get Wrong

Why Non-Calvinists Fight Against Calvinism

Non-Calvinists fight against Calvinism because 1) its doctrine of reprobation (that God picks a few to be saved by faith and leaves the

rest to be lost), is immoral; and 2) because Calvinism contradicts the normal meaning of language when the Bible says things like God loves people, and people have personal choice and responsibility. Even Calvinists are naturally offended by the implications of reprobation.

> Calvin (Calvinist). The decree [of reprobation], I admit, is dreadful.[114]

The Groups-Not-Individuals Fallacy

Some non-Calvinists fight against Calvinism by claiming God chose groups, like the "in Messiah" group, not individuals; and that individuals have free choice whether or not to join those groups. Like if a ship was scheduled to go to London, then when you get on the ship, you become London-bound. God has predestined some groups, like Israel, for some things. But Calvinism is right that God predestined specific individuals to salvation from the foundation of the world.

> Rev. 17:8. Whose names were ... written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

Non-Calvinists don't need to fear Calvinism's doctrine of individual election, so long as election is to glory, and not to faith.

The Not-From-the-Foundation-of-the-Earth Fallacy

Some non-Calvinists fight against Calvinism by saying God predestines us after or when we believe. But there's no reason to fear predestination from the foundation of the earth, so long as it's to glory, not to faith. God can't help knowing the future. Why should he wait until his beloved believe before ensuring their welfare? Wouldn't that be somewhat irresponsible? Besides, choosing from the foundation of the earth is biblical.

> Acts 15:18. Known to God are all his works from the beginning of the world.
>
> Mt. 25:34. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
>
> Phil. 4:3. My fellow laborers, whose names are in the book of

114 Institutes, Chapter 23, Section 7.

life.

2 Tim. 2:19. Nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, "The Lord knows them that are his."

Rev. 13:8. Names ... written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Rev. 17:8. Whose names were ... written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

The Not-Irresistible Fallacy

Non-Calvinists also fight against the doctrine of reprobation by claiming God's grace isn't irresistible because men have genuine free choice whether or not to believe the gospel. Men do have genuine free choice whether or not to believe the gospel, but Calvinism is right that grace is irresistible. It's irresistible after faith. "Having been justified by faith, ... we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand," Rm. 5:1-2. Irresistible grace is the joy of guaranteed sanctification and glorification, not the horror of reprobation. Non-Calvinists don't need to fear Calvinism's doctrine of irresistible grace, so long as election is to glory and not to faith.

The Foreknowledge-of-Who-Will-Believe Fallacy

Non-Calvinists also fight against the doctrine of reprobation by claiming God looked forward through the corridors of time to see who would believe, and then predestined them to believe. The Bible doesn't say anywhere that election is based on God's foreknowledge of who would believe, even though it does say God knew who would believe. "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn't believe," Jn. 6:64. But the Bible does say God chose us already "in Messiah," not someday "to be in Messiah." "According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," Eph. 1:4. Rufus, chosen in the Lord," Rm. 16:13. Also, looking forward to see who would believe to predestine them to believe would be circular reasoning.

Anthony Badger (Non-Calvinist). The problems with the Arminian view might be as follows: ... What would be the point of actively electing some and not others [to believe] if God simply knew [who would believe]? Why wouldn’t God just wait

> and let the chips fall where they may, so to speak? ... Why not just say that God knew who would freely believe? ... The idea that election [to faith] is conditioned upon what [faith] God foresees is simply no election at all.[115]

However, with biblical predestination to glory, not to faith, there's no circular reasoning.

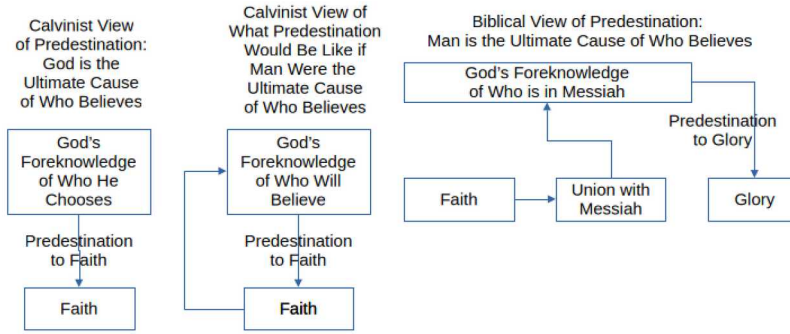


Figure 2: There's No Circular Reasoning with Biblical Predestination to Glory

Election based on foreknowledge of who is in Messiah is both biblical and also exempt from the following Calvinist objections:

Foreknown faith is subject to the Calvinist objection that the word foreknowledge in Greek implies knowing someone personally, not knowing some facts about someone. But, obviously, God can't know anyone more intimately and personally than those in Messiah.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). God is often pictured as “looking down the corridors of time” and discovering those who according to their own free will would believe in Christ - these he chose to save on the basis of their foreseen faith. ... Rm. 8:29 ... does not say that God foreknew facts concerning the actions or choices of his creatures; it says that God foreknew particular persons themselves. ... The Greek verb proginōskō in Rm. 8:29 speaks not of simple foreknowledge but of the knowledge that characterizes an intimate personal relationship. ... Peter writes, “He [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world." ... Peter’s intent is to point to the intimate knowledge of personal relationship between the Father and the Son. ... To foreknow is to “forelove.”

115 Badger, TULIP, 36, Journal of Grace Evangelical Society, Autumn 2003.

Underestimating the Significance of Predestination to Glory not to Faith

Thankfully, many non-Calvinists realize predestination isn't to faith, though they don't give this point the importance it should have.

Arminius. "Is it election to faith? By no means; ... to righteousness."
Godet. "Not a predestination to faith, but a predestination to glory."
Pinnock/Wagner. "What ... to? … They are not predestined to faith."
Flowers. "Predestined to become holy; ... never ... to believe in Christ."

Arminius, Complete Works, 23713. Godet, Romans, 9185. Pinnock/Wagner, Grace for All, 81. Flowers, Potter's Promise, 1089.

Calvinists will say that if God chose those who are in Messiah via justification by faith, it would not be genuine choosing by God; we would in effect be choosing ourselves. However, it would be just as genuine as Jesus' choice of the apostles, choosing 'to' rather than choosing 'who.' Jesus choose only those the Father gave him. "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would go and bring forth fruit [sanctification], and that your fruit would remain [glorification]," Jn. 15:16. The men which you gave me out of the world, they were yours, and you gave them to me," Jn. 17:6.

That the Bible never says we're predestined to faith is too significant to not let it determine our doctrine of predestination. Calvinist predestination is for the purpose of God saving some and damning others. It always has a dark cloud over it because even unsaved people know responsibility without ability is immoral. But biblical predestination is for the purpose of holiness and eternal security. The church needs to reclaim the doctrine of predestination back from Calvinists, and teach the joy of knowing we are being sanctified and will be glorified. How often do non-Calvinist churches teach predestination as a topic?

There's no need to fight against individual election, election from the foundation of the earth, irresistible grace, or choosing not being based on foreknown faith; so long as election and irresistible grace are to holiness and eternal security, and so long as choosing is based on those foreknown individually in Messiah from the foundation of the earth. We can win the battle against Calvinist predestination, God choosing who will believe to become saved, and its disgraceful doctrine of reprobation, if we stop fighting against the parts of Calvinism that are

biblical.

When Calvinists or seekers hear arguments against the parts of Calvinism that are biblical, it weakens the argument against Calvinism. And it makes them think all non-Calvinists are just trying anything they can to get around Calvinism. And that makes them more committed to Calvinism, thinking they will have to believe it regardless of how immoral it seems, if the Bible teaches it.

Why Good Men Believe in Calvinism

Good men believe in Calvinism because they think the Bible teaches it. Romans 9:21-22 is the heart of Calvinist reprobation, and causes many good men to think they have to believe in Calvinism.

> Rm. 9:21-22 CEB. Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, to make ... pots made for wrath, ... designed for destruction, ... to show his wrath and to make his power known? [I don't really think it would show God to be powerful to throw a peon man in hell. It would be more like a man in woman's boxing.]

Martin Luther

Luther was offended by Calvinism, but thought he had to believe it, because he thought the Bible teaches it. If only he had had a copy of this book.

> Luther (Calvinist). It is this [reprobation] that seems to give the greatest offense to common sense or natural reason - that the God, who is set forth as being so full of mercy and goodness, should, of His mere will, leave men, harden them, and damn them, as though He delighted in the sins, and in the great and eternal torments of the miserable. To think thus of God, seems iniquitous, cruel, intolerable; and it is this that has given offense to so many and great men of so many ages. And who would not be offended? I myself have been offended more than once, even unto the deepest abyss of desperation; nay, so far, as even to wish that I had never been born a man.[116]

116 Luther, Bondage of the Will, 162.

R. C. Sproul

R. C. Sproul didn't want to believe in Calvinism, but thought he had to, because he thought the Bible teaches it. I wish he had had this book.

> Sproul (Calvinist). Predestination. I did not like it. I did not like it at all. I fought against it tooth and nail all the way through college. ... I resisted for well over a year. My final surrender came in stages. Painful stages. ... I wrote a note to myself that I kept on my desk. ... YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BELIEVE, ... AND TO TEACH WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS IS TRUE, NOT WHAT YOU WANT THE BIBLE TO SAY [caps in original quote]. ... The ninth chapter of Romans was the clincher. I simply could find no way to avoid the Apostle's teaching in that chapter. Reluctantly, I sighed and surrendered, but with my head, not my heart. "OK, I believe this stuff, but I don't have to like it!" ... I began to like the doctrine little by little, until it burst upon my soul that the doctrine revealed the depth and the riches of the mercy of God. I no longer feared the demons of fatalism or the ugly thought that I was being reduced to a puppet.[117]

John Piper

If John Piper hadn't been trained in the doctrinal antisemitism of Reformed Theology, or if he had this book, he might not have come up with the wrong answer after seven years of studying Romans 9.

> Piper (Calvinist). There are two experiences in my life that make Romans 9 ... the most important chapter in the Bible in shaping the way I think about everything. ... I entered this systematic theology class. ... Romans 9 proved to be the watershed text in that class. ... These texts ... were making me very angry and making me cry in the afternoon as I read my Bible. ... Emotions run very high when your world is collapsing.[118] ... When I finished my studies, I was so bound by this chapter, I took seven years to write a book on it.[119]

John MacArthur

Can you imagine the apostle Paul teaching the Spirit-led believers in

117 Sproul, Chosen, 2.
118 Piper, Interview: https://desiringgod.org/interviews/how-did-john-piper-become-a-calvinist, accessed 6/17/26.
119 Piper, Sermon "I Will Be Gracious to Whom I Will Be Gracious."

Ephesus for three years, and avoiding plain teaching about biblical election? If John MacArthur had my book, maybe he could have avoided becoming a stealth Calvinist.

> MacArthur (Calvinist). I grew up in a Dallas Seminary environment. ... [During a 1980 sabbatical, he studied puritan theology and then began teaching a five-year series on Matthew.] I really became Reformed teaching the book of Matthew. ... But my entire constituency couldn't have possibly understood if I had started talking like a five-point Calvinist and throwing labels around. I didn't want to cut the cords. I wanted to bring them along. And I thought the only way I could bring them along is ... exegetically and expositionally without unpacking everything in labels that would put barriers up. So it took me a long time. ... I spoke at a Ligonier Conference, ... and I asked RC why are you doing this. He said, "I want you to speak on election because I want to know what you believe." ... And that was my coming out on Calvinism.[120]

Wayne Grudem

Wayne Grudem doesn't want to believe in Calvinism, but thinks he has to, because he thinks the Bible teaches it. If you know him, please give him a copy of this book.

> Grudem (Calvinist). [Reprobation] is something that we would not want to believe, and would not believe, unless Scripture clearly taught it.[121]

Edwin Palmer

Edwin Palmer said Calvinism is illogical and foolish, but said we have to believe it anyway, because he thought the Bible teaches it. I wish I could have written this book sooner.

> Palmer (Calvinist). The Calvinist ... realizes that what he advocates is ridiculous. ... To say on the one hand that God has made certain all that ever happens, and yet to say that man is responsible for what he does? Nonsense! ... To say that God foreordains the sin of Judas, and yet Judas is to blame? Foolishness! ... The Calvinist freely admits that his position is

120 "How John MacArthur Became A Calvinist" @Soteriology101, Grace Family Baptist Church, https://youtube.com/watch?v=c7zT0o4YIC4, accessed 6/17/26.
121 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 685.

> illogical, ridiculous, nonsensical, and foolish. ... In the face of all logic, the Calvinist says that if man does anything good, God gets all the glory; and if man does anything bad, man gets all the blame. ... [But] the Calvinist has to make up his mind: what is his authority? His own human reason or the Word of God?[122]

Along with Palmer, I urge every reader to "make up his mind: what is his authority? His own human reason or the Word?" Be willing to accept whatever the Bible says within it's textual context, without being influenced by religion, theological systems, or culture.

> Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

> Rev. 22:17. The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that hears say, "Come." And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

122 Palmer, Five Points, 102)

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Calvinist predestination is to faith, directly or indirectly, so God can choose who gets saved and who doesn't. That's the heart of Calvinism, what defines it, and sets it apart from all other beliefs. Augustine: "Elected to believe. ... Called ... that we may believe." Calvin: "We were ... ordained to faith in Christ." MacArthur: "Foreknowing ... those ... effectually called ... to saving faith." Piper: "'His people' are those ordained to believe, ...choosing them for this." Sproul: "We are elected to faith." Westminster Confession: "[Those] elected ... are ... effectually called to faith." Luther (Calvinist): That ... God ... should of His mere will, leave men ... and damn them, ... seems ... cruel, intolerable; and it is this that has given offense to so many and great men of so many ages. And who would not be offended? I myself have been offended more than once, even unto the deepest abyss of desperation; nay, so far, as even to wish that I had never been born a man.

But Biblical predestination is to sanctification and glorification, so God could ensure us a holy walk and eternal security. Whatever God predestines always comes to pass without fail! Hallelujah!

Chosen to Sanctification
Eph. 1:4. "He has chosen [ἐκλέγω] us in him, ... that we would be holy."

Predestined to Sanctification
Eph. 2:10. "Before ordained [προετοιμάζω] that we would walk in [good works]."

Called to Sanctification
1 Cor. 1:2. "Paul, to them that are sanctified, ... called [κλητός] to be saints."
1 Thess. 4:7. "God has ... called [καλέω] us ... to holiness."

Predestined To Glorification
Rm. 8:30. "Whom he predestined [προορίζω], ... them he also glorified."
Rm. 9:23. "Vessels of mercy, ... before ordained [προετοιμάζω] to glory."

Called To Glorification
1 Thess. 2:12. "God has called [καλέω] you to his [future] kingdom and glory."
2 Thess. 2:14. "He called [καλέω] you ... to obtaining the glory of our Lord."
1 Pet. 5:10. "God has called [καλέω] us to his eternal glory."
2 Pet. 1:3. "Through ... him that has called [καλέω] us to glory."

Distribution of 88 NT Predestination Verses - Predestined to Glory, Not to Faith				
Total (88)	Faith (0)	Justification (12)	Sanctification (32)	Glorification (44)
Chosen/Elected (27)	0	3	6	14
Predestined (13)	0	3	5	9
Called (48)	0	6	21	21

Biblical predestination to glory de-Calvinizes every point of TULIPS. Yes, God predestines individuals, not groups; but to glory, not to faith. Yes, grace is irresistible, but to sanctification and glorification, after faith.