

# Foreknown, Predestined

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Date: 11 October 2015

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[ 0 : 00 ] Let's take a seat for just a moment, and if you would, get your Bibles out and open up to Romans chapter 8, where we have been now for a couple of months.

And we're going to continue here in Romans chapter 8. If you're using one of the Bibles that we have scattered around in the chairs, then I just want to invite you to turn to page 944 in those Bibles.

It's easy to find if you turn there. Otherwise, find Romans 8 in your own copy of the Scriptures. And we are going to zero in this morning on verses 29 and 30 in this great chapter.

And I would like to ask you guys, even though you just sat down, I'd like to ask you to stand in honor of God's Word as we read together. The Apostle Paul writes, For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those whom he called, he also justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified.

[ 1 : 18 ] Father, what a wonderful passage we confront this morning. Words that are dripping with truth and depth for us to ponder and consider.

So help us not to draw our own conclusions, but to be led, to be guided by your Word as we think over these things.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. You guys take a seat. Well, last week, as we were journeying through Romans chapter 8, we paused at verse 28 and really spent all of our time on verse 28, touching on verse 29 just briefly to help us to better understand verse 28.

But we paused there because Romans 8, 28 is, as we said last week, one of the greatest promises in all of the Bible. It ought to be one of the most treasured sentences in all of the Bible for those of us who belong to Christ.

Because Paul promises us that for those who love God, for those who are called according to His purpose, all things work together for our good.

[ 2 : 28 ] That's a great promise. It means that no matter what happens to you in life, whether you're confronted with the word cancer, or you're confronted with the word divorce, or you're confronted with the word death, or whatever loss might confront you, you know that all those things are not merely the circumstances in which God happens to cause good things to happen, but those things are being worked by the providential hand of God to actually bring about your ultimate good, which, as we said last week, is to be conformed to the image of Christ, and ultimately, at the end of verse 30, to enjoy full glorification in the presence of God.

All of our old sin nature removed, all of the old problems that we experience in this fallen world, with these fallen bodies removed, to rejoice forever in the presence of our great Savior and King.

All things that happen to us in this life, good or bad, are not only happening along with God's work, they are God's work to move us toward that end, so that we should never despair as the followers of Jesus, knowing that those things are working for us, an unimaginable good ahead, our glorification in the presence of Christ.

And so now, this morning, we're not leaving that promise behind, because it does not occur in isolation from the rest of this chapter, or even from the rest of this book, or the rest of the Bible.

That promise occurs within the context of Romans chapter 8, particularly this last paragraph that extends all the way down to verse 30. And so I want us this morning not to leave the promise behind.

[ 4 : 04 ] I want us to add foundation to the promise. I want to give you more reasons to rejoice in that promise, and more reasons to be confident that God will, in fact, fulfill that promise if you

belong to Christ.

But for us to do that, we need to follow with the Apostle Paul's argument in chapter 8, because there is a clear connection between verses 29 and verse 28.

You can see it in the first word, which the ESV renders with the word for. It also means because. So Paul is adding reasons for us to be confident in the promises.

Why do we know that all things are going to work for good? Because of this, Paul says. And what is it? What is the reason? Well, this is the point in which we dive off, along with the Apostle Paul, into some matters of doctrinal importance that have been debated throughout church history.

But I contend ought not to be matters of debate, but ought to be reasons for rejoicing. So look closely. We're just really going to focus on verse 29 this morning and turn to verse 30 next week.

[ 5 : 12 ] But look closely at the connection. All things, we know that all things are going to work for good, because those whom God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that Jesus, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

So we have some very simple questions that we need to answer this morning to understand the way that this verse functions in the context of the paragraph. To understand why, why does this support our confidence in the promise of verse 28?

And those questions are as follows. Just give them to you at the beginning, and then we'll walk our way through them. Number one, what does the word foreknow mean in this context? What does it mean? Secondly, what does it mean when Paul says that those who are foreknown, God also predestines?

So we're really looking at two words and what they mean in the context of the Bible as a whole.

What does it mean for God to foreknow someone? What does it mean for God to predestine someone? And then, what is the end for which He predestines us?

What is God aiming toward for us? So those are the three questions this morning. And I want to start with this word foreknow. Those whom He foreknew, He also predestined.

[ 6 : 26 ] Because it has been the occasion for much confusion for many Christians throughout the centuries that the church has been around. Because many interpret this passage to say that the idea of predestination or the doctrine of predestination teaches that God looks into the future and He sees, because He foreknows, He sees what we will do and those whom He sees will choose to believe in Christ.

It's those that God, seeing what they will do, those He predestines. And many base the argument on this verse and a couple of other verses in the New Testament. Because He says, those whom He foreknew, He also predestined.

And yet we have to ask the question, is that what foreknow means in this context and in the broader context of the Bible itself? Is this what it means? Because that interpretation insists that what God foreknows are details about our future activities, at least from the perspective of eternity past when these things occur.

What that interpretation suggests is that God is looking ahead and seeing things about us, things that we will do, but I want you to notice that what Paul actually says is that God foreknows people, not merely the actions of people.

Notice he says, those whom He foreknew. God foreknows people here in this verse. People that He foreknows. And so for us to understand what Paul means by this phrase, we need to look through the Scriptures and say, where are the other places in which God either knows or foreknows people?

[ 8 : 06 ] And what does that mean in that context? Does it in fact mean that God knows details about their future actions? Or does it in fact mean something else?

So we're going to look at a few passages in the Old Testament that use similar language and a couple of passages in other places of the New Testament that use similar language so that we can understand this morning what does Paul mean when he uses this word in this kind of phrase?

Now, to be honest with you, the word foreknow does not occur all that many times in either the Old or the New Testament. So it's helpful for us to begin by looking at the word know because it is used and it is used specifically with reference to God's knowing people frequently throughout the Bible.

So I want you to turn all the way back to the first book of the Bible to the book of Genesis. All the way back to the middle of Genesis, roughly the middle of Genesis, more towards the beginning. In chapter 18 of the book of Genesis, if you're using one of our Bibles in the chairs, it's just page 13.

But Genesis chapter 18 uses this language of God knowing a person and we need to ask what does he mean by that in the context? So I want to jump in in verse 17 in Genesis chapter 18.

[9:17] If you're there, if you're not, it's on the screen for you. We read this. The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.

Now here's where the language occurs in verse 19. For I have, and the English standard version and most English translations say, For I have chosen him that he may command his children and his household after him.

The word translated chosen is actually the simple word for know in Hebrew. It just means know. So that literally what the text says is, For I have known him.

God says, I have known Abraham. Why do the English versions by and large translate this word know as chosen? Because that's what it means in the context of the statement.

It doesn't simply mean that God knows things about Abraham. In fact, all the things that God knows about Abraham in the future happen because God knows Abraham. Notice, For I have known him so that he may command his children.

[10:28] Not, I know that he will command his children. No, God's knowing Abraham or God's having chosen Abraham is the reason that Abraham will command his children to do certain things. So that we get it backwards if we say that God looked into the future, saw Abraham's life, knew what Abraham would do, and then chose or knew Abraham.

That's not the case at all. Here, for God to know Abraham means that some point in eternity past, God chose Abraham or God set his love upon Abraham in such a way that God's having known him transforms Abraham and causes Abraham to live a certain kind of life.

Namely, that he would teach his children the things of God. So here, knowing is not knowing about. Knowing is actually choosing or setting your love upon someone.

That's what God does here in reference to Abraham. You can move further in the Old Testament. We will stop in the book of Psalms. Turn over to the book of Psalms. Psalm 1, in fact, gives us a good example of this kind of knowing.

In Psalm 1, verse 6, we are told that the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. The Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

[11:46] Notice here that there is a contrast between the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. It is not merely that God knows information. No, No, it's that God knows in a way of having intimate, personal relationship with these people.

He knows them. He delights in the way of the righteous. He's not merely aware of the way of the righteous. He delights in the way of the righteous, but on the contrast, the way of the wicked will perish.

So here it takes on the context of a delighting in. It has the connotation of choosing or setting your love upon. It has the connotation of a delighting in someone.

One more place of the word knowledge. I want you to turn all the way back in your Old Testament to the book of Amos, which is a part of those small books toward the end of the Old Testament called the Minor Prophets. And in Amos, we find similar language.

In Amos chapter 3, beginning in verse 1, we read, Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt. Now, focus on verse 2.

[12:54] This is what God says to Israel. You only have I known of all the families of the earth. Pause for a moment to consider this phraseology.

You only have I known of all the peoples of the earth. Is God saying that He doesn't know about all the other nations? Is God saying He doesn't know about all the other families of the earth?

Of course not. God is omniscient. God knows everything. He knows every bit of information. He knows about every person and every nation upon the face of the earth. God's point here is not that He knows about Israel or He knows what Israel will be like.

God's point of saying you only have I known is you only have I set my covenant love upon. You only have I chosen out of all of the nations. You and you only, Israel, not the other nations.

I did not know them in this way. I knew about them but I did not choose them. I did not choose their founding forefather like I chose Abraham. I chose Abraham and I chose you, his descendants, so that when the prophet Amos, God speaking through him, says that He's known Israel, what He

means is He set His love upon them and He chose them and He separated them out from the rest of the nations.

[14:05] We find that meaning frequently. One more place because here we find actually a reference to God knowing beforehand or His foreknowledge. In Jeremiah chapter 1, I'd like you to turn there because I want you to see this.

This is very important. In Jeremiah chapter 1, as God calls Jeremiah to His prophetic ministry, God says this in verse 4. It says, Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, here are God's words, Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

And before you were born, I consecrated you. I appointed you a prophet to the nations. Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, he says.

And notice there's a kind of parallelism in these verses. So that God, knowing, is parallel to God consecrating. And God consecrating is parallel to God appointing.

So to know means the same thing as to consecrate or to appoint. It means that God in eternity past or at least before Jeremiah was even born, before he was born, before he was even formed in the womb, God set His love upon him.

[15:15] God chose him. God set him apart and appointed him and consecrated him that he might be a prophet. That is the point here that God's foreknowledge is God knowing in a way of setting His love upon in advance so that Jeremiah would be selected, chosen out to be something special and specific.

In this instance, to be a prophet. So what we're seeing in the Old Testament is that when God knows a person in the Old Testament, God chooses them. God sets His covenant love upon them. God delights in them. And when God foreknows someone, it's the same action and yet we're given a bird's eye view to say that God's knowing of someone is not merely something that happens in the moment.

This is something that happened well before this person was even born. God set His love upon those whom He chose in eternity past.

We can see similar things in the New Testament. So many of you may be familiar with Jesus' words in Matthew chapter 7, which are really, honestly, some of the most frightening words in all of the New Testament.

[16:28] judgment. It's where Jesus says that for some people on Judgment Day, He will look at them. Matthew chapter 7, verse 23. He will look at them and He says, I will declare to them, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. That's a frightening phrase, but if we just for the moment pause to consider what does Jesus mean when He tells certain people, I never knew you? Does He mean I didn't know you existed? Does He mean I didn't know about you? That's, of course, not at all what Jesus means here. What Jesus means here is that I did not have a relationship with you. I did not share an intimate relationship with you.

We weren't connected. My saving love was not set upon you. I did not know you. Therefore, depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.

So here, Christ's knowledge of a person or His not knowing them is equivalent equivalent to Him having not had a saving relationship with that person.

[17:29] Having not set His saving love upon them. One more passage and then we'll come back to Romans chapter 8. Now turn near the end of your New Testament to the book of 1 Peter. Where we find language of foreknowledge specifically.

The same language that we see in Romans 8, 29. In 1 Peter chapter 1, Peter is speaking of Christ. And he says in reference to Christ that He was foreknown before the foundation of the world. Obviously, the one doing the knowing here is God the Father. And so Peter is saying here that God foreknew Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Now pause for a moment and ask yourself the question. Does Peter mean that the Father in eternity past knew what Jesus would do?

Knew about Jesus? Or is the point that Peter is making is that God knew Jesus in an intimate personal way.

[18:36] That is God loved His Son in eternity past even before the foundation of the world. I think the answer is fairly obvious. The knowing here is not a mere knowing about.

It is a knowing of a person in such a way that the knowing is loving. The knowing is choosing and setting apart. This is what the Bible means consistently when it says that God either knows or foreknows a person.

Not that He knows about them or He knows what their future holds. He does know all of that. But the point of the Bible is to say that God set His love upon certain people. That He chooses them and decides that He's going to make them His own.

That's the consistent meaning of this kind of language when we see God actually knowing or foreknowing a person throughout both the Old and the New Testament.

So that when we come to Romans 8 29 and we read that those whom God foreknew He also predestined we are to understand that to be saying those whom God set His saving love upon in eternity past or those whom God chose in eternity past He also predestined them to something. [ 19 : 52 ] We'll see what that is in a moment. So God's foreknowledge here in Romans 8 29 is not a foreknowledge that says that God looks into the future sees who will believe and then predestines them. No, no, no.

God's foreknowledge is the thing that causes them to believe. It is the thing that sets them apart. It is a thing that makes them His own in His own heart and mind in eternity past.

God foreloved we might say or chose beforehand and all those upon whom He set His love in eternity past we are now told those He predestined.

So what does that phrase mean? Because when I say to you that foreknown here either means that He loved beforehand or He chose beforehand you may begin to think but isn't that a little bit I don't know repetitious?

I mean if He says those whom He chose He also predestined we might think isn't that saying the same thing really with two different words? Well no it's not because for God to choose or the term used most frequently throughout the New Testament is to elect that's where we get the term election for God to choose or for God to elect is not the same thing as for God to predestine.

[ 21 : 03 ] They are interrelated concepts but they are not the same thing. And we can understand the word predestine if we just we don't even have to look at the Greek when you just consider the English word itself because we get words like destination or destiny from this same root word.

And we all know that a destination is an end goal it's an end point and we all know that when we speak of someone's destiny what we mean is this is where they're headed this is the ultimate goal or purpose of their life that's what we mean when we say that guy has a destiny we mean that there is a purpose there is an end goal for this particular person's life so that when we see the word predestined we all sort of instinctively know this means that there is a predetermined destination for someone a destiny that has been determined beforehand for a particular person so that we're not using terms that are interchangeable the point here is that those who have been chosen or those who have been loved beforehand have now been given a final destination their destiny ultimate arrival has been set so this is actually not a very confusing term it's a very clear term those whom God set his love upon in eternity past those whom he set apart that he chose for himself in eternity past he also determined a destination for them an end point a goal for them that's what we mean by predestination and Paul tells us exactly what the goal is notice very clearly those whom he foreknow he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers

God predestined those upon whom he set his love in eternity past that they might become the spiritual brothers of Jesus in other words God chose some and then he set their destiny that they might be adopted into his family we just sang a song that comes from Romans chapter 8 it says I'm no longer a slave but I am a child of God that's what this text is reminding us of it's reminding us that Paul has said earlier in this passage that we have not received a spirit of bondage again to fear but we have received a spirit of adoption by whom we cry out Abba father this is about the doctrine of adoption and what Paul is saying is that God has destined those upon whom he set his love in eternity past that they might become one of his children that they might be conformed to the image of Jesus which means that there is a present reality being worked out because we are those who have trusted in Christ are presently being conformed to the image of Jesus but there is an ultimate reality behind that in that we will someday finally and fully be conformed to the image of Jesus which is what the word glorified means at the end of verse 30 so the apostle Paul was saying that in eternity past

God loved a certain people he chose them he elected them he set them apart in his own mind and heart and now in the working out of history God has actually destined those people that they might become his sons and his daughters that they might enjoy the full privileges of sharing with Jesus membership in the family of the father and not only membership but that we might become like Christ incrementally in this life and fully in terms of our character in the next so that we will be glorified God has set his love upon a people he has determined the destiny of those people and next week as we continue in verse 30 we will see that he has also appointed all the means that are necessary to move us from merely being chosen to arriving at the destination that he has set for us because we read all those who have predestined verse 20 verse 30 those who be predestined he also called those who be called he also justified those who be justified he also glorified this is good news this is good news for us because it means that the promise of verse 28 rests not upon us ultimately but it rests upon God's determination to bring all those of whom he has chosen and loved to the destination that he has decided they should arrive at someday this is good good news for us this is foundation this is grounds for believing the promise of verse 28 of course we don't think of these things that way often we often think of these kinds of doctrinal issues as issues that we need to avoid that we need to perhaps shy away from stay away from that we don't want to deal with in any detail and yet

I don't have the freedom to do that because my job every week is to come and preach the next verse or verses that are in line and the next verse in line is verse 29 so we cannot avoid this I can't avoid it as your pastor and you ought not to avoid it because it's throughout the word of God every Christian should have a doctrine of predestination and every Christian should desire for what they believe about that to line up with what the scriptures actually say about that this is not something to be avoided in fact some of you may have heard the phrase I've heard preachers say it and I've read it in books written by Christian authors I've heard the phrase that doctrine divides and I just don't think that that's true I think that right doctrine rightly understood pursued by the people of God does not divide us it does far better things than that so I want to close this morning I want to make three suggestions to you because I know that most of this is somewhat cerebral in your thinking quite a bit this morning and trying to reconcile things in your mind and so I want to close this morning by suggesting three very practical ways in which rightly understanding this truth should impact your heart and your life so just real quickly three things number one we can see very clearly that what this doctrine ought to do in the life of every Christian is it ought to inspire worship it ought to produce praise if you want proof of that

[ 27 : 43 ] I'd like you to turn over to Ephesians chapter one Ephesians chapter one where once again Paul ties together the doctrines of predestination and adoption into God's family we read that beginning in verse three Paul says blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him in love he predestined us for adoption as sons there it is the same kind of thought that we find in Romans 8 29 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will and if you read verse 6 it makes it clear that this is all to the praise of his glorious grace what is the purpose of this predestining that God does what is the purpose of adoption what is the purpose of all of these things it is ultimately to the praise of the glory of the grace of God so that rightly understanding the doctrine of predestination is not something that should merely result in confusion frustration or division it is something that ought to result in worship and in praise if you see how supremely sovereign God is over all things even your own eternal destiny you should be moved to worship this great and awesome and powerful

God this is not a doctrine that divides this is a doctrine that unites us in praise for God secondly though I think that this doctrine ought to inspire humility in us because while as we'll see as we continue to move through Romans 8, 9 and 10 because we're not done with the doctrine of predestination because Paul's not done with it he will come back to it in full force in chapter 9 and yet we will see in chapter 10 that the doctrine of predestination does not rule out our responsibility to believe in the gospel that's preached but it does inform us that the ultimate cause of our faith the ultimate cause of our salvation is not ourselves but it is God himself God is the ultimate cause his purposes are the ultimate reason why we believe they are the reason why our destiny is secure which means that we who believe in this scriptural teaching ought to be the most humble of all people because we recognize that our destiny is not rooted in our performance it's not even rooted

in our own determination to believe no we believe because those whom God predestines he calls and transforms their hearts so that those of us who believe this truth should be humbled should know that we have not saved ourselves we have not even availed ourselves by our own power of someone's help no we have been rescued we have been rescued by him so that we ought to walk every day of our life in humility knowing that it is owing only to the grace of God that we are who we are and then thirdly lastly this may seem to be the opposite of humility but I think that this ought to inspire great confidence in us it's not the opposite of humility in fact humility coupled with confidence is what we call assurance and we ought to be assured and confident in our salvation if we understand this doctrine

I mentioned last week that these verses 29 and 30 are often called the golden chain of redemption by those who study this passage because you can see each of these words linked together like a chain that cannot be broken it cannot be separated apart there's no division here it's not as if Paul says that some of those that God foreknew he predestined and some of those that he predestined he called and some of those that he called he justified and some of those that he justified he glorified no the implication of the text is that those who are foreknown they are predestined those who are predestined they are called those who are called they are justified those who are justified they are glorified these things happen because God has bound them inseparably together you cannot be called and then fail to believe and therefore be justified by faith you cannot be justified by faith and fail to be brought into glory it cannot happen why because God is indeed sovereign and he is doing these things which means that simultaneously the knowledge of the doctrine of predestination should humble us to our knees and yet give us courage and assurance in our hearts that these truths will bring us all the way home this inspires worship it inspires humility it inspires assurance

I want to close quickly though by answering one quick objection to this whole doctrine Paul's going to answer a number of objections in Romans chapter 9 we'll get there eventually I promise he's going to answer a number of objections but the one objection that I that I've heard more often than any other is that if you believe this sort of stuff if you really believe that God is sovereign over salvation then you won't share the gospel why would you I mean God's the one who does it not you so why would you share the gospel so the argument has been that I've heard over and over again is that people who believe these things don't or won't preach the gospel to which I want to reply in two ways number one if we look at church history we see that that simply is not borne out by the reality what we begin to see when we look through church history is that almost every major awakening and revival and nearly every major movement of missionaries out to the nations has been led by those who believe this doctrine it has been led by those who are sometimes labeled reformed or Calvinist

I don't care about the labels you can set them aside you can use them you can do whatever you want with them but the historical facts bear out that those who have been most fervent throughout history often times many times we should probably say most of the time have been people who believed this doctrine so that the protestant reformation was led by Martin Luther John Calvin Ulrich Zwingli and other men who believed wholeheartedly in this doctrine and preached the gospel to any who would hear not only that but we have the great awakenings that occurred in England and America the first and second great awakenings both of them led in large part by those who believed this doctrine not all the leaders but many of the leaders were you had George Whitefield a convinced believer in this particular doctrine preaching in both England and America you have Jonathan Edwards really one of the seminal figures in the great awakening here in America and then not many generations later a couple of generations later there's a second great awakening that transforms the colonies it was led in part by

[ 35 : 43 ] John Edward's grandson Timothy Dwight who believed in these things so that two of the greatest revivals in all of Christian history were in fact led by those who believed this doctrine the Protestant Reformation itself led by those who believed this doctrine what we call the modern missionary movement that began in the late 18th century was begun by those who adhered to this particular doctrine men like William Carey Adoniram Judson who gave up all that they had and went to truly unreached places places where people were being beheaded for doing what they were doing and they went there and they gave their whole lives over to preaching the gospel why did they do that why because they believed that if God had in fact set his love upon some of!

those people on to the gospel when they heard the gospel evangelism is not undercut by the doctrine of predestination it is undergirded by the doctrine of predestination history tells us that but I want to give you one biblical example before we're done this morning turn in the book of Acts to Acts chapter 13 in Acts chapter 13 Paul is doing what he typically does he's going from city to city preaching the gospel in those cities typically when Paul would enter a city he would go to the synagogue because the Jews obviously would have more knowledge of the Bible he would have more common ground with them it's easier to share the gospel with people who at least know a little bit about the Bible in this case people who know a lot about the Old Testament so Paul would start in the synagogue but as was often in the case Paul would be rejected by most of those in the synagogue and then he would begin preaching the gospel out on the streets or in the marketplace or wherever he had to to the Gentiles we see that happen here we see that pattern happen here and in verse 48 we read this

Paul is now turned to preach to the Gentiles and it says! life believed did you hear that? Paul preached the gospel and all those appointed to eternal life believed why did the apostle Paul so boldly in the midst of rejection and persecution continue to go into city after city after city why? because Jesus told him that he had been set apart to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and because of that Paul was confident that God was sovereign and when he preached the gospel to the Gentiles those who were appointed to eternal life those whom God had foreknown and predestined they would in fact believe so that for the apostles for great leaders throughout church history the doctrine of predestination has been not a hindrance to evangelism but it has been motivation!

[ 38 : 51 ] to know it doesn't depend upon your ability to convince everyone it doesn't even depend upon your ability to remember everything that you want to say it depends upon God working to do what he promised he would do through the word that is preached and when you preach the gospel all those appointed to eternal life will indeed believe so preach the gospel share it with your co-workers and your neighbors and anyone who will listen and do not worry about your own inadequacies because God himself is sovereign even in this he is sovereign and if you sit in wonder this morning but but am I among them this sounds interesting this sounds maybe even compelling but I worry when I hear this am I among them am I hear the words of that verse all those appointed to eternal life believe and ask yourself do

I believe and I'll tell you what the apostles would say over and over as they went from city to city believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved!