

- For all who have fallen away: **Acts 3:19** “...repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

Since God desires each person to be saved and has not predestined any person to damnation, why will many be separated from God and His blessings forever?

The Bible tells us that people – *of their own free will* – judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, pushing the Word of God from them and persistently resisting the work of the Holy Spirit, whose earnest will it is to bring them to repentance and faith.

- **Acts 13:46** “Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you [Jews] first; since you [reject] it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.”
- **Matthew 23:37** [Jesus said:] “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.”

#### 4: God’s undeserved love embraces all people, but He has only predestined some people!

Like God, we want everyone to be predestined and with God forever. However, *within the mystery of God*, only some have been predestined. Since God has not told us why, we let God be God – *so we let this mystery remain a mystery.*

But some well-intentioned theologians have tried to solve this mystery with common sense; unfortunately, they have contradicted the word of God.

This is a vital distinction:

- **God desires all to be saved:** He has provided the gift of salvation for everyone through Jesus and truly desires all to receive His gift.
- **God has predestined some, not all:** All whom God has predestined will certainly be saved.

Even though those statements seem to clash, *they agree with God’s word*. So, *we leave it a great mystery as to why some are saved but not others*. Key passages:

- **Matthew 22:14** “...many are called, but few are chosen.”
- **Luke 7:30** “...the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves [to be saved], not having been baptized by John.”

#### 5: God’s predestining includes His choosing before time, His saving work in time, and His work of perseverance!

People hold to various salvation opinions:

1. I chose Jesus; I continue myself in Jesus.
2. God chose me; I continue myself in Jesus.
3. God chose me; God continues me in Jesus.

Option 3 agrees with the Bible:

- **1 Corinthians 1:30** “...by [God’s] doing you are in Christ Jesus...”
- **Philippians 1:6** *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good*

*work in you will [bring it to completion] until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

#### 6: Repentant believers should be sure they are predestined and have escaped eternal punishment!

Our assurance should never rest on our feelings, *but on God’s word*. By the Holy Spirit working through the word, we know ♦the Bible is true, ♦we have sinned, ♦we are helpless to save ourselves, and ♦Jesus has done everything necessary to fulfill God’s requirements through His sinless living and sacrificial dying. Furthermore, *we have been gifted with faith in Jesus as our Savior and Lord!* Be encouraged:

- **John 6:47** [Jesus said:] “...he who believes has eternal life.”
- **John 5:24** [Jesus said:] “...he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”
- **1 John 5:11-13** “...God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life... **These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.**”

Scripture taken from the New American Standard Bible – 1995.

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# Predestination

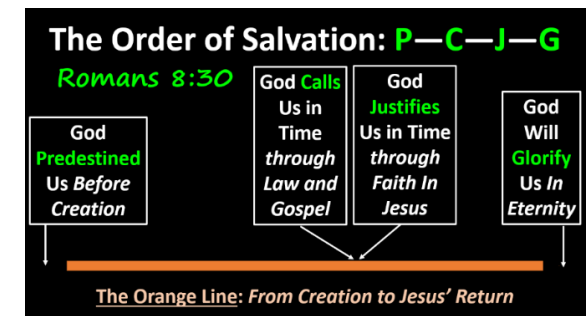
**God’s work before time to save us in time and bless us forever!**

## Introduction

**Dear Friend:** It is normal and natural to have concerns about our salvation. Sometimes we wrongly look to ourselves, saying: Have I done enough? So, the purpose of this brochure is to comfort you, *a repentant believer*, regarding your salvation as you learn more about the Biblical teaching of predestination.

This brochure breaks down predestination into seven parts – an overview image, followed by six summary statements. Each statement is followed by some details and key passages. Blessings on ♦reading, ♦understanding, and ♦being sure that God will welcome you into heaven through Jesus!

## An Overview Image



The image is based on [Romans 8:30](#) – *emphasizing God’s work for our eternal good*: “...these whom **He** predestined, **He** also called; and these whom **He** called, **He** also justified; and these whom **He** justified, **He** also glorified.”

Notice what God ♦did before time, ♦is doing in time, and ♦will do after time. Even though many presume they are saving themselves, *God was at work and continues to be at work to finally bring us into His glorious presence!*

As the tipping of one domino causes the others to fall, so God’s work of predestination before time causes us to be called and justified in time, then glorified in eternity!



### 1: All who are predestined will be saved!

The words *predestined*, *chosen*, *elected*, and *appointed* can be used interchangeably. They all refer to God’s work before creation to save us.

Amazingly, when God predestined us before time, He decided that ♦by His grace alone, ♦for the sake of Christ, ♦by the Holy Spirit, and ♦through word and sacrament He would bring us to faith, make us right in His sight, and enable us to finally die in a state of repentance – *sorry for our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior*.

Some key passages:

- <sup>ESV</sup> [Ephesians 1:4-5](#) “...[God the Father] chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and

blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will...”

- <sup>ESV</sup> [2 Timothy 1:9](#) “[God] saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began...”

### 2: God did not predestine us ♦because of something good in us or ♦because He saw our faith in advance!

These are two things we reject because they do not agree with the Bible:

**1:** God looked ahead, saw something good in us or saw us resisting less, and – *for that reason* – predestined us. Such a teaching is false because all salvation is by the grace of God alone (*not something good in us*) and on the merit of Christ alone (*not something good we have done*).

- [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
- [1 Peter 3:18](#) “For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the just for the unjust*, so that He might bring us to God...”

**2:** God looked ahead and saw our faith, then He predestined us. *Such a teaching is false and backwards*. It was not our faith that moved God to predestine us, but rather His choosing of us before time that became the cause of us being brought to faith in time.

- [Acts 13:48](#) “...as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”
- [2 Thessalonians 2:13](#) “...God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.”

### 3: God has not predestined anyone to damnation!

Two categories:

**1:** God has predestined some to be saved; God’s action before time causes them to be called, justified, and glorified.

**2:** For everyone else, God also wants to work by His Spirit through His word to save them by grace through faith in Jesus.

For the predestined, *their salvation is guaranteed*. But God loves **everyone** and desires **everyone** to be saved:

- [John 3:16](#) “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”
- [1 Timothy 2:4](#) “[God] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Let us maintain this distinction: God’s *predestination* causes salvation; God’s *divine foreknowledge* knows all things but does not cause all things.

- Objective justification: In a real and actual manner, Jesus received the sins of the whole world and God’s eternal punishment for all those sins.
  - [Isaiah 53:6](#) “All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But [God the

Father] has caused the [wickedness] of us all to fall on [Jesus].”

- [1 John 2:2](#) [Jesus] is the propitiation [means of forgiveness] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world*.”
- Subjective justification: Since God desires to ♦bring all people to faith in Jesus, ♦keep them in the faith, and ♦bring them into His glorious presence, *He is calling every person to repent and believe*. In other words, by the working of the Holy Spirit – *through baptism and through the Bible*, God is calling every person to be sorry for his/her sins and receive Jesus as Savior and Lord.
  - Through baptism: [Titus 3:5](#) “[God the Father] saved us... by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”
  - Through preaching: [Mark 1:15](#) [Jesus said:] “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”
  - Through the Bible: [1 Peter 1:23](#) “...you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God.”
  - For all people: [Acts 17:30-31](#) “...God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”