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## Sermon Study on Rom. 8:29-32

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## Sermon Study on Rom. 8:29-32

### Eisenach Epistle Selection for New Year's Day

The Eisenach Epistle Selection for New Year's Day comprises vv. 24-32 of the eighth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. A sermon study on vv. 24-28 will be found in the January, 1941, issue, page 23.

Beginning with v. 29, the apostle states the reason for his bold assertion, v. 28. Paul had assured his readers that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to purpose. A Christian is a Christian not by chance, not because he happened to be born as the child of Christian parents. The Christian has been *called* by the Lord into His holy Christian Church. This call was not extended in a haphazard manner, God having no special person in mind. God called with a purpose, with the firm intention to make certain sinners His children and heirs of salvation and with the full determination to rule and shape all things in such a manner that they must ultimately work for the eternal welfare of His children. This truth, so comforting to the Christian, is proved beyond the possibility of refutation by the facts brought out in vv. 29 and 30, and in vv. 31-39 the brief statement of 28a is expanded, the apostle showing in a detailed manner that nothing can keep the elect of God, His chosen children, from attaining their eternal salvation.

In vv. 29 and 30 we have eight aorists illustrating the flexibility in the use of this Greek tense often so puzzling to the interpreter and presenting almost insurmountable difficulties to the translator. The aorist presents the simple action, the action "an und fuer sich," as Robertson puts it. Very frequently the aorist has no special reference to the actual past but expresses a truth valid at all times, the so-called gnomic aorist. Compare, e. g., the verbs in Matt. 13:35; Luke 7:35; Jas. 1:11, etc. In our passage the first three aorists "did foreknow," "did predestinate," v. 29, "did predestinate" v. 30, describe acts of God that definitely lie in the past, that occurred in eternity, as we shall see. The five following verbs in v. 30 are gnomic aorists, describing these three acts of God, the calling, the justifying, the glorifying of those foreknown and predestinated, as constantly being repeated in the past, present, and future. God has called men throughout the millenniums extending from the time that He called Adam to repentance to our day. He is still calling men into His kingdom in the year of grace 1942, and He will continue to do so until the last man He intends to call shall have been called. Many of those who have been called have already been justified and glorified. Others are



justified but still await their glorification; still others who have been predestinated have not yet been called. For them the calling, the justification, and the glorification still lie in the future, either because they have not yet been born or because, though they are living and have perhaps arrived at old age, God's own chosen hour has not yet come. This entire activity of God in the times of the past, the present, and the future, whereby all those fore-known and predestinated from eternity have been or are being or shall be called, justified, and glorified, is covered by the aorists, each of which designates the act it denotes as a simple fact, "an und fuer sich," without reference to time, irrespective of whether it is past, present, or future.

After this brief survey let us examine more closely the individual statements of our text, asking God that they may prove also in us their gracious power to make us truly happy, care-free children of God, divinely assured of their eternal salvation.

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate." The word προγινώσκειν occurs only four times in the New Testament. Twice it is used of the foreknowledge of men, Acts 26:5, 1 Pet. 3:7, twice with God as the subject. Rom. 8:29; 11:2. The noun occurs only twice, in both instances of God's foreknowledge. Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 1:21. In the latter passage Peter addresses his readers as strangers elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Κατά denotes the relation which the foreknowledge has to their being elect ones, chosen ones, this relation here being causative. They owe their election to the foreknowledge of the Father. In Acts 2:23 Christ is called one "delivered," given out, given over, to the enemies "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," the dative being the instrumental, denoting the cause. Here the term "foreknowledge" is intimately linked with the preceding term "determinate counsel." The article is not repeated before foreknowledge. When only one article is used before two nouns, the two epithets are applied to the same object. "When a second article does occur, it accents sharply a different aspect of the person or phase of the subject." Robertson, *Grammar*, I, p. 785. In Luke 6:49 "he that heareth and doeth not," ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας καὶ μὴ ποιήσας, does not denote two different persons, but one only; likewise τοῦ κυρίου καὶ σωτῆρος in 2 Pet. 2:20 and in 3:2 does not designate two different persons in God, but one only, the Son. The Savior is identical with the Lord, just as in James 3:9 God and Father denote one person, and in 1 Tim. 4:3 those that know the truth are the very ones that believe. In like manner in Acts 2:23 the foreknowledge of God is identical with, the same act as, the determinate counsel of God, according to which God delivered His Son. Hence God's foreknowledge very clearly comprises more than a mere



prescience, a being aware of anything beforehand; the term "prognosis" denotes the same act of God's will that is called the determinate counsel. There can be no doubt that there is such a knowledge of God which is at the same time a determination, an act of the will. That is the clear teaching of Acts 2:23. Hodge therefore correctly translates "fixed the mind upon us," and Zahn, "ein seinen Gegenstand aneignendes Erkennen," "a knowledge appropriating its object, whereby the person is transferred out of his estrangement from God into the sphere of God's love." (Zahn, *Roemerbrief*, 3d. ed., p. 419.)

"Whom He did foreknow." When did this act of God whereby He lovingly directed His attention upon us occur? Not only after we were born, not only in the millenniums of time, but in eternity. This is evident from the fact that the "predestinating," which in the very next clause is described as one of the immediate and inherent effects of God's foreknowledge, is in Eph. 1:4, 5 placed side by side with "chosen," which in turn took place "before the foundation of the world." In like manner the "purpose of God," Rom. 8:28, of which the "foreknowledge" is the foundation, is placed into eternity, Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9. What a comforting and faith-engendering and strengthening and preserving truth. Already from eternity God has known and loved me and directed his attention upon me, included me in His eternal plans, and these plans were plans of love and mercy.

"Whom He did foreknow." We note that the object of God's foreknowledge is designated only by the simple word "whom," a very general term, left undefined except by the verb "known." They are such as God lovingly foreknew. The reason why they are so known is stated as little as is the purpose for which God took note of them already in eternity. There is no second or predicate accusative, and there is no causal nor final clause added. There is no need for such addition. The plain statement that God has known some people, has embraced them in His loving knowledge, is sufficient. Every attempt to add something is not only useless but does violence to the Word of God. Cp. Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6.\*

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\*) In commenting on this passage Zahn makes a remark very much to the point: "Above all one must reject as an impermissible interpolation the thought that God from eternity, or in general before He had called the children of God, had known before that they would believingly follow His call to salvation and remain steadfast in their first faith until the end; from which fact another deduction is made that God had predetermined these individual persons, whose obedience of faith He had foreseen, unto conformation with Christ, in distinction to others whom He had also called through the same Gospel. Apart from the fact that it would have been necessary to express these very essential ideas in order that the reader might apprehend them; apart



The very next clause tells us that God could not have been motivated by anything within those He knew, by any good quality He happened to see, or by the fact that He foresaw that they would love Him, or be fit to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, or that they would believe in Christ; for the conformation to the image of His Son through justification and sanctification is very definitely designated as the purpose and effect of the foreknowledge of God and not as its motive. In Eph. 1:5 our adoption as children is clearly stated as the purpose of God's predestination. In Eph. 2:1-10 and 2 Tim. 1:9 our own works are expressly excluded as a possible motivation for our calling. God foreknew us in loving kindness because He lovingly foreknew us. His love is the only motivation for His love, for it is a love and a knowledge of a nature as only God can know and love. The answer which explains all without explaining anything is found Jer. 31:3; Ex. 33:19. O mystery of love and knowledge divine! When Paul exclaimed "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God," he had in mind not only that knowledge which never is at a loss to choose the right means. As the distinction in the same verse between the judgments of His justice and His loving ways of grace indicates, he thought also of that foreknowledge past finding out, baffling all our attempts to trace its hidden well-springs, which lies at the very rock-bottom of His plan of salvation and on which as on an immovable foundation the assurance of our salvation, our faith, our hope, our love, our life eternal and glory unspeakable rest. That is the thought brought out by the apostle in the next clauses.

"He also did predestinate." The very ones whom God foreknew, upon whom He fixed His mind in everlasting love, these very ones He also predestinated, προόρισεν. This word seems to have been coined by Paul, as it is found neither in the Septuagint nor in profane literature prior to Paul; the Church Fathers used it, and later it appears also in profane literature. Its etymological meaning is clear and undisputed. It means to predetermine, to decide or destine beforehand. In the New Testament it is used exclusively of God's eternal determination, once referring to a determination with respect to Jesus, Acts 4:28 (cp. Acts 2:23), once

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from the fact that if οὓς προέγνω [whom He foreknew] were to limit the κλητοί [called] to a smaller circle, a τούτους [them] immediately after οὓς προέγνω would be much more necessary than after the relative sentences following; such an interpolation is excluded by the constant usage of γινώσκειν [know] with a personal object, which usage is invariably retained by προγινώσκειν in like connection." In a footnote Zahn states: "The addition of a second accusative or an objective predicate is as impermissible as it is unnecessary" and compares Rom. 11:2; 1 Pet. 1:20. (Op. cit., pp. 419, 420.)



with respect to God's hidden wisdom, 1 Cor. 2:7, and four times with reference to the eternal salvation of the believers, Eph. 1:5, 11; Rom. 8:29, 30. The word is practically a synonym of "foreknow" and of another term used by Scripture, "elect" or "choose," ἐκλέγειν. We have already called attention to Acts 2:23, where "the determinate counsel" and the "foreknowledge of God" describe the same act of God's will. Eph. 1:4, 5 we read that God chose us, ἐξελέξατο, having predestinated us, προορίσας. Peter says that the Christians are elect, ἐκλεκτοί, according to the foreknowledge of God, 1 Pet. 1:2. These three terms are in fact identical with the "purpose" on which Paul founded the title "called ones," v. 28. Loving foreknowledge, the election, the predestination, form the purpose, the determination of God, in accordance with which He called the Christians. Therefore Paul speaks in Eph. 1:11 of a predestination according to a purpose of God, in keeping with His determination, and in Rom. 9:11 of the purpose of God according to election, "a purpose involving a choice" (Denney in *Exp. Gr. Test.*). Stoeckhardt writes, "In His eternal today God had determined that He would accept the seed of Jacob as His people and reveal to them His judgments and statutes and testimonies, and that the salvation of the world was to come out of Jacob. This plan had the nature of a choice, God choosing the younger of the two sons of Rebecca for the purpose named." (Stoeckhardt, *Roemerbrief*, p. 429.) That Paul regards the two terms as describing the same act of God is indicated also by the omission of the τοῦτους before "did predestinate" in v. 29, while in the three compound clauses of v. 30 it is repeated.

Hence these four terms are so intimately intertwined that for all practical purposes they may be regarded as synonyms, as different terms describing the same act of God. Etymologically there may be a difference between the various words, but that is a difference rather of viewpoint than in the act itself, just as conversion, illumination, regeneration, denote the same act of God from various viewpoints. "Purpose" stresses God's act as one of determining upon a certain act without naming the latter, the exact nature appearing only from the context. "Foreknowledge" looks backward to God and emphasizes the motive and effect of His purpose lovingly to embrace certain people. "Elect" describes the purpose as a choice out of a multitude. "Predestination," the appointment, looks forward to the goal, the final consummation God had in mind in His purpose or plan. We may therefore detect in these words a certain sequence, the purpose coming before the choice, the motive before the predestination. We might be inclined to establish a logical order of some kind for these various activities of God. Yet we must not forget two facts: The first, that all these



acts are placed into eternity, where there is no time, no "earlier" or "later," only an everlasting, ever-present "now." In the second place, we must guard against judging God's decrees and acts by the standards of human thinking and logic. Is. 40:13, 14, 18, 25, 28; Rom. 11:33-36; 1 Cor. 2:9-11.

"To be conformed to the image of His Son." Conformed, the adjective, occurs only here and in Phil. 3:21, where also the verb "to conform" occurs, the only time in the New Testament. The word means having the same form as another; *μορφή* is the "form by which a person or thing strikes the vision" (Thayer), his outward appearance, his manner of speaking or acting, whereby he may be distinguished from other persons. Phil. 2:6, 7, we are told that the incarnate Christ was in the form of God, that He had the right to appear as God, to speak and act as only God can act and speak; that He took upon Himself the form of a servant, acting as a slave. The purpose of God's predestination was to constitute those predestinated such as had the same form as the image of Christ. He does not say that they are to be conformed to *Christ*. Christ even in the deepest humility was that which no Christian in his highest exaltation will ever be, the God-man, God's only-begotten Son, Col. 2:9. The predestinated ones are conformed to the *image* of Christ. This is the word used by the LXX in Gen. 1:26, 27, to express the "image" of God, which consisted in blissful knowledge of God and a perfect righteousness and holiness, Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, without making man the equal of God, a second God. While this image is being renewed daily in the Christians, there is much that is altogether unlike this image to be found in every Christian. We do not act and speak always like Christ nor like images of Christ. "Conformed ones to the image of Christ" we will be only after 1 Cor. 15:42-57 shall have come to pass, when the last trace of sin shall have disappeared from our nature, when our body will be transformed, Phil. 3:21, when our soul will be sinless, holy, undefiled, and undefilable. That is the wonderful goal for which God has predestinated us. And before God the predestinated are already conformed to the image of Christ from the very moment (may we so call it?) of their predestination in the eternities before the world began. Paul does not use the verbal connective "to be"; he simply uses the adjective, the predicate accusative, "conformed ones." A literal translation would be: Whom He foreknew, He also predestinated (as) conformed ones. By virtue of His predestination they are, as far as the eternal God is concerned, conformed to the image of Christ, already in full possession of their glory in heaven, ages before they were born. Ages before the mountains were brought forth or ever He had formed the earth and the world, the God of



loving foreknowledge already saw His predestinated ones enjoying His blissful company in heaven. And in this manner, with such positive assurance based on the infallible Word of the unchanging God, a Christian should regard his eternal salvation.

"That He might be the First-born among many brethren." That is another purpose God had in mind when He conceived His plan of salvation and determined to predestinate some to be conformed to the image of His Son. This plan was to serve also *ad maiorem gloriam Christi*, who played such an essential part in God's plan of salvation on which His decree of predestination is based. Cp. vv. 32, 34. The sacrifice the Son was willing to offer was not to be in vain. It was to be more than the grandest manifestation of God's mercy and Christ's love. It was to be a gloriously successful one in spite of all appearances to the contrary, in spite of all cavils and calumnies of unbelievers. He, the only-begotten Son of God, would become the First-born among many brethren. As He was the Son of God in whom God was well pleased, so there would be many sons of God whom He as the Captain of their salvation has brought unto glory, having through His death delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, Heb. 2:10-14. As He is not ashamed to call them brethren, so they in all eternity gratefully own Him their Elder Brother, the First-born, to whom they owe all they have and enjoy as sons of God at home in the blessed mansions of the Father prepared for them by the Son. Sons of God through the only-begotten Son! Children of adoption through the First-born among many brethren! The eternal salvation of the predestinated is the rich reward, the crown of glory, which the Eternal Father has decreed for the Son as the Redeemer of mankind.

"Moreover whom He did predestinate them He also called." In v. 29 Paul had spoken of the plans and acts of God dating back to eternity. Now he speaks of the execution of these plans in the course of time. As already noted, these aorists describe all that God has done in time, is still doing, and will do for all that are ultimately brought to glory. Having predestinated some for everlasting life, He will surely call them, call them efficaciously and effectively. While hundreds of thousands despise and reject God's call and are hopelessly lost, those whom He has foreordained, whom He has from eternity chosen as His own, these will by His call through the Gospel come to everlasting life. In these He will through the Gospel implant saving faith, faith which accepts the forgiveness wrought for all mankind when God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, 2 Cor. 5:19-21. It cannot be otherwise. It is the immutable God that has predestinated us unto life, and His counsel cannot fail. Is. 28:29. Though Satan



burns with eagerness to frustrate God's determination, though he raves and rages with greater fury the closer the end of the world draws near, yet the immutable counsel of the God who changeth not (Mal. 3:6) will be carried out in His own time without failure. He will call them whom He has predestinated, every one of them, and call them not only efficaciously, as He does all men, but effectively, so that they will by the power of His grace come to saving faith and accept the blessings offered to them in the Gospel.

"And whom He called, them He also justified." The apostle uses this latter term in the sense of Rom. 3:21—4:24, of justification through faith, of that act of God whereby God at the moment His call becomes effective, at the moment He brings them to faith by His call, pronounces them righteous for Christ's sake, Rom. 3:24, tells them, Jer. 31:34, and presents them with the costly garments of Christ's perfect righteousness, Is. 61:10, clothed in which they stand before the judgment-throne of God without fear of condemnation, Zech. 3:1-5; Rom. 7:9-17; 19:8. And He Himself will keep them in this saving faith to the end. That is the next link in this golden chain.

"Whom He justified, them He also glorified." He that began a good work in the Christians will carry it out to successful and blessed completion, Phil. 1:6. Many interpreters restrict the glorification of which the apostle speaks here to the glory that is the Christian's during his lifetime. They argue that since all preceding aorists refer to the past, this last aorist must also be referred to the past. Let us recall what has been said above on the flexibility of the aorists. Moreover, regarding this aorist as describing a past act of God will not solve the difficulty, for while the justification of a Christian is an accomplished fact lying in the past, the glorification in sanctification is not a *fait accompli*, but a progress, a gradual growth. Cp. Phil. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 3:18.

We must not overlook the scope of the text. The purpose of the apostle in this entire passage is not only to assure his readers of their present glorious state of adoption, but His purpose is to make them sure of their *future glory* as a most powerful incentive to remain patient in the tribulations and trials of this life. Beginning with v. 17 we read constantly of the glory which shall be revealed in us on yonder Day and from which nothing can shut us out, vv. 21-28. If the apostle were simply speaking of our glorification in this present life, he would be stopping before reaching the climax, before arriving at the goal toward which he had been pressing forward from v. 16, the certainty and assurance of their everlasting salvation, their future glorification. The timeless aorist comprises in one act all the individual glorifications which God has carried out, is still carrying out, and will carry out in all



eternity. Denney writes: "The tense in the last word is amazing. It is the most daring anticipation of faith that even the New Testament contains." (*Exp. Gr. Test.*, p. 652.) Amazing it is indeed, and daring it may seem. Yet Paul merely follows in the footsteps of his Savior, who already had voiced the same amazing and daring truth when He assures us: John 3:36. Denney adds, "The life is not to be taken out of it by the philosophical consideration that with God there is neither before nor after." Yet this need not and should not be a mere philosophical reflection. It is a Biblical truth, and the very fact of God's eternity and immutability guarantees to the believer the factuality of this amazing statement.

"What shall we, then, say to these things?" v. 31. The apostle had enumerated a number of divine acts in the eternities before the creation of the world, during the continuation of time, and finding their consummation in the blessed eternities when time shall cease. What shall we say in view of these indisputable facts? He answers the question by putting another question: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "For," *ὑπέρ*, over; "against," *κατά*, down upon. Hence, we might translate literally, "If God over us, who down upon us?" The root idea of the two prepositions will help to illustrate what Paul means to convey to his readers. God over us! As an eagle "fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so the Lord would lead Israel, says Moses Deut. 32:11. Cp. Ps. 91. God over us, under the shadow of the Almighty, we can safely abide, knowing that He will fulfil His precious promises, Is. 4:5, 6; 25:4. God over us, the unfailing sunshine of His everlasting grace pouring out daily, hourly, its life-giving and life-sustaining rays, His mercy and loving-kindness surrounding us wherever we go. If this God be with us, who shall be against us, down upon us? What power is there in heaven or earth or hell that can harm us so long as God is for us, Ps. 27:1 ff?

There can be no doubt that God is with us. The apostle tells us what kind of God he has in mind, one "that spareth not His own Son," v. 32. The Greek text inserts after the pronoun the connective *ὅς* which "indicates that the meaning of the word to which it belongs has special prominence and therefore that that word is to be distinguished from the rest of the sentence and uttered with special emphasis." Thayer, *Lexicon*, p. 111. We might translate, "the very one who, precisely who." Behold what a God it is that is for us, One who spared not His own Son. The apostle evidently thinks of God's word of commendation addressed to Abraham, Gen. 22:12. There the same word is used in the Septuagint translation, meaning to hold back. Abraham did not hold back his only son. The Greek term *ἰδιος* means "pertaining to one's



self" and is used sometimes of a person who may be said to belong to one above all others. In this sense the word is used John 5:18. Abraham had other sons; yet in a certain sense Isaac was the only one, the one son of promise in whom alone the nations were to be blessed, who on that account was particularly dear to him. Therefore the Septuagint translates the word by a term meaning beloved. So God held back not even His own Son, who stood in a peculiar, unique relation to Him, who was one with the Father, beloved of Him as only the eternal Son can be loved by the eternal Father. Abraham's act was an example of obedience to a divine command. God was under no obligation whatsoever to sacrifice His Son. In giving up His Son, God was—as in all His other works—the Lord Jehovah, under obligation to no one. His entire act of giving up His Son from its first planning in eternity to its final consummation on Calvary was a willing act of His own choice, a spontaneous surrender of His Son, proceeding from His gracious goodness and loving mercy. He would have remained the just and holy and gracious and blissful God if He had determined to reject and condemn man. This very fact places His act on an unsurpassable pinnacle. His is indeed an eternal love all human love transcending.

God "delivered Him up for us all." The word deliver is the same word used of God's giving over the wicked to a reprobate mind, Rom. 1:21, 24, 26, 28, where Paul describes the giving up of the servants of sin to the power of sin and Satan. So God gave up His own Son to the powers of darkness, Matt. 4:1 ff.; Luke 23: 37, 41-44, 53. For what purpose did He deliver His Son? Paul had answered that in v. 29. Cp. Heb. 2:10-15. "For us all." Paul has in mind all believing Christians, not because they are the only ones for whom Christ died, for Paul is the teacher of universal redemption and objective justification. But in a special sense Jesus, the Savior of all men, is the Savior of them that believe. Unbelievers reject this marvelous love of God. It is only in the believing Christians that the loving sacrifice of God accomplishes its glorious purpose, the eternal salvation of sinful man. The apostle stresses the truth that Christ died for the Christians because here he is seeking to comfort and strengthen these very believers during the troubles of this time. If a mother tells one of her children, "I love you," that does not exclude her other children from her love. And if a child exclaims with joy, "Mother loves me," that does not make him the only recipient of the mother's love, nor does the child mean to say that. But every Christian should know that Christ was delivered for us *all*, for every individual Christian. That includes not only John, the beloved disciple, but Saul, the converted persecutor of Christ; not only Mary, the mother of the



Savior, but also the woman that was a sinner; not only innocent infants brought to Christ by Baptism, but conscience-stricken adults, oppressed by the knowledge that time and again they have broken their baptismal covenant. For all of them, for every believing Christian, for every one who seeks the Savior's forgiveness, this very Savior has been given up. The sins of a Christian, though more inexcusable than those of an unbeliever (cp. Luke 12:47, 48), because Christians are the children of God in Christ Jesus, still have been atoned for, done away with, because God delivered up His own Son for *Christians* also, for *all* of them.

Since God has made this supreme sacrifice, "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Note how effectively Paul placed his words so as to emphasize each one, how not also with Him all things to us He will graciously grant? "How not?" The apostle knows no answer to the question excepting an emphatic: It is impossible that God should not do that! "Also" adds something. But before stating what it adds, the apostle emphatically places Christ once more before our eyes: "with Christ." Without Christ we are without God and without hope in the world, Eph. 2:12. With Christ we have not only Christ as a Savior and Redeemer from past sins and bygone sorrows, not only from present shortcomings, trials, and temptations: With Christ is also given us "all," "the whole of what God has to bestow in accordance with the aim of the surrender of Jesus; that is, not 'the universe of things' (Hofmann), which is here quite foreign; but in harmony with the context, vv. 26-30, the collective saving blessings of His love shown to us in Christ." \* Looking back upon his past life, a Christian may say, Yes, I am a Christian; I am called; I am justified; I believe now. But looking into the unknown future, grave and harassing doubts and misgivings may arise, "Will I remain steadfast to the end? Have not many fallen away? What about the sin so easily besetting me? What about Satan, that untiring enemy of my salvation? What about my flesh and the temptations constantly threatening me? What about the future? The apostle comforts and encourages and strengthens just such care-worn Christians: With Christ all things will be given to you, all things you need to reach the goal. If you need comfort, with Christ it will be given you. If you need strength to crucify your flesh, with Christ it will be granted you. If you need warning or rebuke or chastisement or patience; if you need the sunshine of prosperity or the clouds of sorrow or the tempests of adversity; whatever you need, the eternal omniscience of God has not only foreseen but for all contingencies still awaiting you the

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\*) Meyer in loc.



God of everlasting love has provided for you in His gracious decree of predestination before the world began, has determined to give that to you together with Christ and stands ready to grant it all to you as the need arises. As thy years, so shall thy strength be! And all this without money and without price, all this—that is the last and most emphatic, most comforting statement—“He shall freely give,” *χαρίσεται*, graciously grant without any merit or worthiness on our part, only because He will glorify those whom He has called and justified. And He has called them because according to His purpose He has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, and He has predestinated them because from eternity He foreknew them and loved them with an everlasting love.

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On the basis of this noble passage the pastor may preach on *The Certainty of a Believer's Salvation* and then take up each clause, God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, will glorify, because He spared not His own Son, He will give us all things. Conclusion v. 31.—*We Enter the New Year with the Conviction, If God be for Us, Who Can Be Against Us?* (1) God is for us. He has given us His Son. In Him He has chosen, called, justified, will glorify us. (2) Who can be against us? Picture the dangers, temptations, etc., confronting us. Yet all things must work together for good to us. Will the Father who gave His own Son, will Christ who died for us, will the Holy Ghost, who called us, the Triune God who foreknew us, will He not freely give us all things?—*Jesus Christ, The Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever.* (1) In Him we were chosen. (2) In Him we were called. (3) In Him we shall be glorified.—*Our First-born Brother Leads Us Onward.* (1) He was delivered up for us all. (2) In Him we have been chosen and called. (3) In Him all things are freely given us.—*All Things Must Work Together for Good unto Them That Love God.* (1) God has chosen us to be His own. (2) He will surely glorify us.

THEO. LAETSCH

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