

## January 20 - Calling, Regeneration, Conversion, Justification, Adoption

### I. Calling:

When Paul talks about the way that God brings salvation into our lives, he says, “Those whom he *predestined* he also *called*; and those whom he called he also *justified*; and those whom he justified he also *glorified*” (Rom. 8:30).

#### **Romans 8:30 (NASB95)**

**30** and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Here Paul points to a definite order in which the blessings of salvation come to us. Although long ago, before the world was made, God “predestined” us to be his children and to be conformed to the image of his Son, Paul points to the fact that in the actual outworking of his purpose in our lives God “called” us (here in this context, God the Father is specifically in view).

Then Paul immediately lists justification and glorification, showing that these come *after calling*.

### A. effective calling

When Paul says, “Those whom he predestined *he* also called; and those whom *he* called he also justified” (Rom. 8:30), he indicates that calling is an act of God. In fact, it is specifically an act of God the Father, for he is the one who predestines people “to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). Other verses describe more fully what this calling is. When God calls people in this powerful way, he calls them “out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9); he calls them “into the fellowship of his Son” (1 Cor. 1:9; cf. Acts 2:39) and “into his own kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:12; cf. 1 Peter 5:10; 2 Peter 1:3). People who have been called by God “belong to Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:6). They are called to “be saints” (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2), and have come into a realm of peace

### B. external calling

The general gospel invitation offered to all people that comes through human proclamation of the gospel. Also referred to as “general calling” or “the gospel call,” this call can be rejected by people. (33A)<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 1241.

### **C. gospel call**

The general gospel invitation to all people that comes through human proclamation of the gospel. Also referred to as “external calling.”

### **II. Regeneration:**

We may define regeneration as follows: *Regeneration is a secret act of God in which he imparts new spiritual life to us.* This is sometimes called “being born again” (using language from John 3:3–8).

### **III. Conversion:**

*Conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation.*

The word *conversion* itself means “turning—here it represents a spiritual turn, a turning *from sin to Christ*. The turning from sin is called *repentance* and the turning to Christ is called *faith*.

***Regeneration precedes conversion...***

### **IV. Justification:**

Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which He (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in His sight.

### **V. Adoption:**

*Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.*