

# The Purpose of God in Salvation

## pRomans 8:28–30

### Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

### Introduction

George Whitefield quoted the reformer John Bradford: “Let a man go to the grammar school of faith and repentance, before he goes to the university of election and predestination.”

This statement reflects the reality that these doctrines that we are engaged in studying or some of the most complicated yet deep and amazing doctrines of all the Scripture.

They permeate all of Scripture and reflect the divine authorship of the Word of God. Men would not

write a book that would put them at the disposal of the God that they worship. Especially since men can do nothing at all to save themselves or to perform enough good works to get themselves saved. They are left solely at the disposal of a Sovereign God.

It indeed teaches us that God is indeed God

There are some areas of doctrine that are so often misunderstood not properly taught that lead to confusion all these very topics.

The first would be the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. This is rarely taught or expounded in most modern pulpits today.

Pastors and the people of their churches will often tell us that they believe in the sovereignty of God. But what is meant by that is that God is sovereign over his creation. He is sovereign over the angels. He is sovereign over the demons of the devil. But whenever it comes to God being sovereign over man and his salvation immediately His Sovereignty is limited.

The second doctrine that is so often not talk correctly and misunderstood is the depravity of man. Or perhaps maybe to be clearer the inability of man.

Men are said to be evil and sinners but but rarely is it explained that not only is his passion a slave to sin but his will is a slave to sin. Deadness in sin is described as someone who will eventually be dead

because they sin rather than being bound by and imprisoned by their sin with no ability or desire whatsoever to come to Christ and be saved.

Depravity of man is characterized as the depth of sin rather than the effect of sin.

Also add to the fact that we have a feel good theology today with preachers who rarely talk about the justice and wrath of God against sinners.

The love of God is expounded on a daily basis. What you will look far and wide to find is sermon like Jonathan Edwards preached, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God". You will rarely if ever hear verses that God is angry with the wicked every day. You will rarely if ever hear that we don't even deserve an opportunity to hear the gospel much less the gospel itself. And that if someone is saved. It is the mercy and grace of God moved by the love of God.

The doctrine of hell and eternal punishment is systematically being denied by preachers and parishioners alike.

If it is not directly denied or explained out of existence, it just is not referred to or taught and if it is mentioned it is more of an addendum to the gospel to make it good news.

The Gospel, the Bible and the Church has become a message and a book and an institution for the help men rather than for the Glory of God.

It is to help you feel better, do better and be better.

But anyone who spends time in reading and Studying passages like we have before us knows that this message and God's purpose is much bigger and deeper than that.

The Salvation of Man is primarily for the Glory of God although, we are the beneficiaries of that great purpose and plan

## **Review.**

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son,

## **Lesson**

This passage, along with all of Romans 8 is one of the clearest and irrefutable declarations on the security of the believer in all the Bible.

If understood correctly, it is a profound and amazing reality that the believer is who he is because of the purposes of God.

All of this was purposed and planned by God in eternity past long before you ever came into existence.

Your name had been written in the lambs book of life before your where born, and before the world was created.

The Salvation of sinners is not left to chance or to a provision that left to the corrupt and and enslaved wills of men.

It is the purpose of God to save sinners, and he is working in history, in time, calling the ones he has chosen to himself.

And as indicated by the text, the ones he foreknew- fore loved = chose to set his affection on. Will make it to glory = heaven.

None are lost, none stop believing, none apostatize, none will get saved and then walk away from the faith.

Look at the text again.

<sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

There is nothing in these verses that even leave a hint that it might not happen. This is assured. It is absolute.

The ones in eternity past whom were predestined will, not might, but will be glorified.

This is the golden chain with five links that cannot and will not be broken

1. Foreknew
2. Predestined
3. Called
4. Justified
5. Glorified.

They take us from eternity past in the mind of God before we are created, into time when he exist and are called and justified, to eternity future when we are glorified in heaven with Christ.

What a great security... What a great reality... what a great hope.

Not only this, but if you look further in the text,

### **Romans 8:31–35 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,

how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> *Who is he who condemns?* *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Even with these great text, along with many more, invariably, someone will bring up, that they knew someone who once believed and was a Christian and then walked away and lost their salvation.

So the conclusion is that, salvation is not permanent and is not eternal. You can loose your salvation.

And with that statement, I would hardly agree.

You can loose YOUR salvation.

But you cannot loose God's Salvation.

This salvation as defined in this text is not based in man but rather the purpose, plan and execution and preservation of God.

God is doing the choosing, God is doing the calling, God is doing the justifying and God is doing the Glorifying.

There is literally nothing in this text that has a hint of what man does.

Its no wonder then why Paul makes this statement.

Romans 8:31 (NKJV)

<sup>31</sup> ...If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

To be saved

A sinner, who is dead in his sin and unable and unwilling to come to Christ, must be given life to come, faith to believe and repentance to turn from sin to God, and by the Holy Spirit is granted the ability to confess and submit to Jesus as Lord.

Men by themselves and of themselves cannot save themselves any more than a dead corpse on the bottom of the ocean can get up and come out of the water.

It is a true miracle of God of regeneration.

But it does not stop there...

He is kept by the Power of God.

enabled by the Spirits power to preserve

and even in his failings and sin, he has Christ who is at the right hand of the Father interceding on our Behalf.....



And that is not all.

He has the Great and Powerful Sovereign God who is providentially working all things together for God, thereby assuring that whatever comes into the believers life will be for the eventual Good. All the bad, all the failure, all the sin, all the tragedy. ALL ALL ALL

And that is not all

According to John 10 we are wrapped up in the hands of God and are assured of Eternal life.

John 10:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and am known by My own.

John 10:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> 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 flock *and* one shepherd.

John 10:26–30 (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. <sup>28</sup> And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> My

Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> I and My Father are one.”

But even with all of this, and the clarity of these verses, some will say you can still lose your salvation.

Often they will go to some text like Hebrews 6 and others that are misinterpreted to teach the loss of salvation.

But most of the time, these text will be supported by experience rather than proper exegetical hermeneutics.

Some know someone who made a profession of faith and then walked away.

And there have been recently, very high profile leaders and speakers, even pastors that have walked away from the Christianity.

The call this deconstruction.

The reality is this. Not that you can somehow deconstruct genuine faith and salvation, but rather, there never was real faith constructed.

This is the point that needs to be made over and over again.

People who walk away from the the faith, or stop believing or deny Christianity, where never saved... at all.

To say that someone can genuinely be saved and then, lose it or walk away from it makes this text in Romans a lie.

**28 And we know that all things work together for good**

This would be a lie because we cannot say absolutely that all things work for good, since some obviously don't and lead to unbelief and loss of salvation.

**to those who love God,**

this would be a lie because, they don't really love God, they love their sin and self. The Present Participle represents a constant description of them.

**29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son**

this would be a lie because the predestined is not going to happen. The one that he predetermined to conform to the image of Christ did not happen.

these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

This would be a lie because, of all that he called some would not be glorified.

It completely turns this passage on its head and makes it useless rhetoric,... lie after lie after lie.

There are many other passages that this also would be true of

### **John 6:36–40 (NKJV)**

<sup>36</sup> But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. <sup>37</sup> All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. <sup>38</sup> For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. <sup>39</sup> This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. <sup>40</sup> And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

**John 6:44 (NKJV)**

<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

**John 10:28 (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup> And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

**1 Peter 1:3–5 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NKJV)**

<sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*.

**Jude 24–25 (NKJV)**

<sup>24</sup> Now to Him who is able to keep you from  
stumbling,  
And to present *you* faultless  
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding  
joy,  
<sup>25</sup> To God our Savior,  
Who alone is wise,  
Be glory and majesty,  
Dominion and power,  
Both now and forever.  
Amen.

But even in light of all of this, there will still be those who believe you can be lost after being saved, or you can stop believing after being saved or you can walk away from Christ after being saved.

But this reflects a misunderstanding of the nature of regeneration and the origination of faith, repentance and confession.

According to John chapter 3 regeneration is a sovereign Lord of God. It is the imparting of new life to the one who is dead in his sins.

Regeneration is not dependent upon Man meeting some qualifications before he is regenerated.

Man does not have to believe and repent to get regenerated rather regeneration produces faith and repentance.

Regeneration is the imparting of life so that the man who was once dead in his sins can now see and understand the gospel and now can believe and repent

Just like in our physical life we had to be granted life by God's sovereignty and then to be born physically in order to see and to understand.

He is in the spiritual life, life must be granted sovereignly first so that you can believe and repent and come to Christ. This is the reverse of what bunch of evangelicalism is teaching today. Yes we do not genuinely understand regeneration and salvation

Theologians call this the “Ordo salutis”

John 3:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

John 3:7–8 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

### **John 1:12–13 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received (A.A.I) Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe (P.A.Pt) in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born (A.P.Pt having been born), not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And add to this that faith and repentance and confession of Christ as Lord are all gifts. They are divine gifts given to me in an order that they may be saved.

They are genuine fruits of regeneration not the reason for regeneration. But the results of regeneration. Or another way of saying that is since someone has now been granted life and raised from spiritual death, they are now able to



believe and able to repair it and able to confess Jesus as Lord by God's grace.

Jesus himself and warned of the potential of someone not having true genuine faith and looking like they were real at the very beginning.

### **Matthew 13:3–9 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup> Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. <sup>7</sup> And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. <sup>8</sup> But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup> He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

### **Matthew 13:19–23 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes

and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

<sup>20</sup> But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

<sup>22</sup> Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

<sup>23</sup> But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

### So now we turn to this amazing text

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom

He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

## I. The Promise

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good

## II. The Participants

v.28 to those who love God, to those who are the called

## III. The Purpose

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

<sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, to be conformed to the image of His Son

these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

The great and stupendous Purpose of God is that He would select out of the mass of justly condemned sinners a large group of men women and children to save and conform to the image of Jesus Christ and to be a recipients of God's love, grace and mercy at the expense of justice and wrath being poured out on his own Son.

Paul speaks of this in Ephesians 1

### **Ephesians 1:3–12 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, <sup>5</sup> having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

<sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, <sup>9</sup> having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, <sup>10</sup> that in the

dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. <sup>11</sup> In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

So in our text the ones that are participant in this Promise and Purpose are identified.

As the ones who are loving God

These are

the Foreknown

the Predestined

the Called.

### **Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)**

<sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1. **The Foreknown**— this is a beautiful term referring to the elect of God. The chosen of God. As we saw last time, this refers to a preset love. A predetermined intimate relationship with his elect.

This does not refer to God looking down time and seeing what men will do in response to the gospel and choosing them if they choose Him.

This is not foreseen faith to determine Gods elective purpose.

As we noted, God does not and has not learned anything. All has been predetermined and planned. He is the one who ordains all things and knows all things because He ordains all things and controls all things.

And as we noted, if it did mean that God looked ahead to see what men would do, He would only see men hating God, rejecting Christ, suppressing the truth, not coming to the light lest there evil deeds be made known.

God grants faith, repentance and Confession.

The next phrase is **Romans 8:28–30** (NKJV)

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined

predestined

**proorizó: to predetermine, foreordain**

**Original Word:** προορίζω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** proorizó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (pro-or-id'-zo)

**Definition:** to predetermine, foreordain

**Usage:** I foreordain, predetermine, mark out beforehand.

4309 proorízō (from 4253 /pró, "before" and 3724 /horízō, "establish boundaries, limits") – properly, pre-horizon, pre-determine limits (boundaries) predestine.

[4309 (proorízō) occurs six times in the NT (eight in the writings of Paul). Since the root (3724 /horízō) already means "establish boundaries," the added prefix (pro, "before") makes 4309 (proorízō) "to pre-establish boundaries," i.e. before creation.]

[Literal Standard Version](#)

because whom He foreknew, **He also foreordained**, conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be firstborn among many brothers;

[Berean Literal Bible](#)

because those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be firstborn among many brothers.

### Young's Literal Translation

because whom He did foreknow, He also did fore-appoint, conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be first-born among many brethren;

### Smith's Literal Translation

For whom he before knew, he also before determined of the form of the image of his Son, for him to be first born in many brethren.

## **1 Corinthians 2:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which **God ordained before the ages for our glory,**

Ephesians 1:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> **having predestined us to adoption** as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Ephesians 1:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestined according to the purpose of**



**Him** who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

### **Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup> “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and **Your purpose determined before** to be done.

“Paul is saying that God is the author of our salvation, and that from beginning to end. We are not to think that God can take action only when we graciously give him permission. Paul is saying that God initiates the whole process. As Barrett puts it: “The history and personal make-up of the Church are not due to chance or to arbitrary human choices, but represent the working out of God’s plan....”

Morris, L. (1988). *The Epistle to the Romans* (p. 332). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, **He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

## conformed

**summorphos: similar, conformed to**

**Original Word:** σύμμορφος, ον

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** summorphos

**Phonetic Spelling:** (soom-mor-fos')

**Definition:** to conform to

**Usage:** similar, conformed to.

Cognate: 4832 σύμμορφος – properly, conformed, by sharing the same inner essence-identity (form); **showing similar behavior from having the same essential nature** (used in Phil 3:10; this adjectival form also occurs in Ro 8:29 in many texts). [See 4833](#) (symmorpho

**58.5 σύμμορφος, ον:** pertaining to that which has a similar form or nature—‘similar in form, of the same form.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 584). New York: United Bible Societies.

### **Philippians 3:20–21 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

<sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body that it may be **conformed** to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

<sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the **image** of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

## **image**

**likeness** n. — similarity in appearance, character, or nature between persons or things.

**eikón: an image, i.e. lit. statue, fig. representation**

**Original Word:** εἰκών, ὄνομα, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** eikón

**Phonetic Spelling:** (i-kone')

**Definition:** an image, statue, representation

**Usage:** an image, likeness, bust.

1504 eikón (from 1503 /eíkō, "be like") – properly, "mirror-like representation," referring to what is very close in resemblance (like a "high-definition" projection, as defined by the context). Image (1504 /eikón) then exactly reflects its source (what it directly corresponds to).

For example, Christ is the very image (1504 /eikón, supreme expression) of the Godhead (see 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15).

"1504 (eikón) assumes a prototype, of which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn" (R. Trench). 1504 (eikón) then is more than a "shadow"; rather it is a replication (F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, 226; see also Lightfoot at Col 3:10 and 2:21).

We will be in the likeness him in the since of sanctification, purity, holiness.

### **Ephesians 1:4–5 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, <sup>5</sup> having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Predestination refers to God predetermining to make us like Christ.

I have heard some say that that is all it has to do with and nothing to do with salvation. But that is wrong on many levels

1. The whole process of salvation is for the purpose of making one like Christ.

2. The work of regeneration starts the whole process. You cannot have faith, and repent of sin and confess Jesus as Lord unless you have been made alive.

3. The only ones that will be conformed to the image of Christ are the ones that are foreknown.

And these are the ones that God set his love on before they were born. This is inherently Gods election.

To say that predestination has nothing to do with Salvation and only sanctification misses the point of Romans 8:28-30

It is the the ones that are preknown that are predestined. The fact that they are preknown is what infant predestined them to be like Christ.

With that said, I do find it important to emphasize that this does not say that we are predestined to stay out of Hell, although that is true by default.

It does not say that we are predestined to be forgiven of our sin, although that is true by default

Rather the emphasis is placed on sanctification., being made like Christ in Holiness

This also places emphasis that there is no disconnect of justification from Sanctification.

Those who are Justified will be Sanctified.

Salvation from the penalty of sin without salvation from the power of sin is foreign to the Bible.

### **John 17:16–17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

### **John 17:19 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

### **1 Corinthians 15:47–49 (NKJV)**

<sup>47</sup> The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. <sup>49</sup> And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*.

### **2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

### **1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

<sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son,  
that He might be the  
firstborn among many brethren.

#### [Smith's Literal Translation](#)

For whom he before knew, he also before determined of the form of the image of his Son, for him to be first born in many brethren.

## prototokos: first-born

**Original Word:** πρωτότοκος, ον

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** prototokos

**Phonetic Spelling:** (pro-tot-ok'-os)

**Definition:** first-born

**Usage:** first-born, eldest.

4416 prōtōtokos (from 4413 /prōtos, "first, pre-eminent" and 5088 /tiktō, "bring forth") – properly, first in time (Mt 1:25; Lk 2:7); hence, pre-eminent (Col 1:15; Rev 1:5).

4416 /prōtōtokos ("firstly") specifically refers to Christ as the first to experience glorification, i.e. at His resurrection (see Heb 12:23; Rev 1:5). For this (and countless other reasons) Jesus is "preeminent" (4416 /prōtōtokos) – the unequivocal Sovereign over all creation (Col 1:16).

[4416 (prōtōtokos) refers to "the first among others (who follow)" – as with the preeminent, glorified Christ, the eternal Logos who possesses self-existent life (Jn 5:26).]

### Colossians 1:15–18 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. <sup>18</sup> And He is the



head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Hebrews 1:5–6 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did He ever say:

*“You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You”?*

And again:

*“I will be to Him a Father,  
And He shall be to Me a Son”?*

<sup>6</sup> But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says:

*“Let all the angels of God worship Him.”*

Revelation 1:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

29 For whom He foreknew, He also  
 predestined *to be* conformed to the  
 image of His Son,  
 that He might be the  
 firstborn among many brethren.

Matthew 12:50 (NKJV)

<sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

Matthew 25:40 (NKJV)

<sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

“It is God’s plan that his people become like his Son, not that they should muddle along in a modest respectability. We should be in no doubt as to the high standard that Paul sets for Christian people. We have been admitted to the heavenly family; we are *brothers* in that family and we call God “Father”. We are accordingly to live as members of the family, and that means being made like our elder Brother. This is all part of God’s predestination; he predestined us not only to be released from an unpleasant predicament, but in order that we might become like his Son.”

Morris, L. (1988). [The Epistle to the Romans](#) (p. 333). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

