

**Series: God Saves #1436**

**Title: Romans 8.29b; Romans 9  
Because of God**

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. As we begin this new week, I remind you we are discussing God's foreknowledge and predestination in relation to human free will. As you listen, you have learned my perspective on this and then at the end of last week I introduced you to an alternative view. We then put that view under the microscope of a chapter in the New Testament Book of Romans, several verses of which serve as a critique of the alternative view.

That's what we were doing as last week came to a close. And so, let me (briefly) state the alternative view and then we will return to Romans 9, a passage that proves this alternative view to be incorrect. Since we have already done some work in Romans I will also remind you of that as well. If, for whatever reason, you have not been with us in this protracted study of predestination, I want to encourage you to listen to what you missed from our website, [godisministry.org](http://godisministry.org), that's [godisministry.org](http://godisministry.org). All of the free podcasts are there for easy listening at a time convenient to you. Since one day's teaching, one week's teaching builds on what comes before it, to really grasp what is being said it is important to come along with us each weekday. The podcasts at [godisministry.o-r-g](http://godisministry.o-r-g) will help you to do that.

In a nutshell, using few words, here is the alternative view. God, from before time began, being all-knowing looks down the corridor of time, looks straight down through human history, and He identifies real people who He sees will choose, of their own free will, to believe in Jesus. Then, in this sense God predestines that person: He chooses them, He elects them for salvation. In other words, God's choice depends on the free choice of each person. If a person does the good work of choosing Christ, then God in turn chooses him or her. If a person does the bad work of not choosing Christ, then God in turn does not choose him or her.

According to this view, the final decision for our salvation rests on our human free will to choose Christ rather than on God's free will to choose us. This view supposedly upholds, together, God's foreknowledge and predestination *with* human free will. But again we ask: is this biblical? Is this view clearly found in Scripture? And we said, no. This is not a biblical view. And if ever there was a passage where the Apostle Paul could have written in support of this alternative view, it is in Romans chapter 9. But when we come to Romans 9 and read it we see, even on the surface, that the Apostle's emphasis is on *God's predetermined choice* not on our human choices. Let's see this again today.

I am reading Romans chapter 9, beginning in verse 10. **"And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; <sup>11</sup> for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, <sup>12</sup> it was said to [Rebekah], 'The older will serve the younger.' <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.'"**

Last week we read about Isaac, Rebekah, and their two boys Esau and Jacob in Genesis. And we emphasized what Paul does: a) though the twins were not yet born and b) therefore had not done anything good or bad, it was because of *God's choice* of Jacob that the older boy (Esau) will serve the younger boy (Jacob) and that God declares "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." We talked about *when* God's choice was made and that was in eternity past, before time began. *Before* their birth, *before* Esau or Jacob could do anything good or bad, *before* then God chose Jacob.

With that alternative view in mind we must ask: *if* God chose Jacob because God had looked down the corridor of time and saw that Jacob would choose Him, then why doesn't Paul the great Apostle and theologian say that? Instead, Paul says the opposite. He adds, "though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to [God's] choice would stand..." He specifically tells us that in the mind of God, when holy God made His choice, the decision was made as if God did not know what the boys will do. Paul is silent on presenting this alternative view of predestination and human free will here in Romans chapter 9. And it is right here where the alternative view would fit, but it is never mentioned.

Do not pass over those words in verse 11 too quickly: “God’s purpose according to His choice would stand...” Highlight that in your Bible. God’s purpose, God’s choice – not Jacob’s purpose, not Jacob’s choice. God’s purpose, God’s choice – not our purpose, not our choice.

And then get these next words highlighted as well, “not because of works but because of Him who calls.” Wow. That’s essential. The Apostle emphasizes *not* because of Jacob’s good work (or on the negative, not being chosen) *not* because of Esau’s bad work. But because of who? “Because of Him who calls,” and He is *God*. God told Rebekah, “The older will serve the younger” because God had made His choice, God called Jacob. This was *not* because Jacob chose God. It was because God chose Jacob long before Jacob was born, before he had done anything good or bad.

Think about this part of verse 11 this way. What is the best choice a human being can ever make? What is the best work a person can ever do? It is to choose Christ. I think of Jesus’ words in John chapter 6 and verse 29. The Lord said, “**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.**” So to do the work of God is to believe in Jesus whom God sent. That is a really great *work*. The supreme good work is to believe in Jesus. Therefore, the supreme bad work is to *not* believe in Jesus; to reject Jesus. That is a really bad *work*. If the alternative view is right, then God looked down the timeline of world events and He saw Jacob doing the supreme good work of choosing God (Christ not yet having lived on earth), *then* because of Jacob’s good work, God chose Jacob.

But that is definitely *not* what the Apostle Paul writes. He says (Romans 9, verse 11), “not because of works but because of Him who calls.” By this he means God’s election, God’s choice of Jacob, God’s choice of anyone for that matter, is *not* because of the good work we do, but because of God who calls us. Paul says the opposite of what our alternative view says. Paul states the glory for our salvation goes to God alone, because God alone is responsible for us choosing the Lord Jesus and therefore being saved from our sin. The final decision for our salvation rests not on our human free will and choice, but rather on God’s free choice of us. And God made that choice when we were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad.

What Jacob ended up doing had nothing to do with God’s choice of him. What Esau ended up doing had nothing to do with God not choosing him. Let me repeat: What Jacob ended up doing had nothing to do with God’s choice of him. What Esau ended up doing had nothing to do with God not choosing him. Because, as I hope you see, God made God’s choice before the boys were born, therefore before they did anything good or bad.

Ah, but this will likely get a negative reaction from you. The objection usually sounds something like this: “It’s not fair! It’s not fair that before Jacob was born he was chosen and before Esau was born he was not chosen. In order for God to be fair He should have chosen both Jacob and Esau, but because God only chose Jacob, God was being *unfair*. And that’s not right.”

In fact, usually, for most people the real problem is that God did not also choose Esau. We have no problems with God choosing Jacob, but we do take issue with God not also choosing his older brother Esau. In this we sense a lack of fairness. And we can even sense this in our own households, parenting sons and daughters. If one child gets chosen for something, then to be fair the other child should also be chosen. Otherwise, it is not fair. How many parents have been charged with that! Well, more on this tomorrow on God Is.

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