



Romans 8 Pt. 8: Justified

Romans 8:28-34 *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. 31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”*

I am quite positive that Romans 8:28 is the most controversial verse in the Bible. This is the crescendo of all that Romans 8 is. Yet, people are divided over this verse. I was forming a new ministry with a friend. When we differed on this verse, he left the friendship. I have never spoken to him since. Trust me this verse is a doozy. Some claim that only a few people are called or predestined to enter heaven. My former friend believed that he was charged with finding the sleeping predestined. To him and many others, some people were always destined for hell. Yet, I wonder if we have taken this verse all wrong?

This is a book written to Jewish people. Gentiles and the regular joe would not have deep understanding of the Law of Moses. This chapter is so deep that you can go off on many rabbit trails. What if these set of verses were talking to Jews? What if it had nothing to do with who can go to heaven but (instead) it was speaking to Jewish responsibility to God as His chosen children. Remember, gentiles

are adopted. The Jewish nation was chosen. Paul writes in Romans 1:16 *“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”* Right there in the beginning of this chapter we get the template for Paul’s view on heaven. “Everyone” who believes can be saved. Yet, there is an order to things. 1 Peter 2:9 sums it up *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*

Like it or not, the Jewish nation are called out to be the priests of God. To protect and administer the word. Jesus was the word, priest, and teacher. He was Jewish. Gentiles come from the rest of the world outside the Jewish nation. We gentiles do not have a holy nation. Romans 8 is a call for Jews to return to being a holy nation. God chose them regardless of who they were. He predestined that nation to lead us in heaven. Verse 29 points this out. They are predestined and first born among many brothers and sisters. They? Yes, the Jewish nation surrounded by adopted gentile brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus.

The reason I made this study encompass so many verses is because it is one statement. First: those God called He justified and glorified. If God claims you then His decision to do so is justified. It is Gods choice. Secondly, any decision that God makes is glorified in heaven. Then we have the hinge verse 31 *“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”* If God made the decision, then it is done. No matter what we think, say, or do in response to Gods choice, it is done. Paul to the Jews: if God chose us then we are Gods. It cannot be broken by man.

Men have tried to claim these verses as their own. That gentile men can be saved first. People have justified themselves for rejecting others because they felt God chose them only. Yet, Gods word does not lie. God chose the Jews first and then the gentiles. However, they all are

Gods children. Some chosen and some adopted. Yet, there is only one firstborn Son: Christ Jesus. Paul confirms this in the final few verses. Jews are chosen but Jesus is the Son. Gentiles are added in but Jesus is the Son. His sacrifice, His position, and His authority come first over all creation.

Justified means a right or reasonable basis. Yet, some other descriptions of the words call it aligned and made even. Whomever God calls are justified. For thousands of years people have placed the justification on themselves. They are called and they are special. Although this is true in a sense it is not the correct meaning to this word. It is Gods actions toward us that are justified. Its Gods will and plan being evenly aligned and reasonably made within the margin that counts. What God wanted to happen is happening regardless of you: Jew or gentile included.

Verse 34 concludes our study perfectly. *“Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”* As I have said, men have condemned people throughout history. Rejected them in the religion. Rejected them into heaven and the church. They have done this because they believed they were called, justified, and predestined to do so. Yet, that is not how the scripture reads. It is Jesus, by His actions that justifies. It is God by His calling that justifies. Who are the predestined? It is those God chose: first the Jew and then the gentile. Pride says we play a role in this. Reality is humbling because nobody (Jew or gentile) played a role in Gods will. Paul plainly points out that God made all the justified choices for justified reasons only He knows.