*Northwest Bible Church – Apr. 4, 2004 – Worship Service – Alan Conner*

**Romans 8:29**

*Divine Foreknowledge*

**INTRO**

**I. THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF SALVATION.**

    This purpose of salvation to which we have been called by God’s special and efficacious call is set forth in five stages and these are given in their logical and historical order: 1) FOREKNOWLEDGE, 2) PREDESTINATION, 3) CALLING, 4) JUSTIFICATION, 5) GLORIFICATION.

        God is the subject of all of these verses.
        This is to be sure an abbreviated list.

**II. A POPULAR BUT WRONG VIEW OF FOREKNOWLEDGE.**

    FREEWILL UNDERSTANDING of Rom. 8:29 – "those whom He foreknew would believe". God’s foreknowledge is His looking down through the ages of time and seeing who would choose Him and based on their choice, God chooses them.

    This word is used in the sense of having knowledge beforehand in the NT: Acts 26:5; 2 Pet. 3:17.
But in all these verses it refers only to men as the subject, never to God.

**III. THE BIBLICAL MEANING OF DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN ROM. 8:29.**
    A. God’s knowledge. We can think of God’s knowledge in two categories:

        1) general knowledge of all things past, present, and future (omniscience),

 2) His special knowledge of His chosen people whom He loves. Support:

Jer. 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."
Amos 3:2 "You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth;" – "Chosen" (NASB, NIV) here is literally "knew" (KJV).

        THUS, God’s FORE-knowledge means His FORE-choice or His PRE-election. It refers to those whom God has chosen ahead of time.

    B. Rom. 8:29 and God’s foreknowledge.

        a) Rom. 8:29 does not say that God knew before hand "who would believe."
        b) Notice the object of the foreknowledge is people, not information about them.
        c) Those whom God foreknew are also those "called according to His purpose."

    C. Examination of the five occurrences of God’s foreknowledge in the NT.

        1) Acts 2:23 this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

        2) Rom. 11:2 God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

        3) Rom. 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

        4) 1 Pet. 1:1-2 chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.

        5) 1 Pet. 1:20 Christ, for He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (NIV has "chosen," KJV "foreordained").

    SUM: foreknowledge means foreordination, predetermined knowledge based on God’s plan, or synonym for God’s special love placed upon those whom He chooses.

**IV. THE TESTIMONY OF THE EXPERTS**

    A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, p. 710, says that the word "foreknowledge" in Rom. 8:29 and 11:2 means to "choose beforehand." On 1 Pet. 1:2, they translate: "according to the predestination of God the Father."
    Theological Dictonary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel, 1:715, says concerning God’s foreknowledge, "[God’s] foreknowledge, however, is an election or foreordination of His people (Rom. 8:29; 11:2) or Christ (1 Pet. 1:20).
    Translations of Rom. 8:29:
        Moffatt’s translation – "For he decreed of old that those whom he predestined should share the likeness of his Son."
        Goodspeed – "For those whom he had marked out from the first he predestined to be made like his Son."
        Wuest – "Because, those whom He foreordained He also marked out beforehand."
        Williams – "For those on whom He set His heart beforehand He marked off as His own to be made like His Son."

**CONCLUSION**