

God desires all to be saved and has not predestined any person to damnation:

So, why will many be separated from God and His blessings forever?

The Bible tells us: Many people 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... 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!

Logically, statement 4 doesn't make sense, but biblically it is true. What is the great mystery? Since **God desires all to be saved and **God** does the saving, logically all would be saved. But Jesus taught that the lost are many and the saved are few (**Matt. 7:13-14**).**

Can the mystery be solved? Some have tried – as listed below, but notice that their teachings are not in harmony with the Bible:

- Some were predestined to life, others to damnation. **NO: 1 Timothy 2:4** "[God] desires all men to be saved..."
- Those who choose Christ are saved, those who reject are condemned. **NO: 1 Corinthians 2:14** "...a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."

Some key passages:

- **Matthew 22:14** "...many are called [that is, all are called through the Gospel], but few are chosen [that is, chosen in Christ from eternity]."
- **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 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 (Note: After the Holy Spirit has made us alive in Christ, we then have God-given ability to cooperate with the Holy Spirit).

Only option 3 agrees with the Bible:

- **1 Corinthians 1:30** "...by [God's] doing you are in Christ Jesus..."
- **Philippians 1:6** "...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 admit our sins, we know we are helpless to save ourselves, and we are trusting in Jesus and His finished work.

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 Eternal Plan to Save Sinners!

Introduction

Dear Friend: It is *normal* and *natural* for us to have concerns about our salvation. Therefore, please read this brochure to better understand God's work of salvation and be sure – **as a repentant believer** – that your sins are forgiven and heaven is open for you through Jesus!

Jesus is the Son God! Jesus saved us by:

- ♥ Living as our sinless substitute!
- ♥ Receiving our sins and punishment!
- ♥ Laying down His life!

This brochure begins with an overview image, based on **Romans 8:30**, then it breaks down predestination into six parts. Blessings on reading, understanding, and being sure that God will welcome you into heaven through Jesus!

An Overview Image

The Order of Salvation: P—C—J—G

Romans 8:30

God
Predestined
Us Before
Creation

God Calls
Us in
Time
through
Law and
Gospel

God
Justifies
Us in Time
through
Faith In
Jesus

God
Will
Glorify
Us In
Eternity

The Orange Line: From Creation to Jesus' Return

The image is based on [Romans 8:30](#), which emphasizes **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 do** before time, **is doing** in time, and **will do** in eternity. Even though many presume they are saving themselves, our salvation is God's work ([1 Corinthians 1:30](#)).

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** and glorified **in eternity** (*to be glorified is to be free from sin, have a resurrected body, and share in Christ's glory!*)



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!*

Some key passages:

- [Ephesians 1:4-5](#) "... [God the Father] chose us in Him [Christ] before the

foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself..."

- [2 Timothy 1:9](#) "[God] saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not** according to our works, **but** according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity..."

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 disagree 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..."
 - [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. *That 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.
 - [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!

The Lutheran Confessions (Book of Concord) summarize the salvation issue this way:

- God sincerely offers grace to all.
- The Spirit works through the means of grace (baptism and the word).
- Those who are saved owe everything to God.
- Those who are lost have only themselves to blame.

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."

An important distinction:

- God's *predestination* causes salvation.
- God's *divine foreknowledge* knows all things but does not cause all things.

Objective justification: In a real manner, Jesus received the sins of the whole world and God's eternal punishment:

- [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 iniquity [moral crookedness, guilt] 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: God desires to:

1. Bring all people to faith in Jesus!
2. Keep them in the one true faith!
3. Bring them into His glorious presence!

Therefore: God the Holy Spirit is working through God's word to work **sorrow** for sin *through the Law* and **faith** in Christ for eternal life *through the Gospel*.

Consider these key passages:

- 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."
- 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."