**FOCUS Bible Study - March 29**

[**VIEW RECORDING - 90 mins (No highlights)**](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc)

[@7:40](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=460.16" \t "_blank) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

We're just about to get started. One more minute, I think. Okay. I appreciate all those who are able to make it.

So we always get a different crowd each week, and I like that. Or every other week, I should say, I really like that.

like the fact that we have returning people. We have people discovering us all the time. All right, well, it's three minutes after 9-1.

ahead and get started. We'll open up with prayer. And then as people come in, we'll just let them enjoy them, okay?

Lord Jesus, we are grateful for this day. We thank you for waking us up and helping us face a brand new day.

You give us opportunity after opportunity and Lord, your mercies are new every day and we are grateful for that God.

We just pray that you would bless us as we study a word that Lord, you would speak to us, illuminate our minds and hearts to be drawn to you, to help us think clearly, to help us have revelation and to apply your word to our lives, God, that we might have a greater relationship with you, God, because I believe that's really what you desire and that's what it's all about.

We give you glory and praise in Jesus' name, Amen. So like I said, for those who joined a few minutes earlier, we're going to talk about pre-death.

destination. I think that was a request somebody had made a few weeks back at the end of one of our studies where we just slightly touched on it and they wanted to know little bit more about it.

So I dug into it. And I found out, I use the King James Version as I mentioned to you before, excuse me, and I found out the word predestinate for its forms only appear four times in Scripture.

And the word for no or for new combined or its forms only appear four times as well. So in total of eight times you get this idea of predestination or foreknowing.

And so it's kind of an odd thing that you can hear of a doctrine built around a scripture that appears or the word that only appears about eight times.

So why has it become such a thing? And that's what for what, predestined for what? So our main verse is going to be found or means

I did, you know, mine is Julie and it's probably good that we delay because we got Leanne joining us.

So give her one minute to join. If you don't mind, Brian, you're sure here. Good morning, Leanne. For you now, just joining us.

starting in Romans eight and we're going to reverse is 28 through 31.

[@11:25](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=685.62) - **Brian**

You want me to read 28?

[@11:27](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=687.36) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yes, sure.

[@11:28](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=688.2) - **Brian**

Go ahead. And we know that all things work together for the good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose, for whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

However, when we predestined these he also called whom he called these.

[@12:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=720.0) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

He also justified in whom he justified these he also glorified One more verse, please one more what then shall we say to these things if God is for us who could be against us Thank you all right, so This I believe is the primary verse and a lot of people get this predestined idea from So we want to break this down a little bit and like I said, didn't originally include verse 28 But I think verse 28 actually leads us in very well to this topic because It's giving us this idea that God knows all first of all and that because God knows all we should rest assured That he's working all things together for good, right?

Because for those who are called according to whose purpose ours or his Is right his purpose and I think we get confused sometimes because

as we think we want everything to work out according to our purpose and a lot of our prayers are focused on us and what we want you know and our will and if let me also pause if the dog starts barking is because the squirrels have been running rampant on our deck and they're right there right now eating bird seed so I apologize if you all of a hear love barking so like I was saying if if we're praying a lot of times about our needs and our wants and our desires we tend to lose focus about God's will what is God's purpose in what we're going through what is God's purpose in the relationships we have what is God's purpose in the jobs that we carry out all these things right and so we sometimes need to shift the focus that we're really living we should be living our lives as believers focused on God's purpose God's will okay and I think that will needs us into the next verse so let's break down in verse 29 of Romans 8.

And I'll reread just the verse and I want to point out some words. of course I've mentioned to you that I'm using the King James and I just peeled away a note as a reminder and I got to make sure I'm hitting record.

So I apologize for my lackadaisical or my empty head here sometimes that I forget to do that hitting record.

And the next thing is I also want to mention that I have a dentist appointment two weeks from now when we would get back together.

So instead of nine central, we'll meet at eight central. We're just going to move it up to that one week because my dentist appointment, if that's okay.

And if you can't make it, don't worry about that. We'll record it. As long as I remember to hit the button and you can watch it after, okay?

So thank you. Okay. I'll remind us again, hopefully you have the end of a lesson too. So let's read verse 29 for whom he did for no, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.

He might be the firstborn among many brethren. So let's break up those words. What words stick out to you?

Well, they're probably the same words that stuck out to me, for no, and predestinate, conformed, and firstborn. Those are some of the big words in that verse.

And that word for no in the Greek, because remember the New Testament's written in Greek, is, and I'm going to mispronounce it.

So I apologize, but I'll do my best. Progin-Osco, proggin-Osco. And that means to know beforehand, or for ordain, to know beforehand, or for ordain.

The word predestinate is prarid-zo, and it means to determine before or ordain. So they're very similar, right, for no, predestinate seem very similar.

But that word ordain means to confer holy orders on, or order a decree or something official. So what we get from that,

That word is like and the idea that if God's predestinated us, he's given us a holy assignment, holy orders to carry out.

So that means we have a purpose on our life, right? And this ties in, like I said, the previous verse, called according to whose purpose, his purpose, who gave us a purpose.

God did, right? So what is God's overall purpose? Let's go to John chapter three. Oh, and I will put the scriptures in the chat so you can see the follow along.

Give me a thumbs up if you see them in the chat just to know that I did it right.

Okay. Thank you. All right, so John chapter three verses one through eight. And Mike, would you mind reading for us today?

John chapter three verses one through eight.

[@17:03](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1023.94) - **Mike**

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, or the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher, come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

Jesus answered and said to him, Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again.

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes.

So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

[@18:17](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1097.7) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Hey, thank you. All right. What does this got to do with the purpose of God? God makes his purposes clear.

Remember, we mentioned before in 1 Corinthians 14 verse 33 that God is not the author of confusion. So if he is given his purpose, I think he also tells us what that purpose is or what his criteria is for us to have relationship with him, to have salvation.

To me, they're one of the same salvation relationships. Isn't that the purpose that God created man for? And there's a clue here in the scripture that we read in verse 3 and in verse 5, except a man

be born again, he says really twice there, except a man be born of water and the spirit, same thing.

That word again in the Greek also means from the beginning or from above. And the word beginning points us to Genesis, because that word beginning is the word Genesis.

One of the same, Genesis means beginning. And so we get the clue that when God created man, he formed while the dust of the ground.

So he was a living physical being, but then he breathed into him the breath of life and he man became a living soul, scripture says.

And so he became alive spiritually. And that word breath of life, as we've studied out before too, means the same root word as wind or spirit.

And so we know God is a spirit. And so he put himself, other words, into man. And that's how he became a living soul.

So by putting himself into man, he was saying, I want to have such an intimate relationship with mankind, you know, that I'm putting myself in

the midst of them. But of course, we know that man lost that Spirit of God because of sin, right?

They disobeyed God and God had to withdraw that Spirit from them as he separated them from his presence. And so here, what Jesus is saying is that the purpose of God is the reconnection of that relationship.

He's laying a criteria down. If he had said, know, I'm going to come and save you, there's nothing you need to do.

I'm doing it all. You know, all you got to do is just exist. That would be pretty simple, right?

But that's not what he said. He's giving criteria. In other words, there's something we have to do to connect with it.

And we must be, as he said, born again, or connected like what happened at the beginning needs to happen for us.

And Nicodem's kind of got this idea. He's like, I think I'm understanding you, but he was so trapped in the physical, he says, I don't quite get it because I can't crawl back in a

mother's womb, I can't physically be born again. And so Jesus clarifies a little bit by saying, this is about spirit.

He's talking about spirit here. Okay. And so the first part of the purpose that God has ordained upon us is to follow his word, right?

To fulfill criteria. He's laid out. If we don't follow the criteria, don't fulfill his word. We can't get associated with what he's done.

Does this make sense? Questions on any of that?

[@21:37](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1297.0) - **Mike**

Yes, if you're spiritually dead, how can you make yourself alive? That's a common argument for election because we can't make ourselves born to our physical parents.

Like just says, and we, their argument for election is that we can't make ourselves spiritually alive, either.

[@21:56](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1316.54) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

I agree with that. We can't make ourselves spiritual alive. The scripture does say, and I can't remember the exact verse, but if you go to Bible gateway.com and you type in the measure of faith or measure of faith, you will see that the scripture says every to every man was given the measure of faith.

And that's important wording because it's not a measure of faith, meaning we get everyone gets doled out a different portion.

But because it's called the measure of faith that we get the implication everyone has starts off with the same measure.

So is somebody actually spiritually dead? That's a hard thing to assess because who knows if somebody is spiritually dead?

We have a hard time knowing our own heart, according to Jeremiah. So I can't assess if somebody is truly spiritually dead when I don't even know my own heart.

So we have to understand that we got knows if somebody is spiritually dead. So I have to believe that who we might think is spiritually dead.

Probably there's still a delimmer if there's even a bark, right? And you think about like a fire. You thought the fire all dive down, you thought the fire is completely gone, and you know, but yet, and people walk away from their campsites and they go back their homes, but yet the forest ends up burning down because there is still an ember, right, that they didn't pay attention to you, and that ember caught hold of something and caused the fire to spread, right?

So, as long as there's a measure of faith, God can deal with that, right, or theme, I should say theme as your faith.

And Julie's pointing out that it is in Romans chapter 12 or three, if you wanted to read that.

[@23:35](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1415.24) - **Mike**

So, go I understand what you're saying, but Ephesians two, eight to 10 says, it's a gift. So he gives it to some, it's my understanding.

So that we can't, we can't say it, salvation is from ours.

[@23:53](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1433.06) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

It's not a work of ours. Right, so, so there is a connection here. So, like I said, I'm, we can't assess if somebody is spiritually dead.

So, as long as there's something there that God can work with, it's God who will bring it to the past, not ourselves.

But there has to be something in us, this little spark that draws us to God. God will not violate free will.

We can associate that little spark of faith, the measure God gives available, so that we can exercise our free will to come to God.

Once we turn to God, God then can do amazing things, right, and turn our lives around. And we see that example in Moses in the burning bush, because it says when Moses saw the bush burning, mean, was out there with his sheep, he looks, he sees the bush burning.

God didn't speak the moment he saw him view the bush. It says when Moses turned to investigate or Moses turned to inquire, right, that then God spoke to him.

So there had to be this first initiation on Moses's part. On all of our parts, the exercise of our free will, this thing, that triggers us to say, Oh, I need God.

I need something. I'm in a desperate place, or I'm hurting, or, you know, I just, I need to change, I need some power in my life, whatever it is, that flips the switch.

The moment the switch is flipped, then God can work in our lives and grow that faith. But you're right, we can't extend it beyond that initial thing, because God does all the work.

Otherwise, we would boast of it, as I think Mike is pointing out in the future.

[@25:33](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1533.8) - **Mike**

I don't want to belabor it, but my understanding is that because we're spiritually dead, we can't even make the first move.

[@25:40](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1540.42) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

That's what they teach. Yeah, and I understand that's what some people teach, but I can also say that some people are wrong.

You know, it's we couldn't come to God unless we had free will and we exercise that free will. mean, we clearly see that in general.

when God created man. And he had two trees, the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life.

And he didn't put a fence around it to say, look, I'm going to protect you from this. He didn't keep guards there all night.

He simply gave them a command. The day you eat of it is the day you die. You choose. What do you want to do?

They chose disobedience, right? God carried his word. His word was true. But that was the exercise of his free will.

And we know that God created man with free will because of the purpose that God wanted to know man loved him back.

He already created angels that were meant to serve him. But by God creating man after the angels, he was trying to create something that would love him back.

And we understand love can't be truly love unless it's given freely. Right? And if and the moment you exercise that free will, you're expressing to God some kind of love for God.

You may not have a deep, overwhelming love of God at that point, but there's something that is there that is probably not measurable to when they could I, or to the human emotion, but there's something there.

And that's what I'm talking about like this spark of spirit. So the only one who can classify somebody as spiritually dead is God.

Go ahead, Leanne.

[@27:22](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1642.58) - **Lee Anne P.**

I had to find in the mute button. So what you're pretty much saying is like days when I get life done, know, stuff happens, you know, I allow myself to be diverted into worldly problems and issues and self-pity and self-centeredness.

I don't have the spirit, you know, I get mad at myself when I finally come back and say I could have dealt with that so much easier by just causing and, you know, selling myself with the spirit.

[@28:18](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1698.06) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

I hear what you're saying the end but I'm going to clarify that a little bit because everyone falls at times and makes mistakes.

And that doesn't mean that we are without the spirit. So God, when we are born again and we're given the spirit of God, we have ourself and God, just think about this.

God gave everyone a personality, right? And my personality is not the same as your personality. We act differently. And so again, because we have different ways of behaving mind, we have free will, but we exercise that differently through our personalities, right?

drawn to something you're not drawn to, you're drawn to something I'm not drawn to. We have weaknesses that are different from each other, etc.

so the enemy will try to pull us away from God, even though we have the Holy Spirit, we deal with this duality of flesh and spirit, as scripture talks about.

And so the idea is before we come to God, we're ruled by flesh, right? We have these passions, these desires that have gotten us in trouble, they caused us to sin.

But the moment we are blessed with the spirit inside of us to overcome that, we have greater strength, that's why it's called dunamis power.

power is like dynamite, that's where we get the word dynamite, dunamis from dynamite. That kind of is explosive, that blows away some of those temptations and things we deal with when we don't have the ability.

But because God is kind of like dynamite, blast certain parts, it doesn't tear down the whole mountain, it tear a little bit at a time.

It's kind of like God does certain work in our lives, but it's up to us to do the rest, right, dig through the rest of it.

And so God isn't going to come in and just like the moment we surrender a little bit of free will, he's not going come in and take over everything.

He's going to take over the things we surrender to him, that we exercise that free will in. And so the more we surrender that free will, the more he gains that control over lives to help us with these things.

But so it's kind of like letting a little bit of light in the room, it illuminates the whole room, but right at the source of the light is the brightest, right.

What you want is to fill the whole room up. But there are still pockets of darkness in that room.

So what happens is we get distracted, we then start to focus on darkness instead of the light. It doesn't mean the light's still not in the room, right?

The light is still there, but we've turned from the light, we're looking at the corner of the darkness. And it's the same thing when the enemy hits us with our temptations and the weak spots in our lives that God is perhaps still dealing with that.

we had to lose the spirit because we failed a little bit. We turned back to the light, light's still there.

That makes some sense? Okay. Can I ask one more question? Yeah.

[@31:14](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1874.74) - **Mike**

Now you believe in the sovereignty of God, as it says in Romans 8 and 9 and 7. But my question is when Paul was on the road to masters before he was saved and God called him.

I did all have the ability and the right to say no to God then you think?

[@31:38](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1898.74) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Oh sure. Because it's all an exercise of free will. We week today. I mean you can hang up this phone call today and walk away from God.

You know? We hope that you don't. God hopes that you don't, right? Because God has, this is the part of the idea we're going to talk about further here about what did God perdest in us for?

What purpose does he serve us for? Why does he want to have relationship with us because he's got good things in mind, right?

[@32:04](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1924.84) - **Mike**

But to me that puts a lot of power in our hands and takes power away from God. I know he hardened Pharaoh's heart after Pharaoh hardened his own heart.

He talks about that in Romans 9. And I just wonder if we had that much power, what the world would look like if we chose whether we did something that was God's will or not all the time.

[@32:25](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=1945.46) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

You know what I mean? I think so because you know here's here's another saying that I think I've heard and I kind of believe you know the devil gets a lot of credit for doing things he never did but so does God.

Sorry to say you know and what causes that difference is again free will. You know we we choose we don't understand it's called the power of choice.

There is power in choice and exercising that free will and we don't understand sometimes the power that we do have.

We choose to have the relationship with God. when we surrender that power to God here's in fact human only has the power of choice, if you will.

You're going to surrender that power to either God or the enemy. Once you make that choice, then the power of one side or the other is going to be exercised.

that's why Jesus even said you can only have one master. Either you're going to love God and serve the enemy, or you're going love the enemy and serve him.

It's one or the other. I may have said that incorrectly, I think I'm trying to get the point across that as a human being, when we're talking about spirit, the spiritual realm, I'm going to be influenced and controlled over one or the other, because there's no spirit in me outside of the exercise of free will, because I'm living in this human realm.

And in this human realm, I'm controlled by the elements, right? I'm affected by the elements. choose how we respond to those elements.

But when it comes to the spirit, it's the same thing. mean, they're influenced by the enemy or an influence.

is by God. I'm going to choose which one I want. They come at me, both are coming at me all day long every moment of the day.

[@34:08](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2048.56) - **Mike**

I see what you're saying, but Ephesians 2 10 says he prepared works that we would walk in. when we become a Christian, he has things for us to do.

They're pretty much set kind of like Paul couldn't go to Asia. I mean, went to Holy Spirit as He guiding you more than your own will, making free choices.

[@34:28](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2068.58) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

That's the goal. Right. Exactly. That is the goal that we should surrender to the will of God. And I think that's what I'm trying to point out here is what is the God predestining us for?

It's to exercise His will in our lives. It's His desire for us to follow His will for our life, because He knows it's the best thing for us.

But we can choose all along whether we want to follow it or not. Here's an example I was going to use a little bit later, but I was into fantasy role-playing as a teenager into those kinds of games and those kinds of books.

Well, when I've read some certain fantasy books, they had chapters that you get at the end of the chapter and you can decide what the character is going to do.

Now, the author of the book thought about every decision you were going to make for that character and gave you the options.

He's going to do A, B, or C, and he wrote a separate chapter for that decision, right? So you'd read that book and you'd get to the end of that chapter and you decide, oh, want the character to do this.

We can flip over to that chapter and find out what happened. It's kind of like that. knows everything. He knows how all things work.

We've read Romans 8, 28. All things work together for good. He's kind of planning us to get us to the ultimate goal of relationship with him, but he knows the best root we should take to get there.

And he really wants us to follow that, but it's really up to us whether we will or won't.

[@36:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2160.0) - **Mike**

And he overcome our will, though, like he did with Pharaoh, hardened his heart. And David, that time he had him count the number of the senses when it was wrong to do so.

[@36:11](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2171.2) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Well, when we talk about the example of Pharaoh and hardened his heart, and I may have mentioned this at the last Bible study, and then I'll get to you on one second, I apologize.

Thank you for patience. When God said, I'm going to harden Pharaoh's heart, that's kind of a misnomer. He had to read and study the root word there about what he means and intending to harden Pharaoh's heart.

God, again, knew every decision Pharaoh would make in every response he would choose. And all God did is present him a choice that forced him to make a decision.

And he knew the decision Pharaoh would make. So in a way, it was kind of like God saying, I'm hardening his heart.

But Pharaoh was making the choices all along. Okay, I'll click and then I'll stop.

[@36:57](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2217.28) - **Mike**

So in your understanding, God has to kind of react to our choices rather than the other way around?

[@37:04](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2224.24) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

No, we're swimming in a sea of God. So God's already made all the choices available out there. You know, like I said, he knows every decision anybody and everybody would ever make.

He knows where it would lead, everything. So God is just sometimes kind of helping us along to make the right decisions.

Think about like you mentioned Paul and when you finally went to Macedonian instead of wherever he was trying to go, it's kind of like, well, he had the choice but he wanted to obey or not.

But God was kind of guiding him until he had this dream. he wasn't getting it, right? So God gave him a dream.

And then he's like, oh, this is God's will. So that was able to see it clearly and he did it.

But as a Christian, as a believer, as somebody trying to have a good relationship with God, we want to do his will, sometimes as a human.

human side of us, we go, hmm, I'm not quite getting it right. You know, well, God isn't gonna let us flounder.

He's gonna try to guide us in gentle ways to get there. Just like he guided Pharaoh in hitting the decisions.

Pharaoh ended up making he knew his heart, but he didn't harden it for him. Pharaoh did it himself. Leanne, go ahead.

[@38:22](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2302.36) - **Lee Anne P.**

I'm going back a few minutes. Welcome, something about the evils of the world, you know, and free will and it reminds me of what happened yesterday at the Kansas State Capitol.

There was some satanic worshipers that were gonna I think. only like two or three statements, statements were there. And you can catch it on YouTube.

It's all on film. And it was a wonderful showing of Christians saying, hey, this is not okay. You know, you are the enemy.

He was saying how Satan and they were saying, Hail Mary, know, the full prayer, even louder. And it was just marvelous because it was echoing.

And I do think, you know, the devil has taken the better of most people. But I see that tide turning.

I see people not being fearful of of their faith in Jesus Christ. And I do see a reckoning, not, you know, right now, but I see a steadfast of people really believing in the armor of God, like a patient's sick, you know, and that they're protected.

I just want to put my input, you know, about free will and, you know, people, you know, being careful about, you know, not, because we're off the side, we were off the side for four years, you know, we were on the enemy's list.

And it's a wonderful feeling to be able to, you know, shout it from the mountaintop, like the Bible tells us to do.

That's all. Thanks.

[@40:54](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2454.58) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

appreciate that, Leanne. Thank you so much for sharing. Well, let's keep this idea. That we have free will right we I think we all agree we have some free will what now Let's let's dig back into this idea of predestination You know how much control does God have over us how much control do we have?

[@41:15](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2475.24) - **Mike**

I think is the heart of the question right Mike Yes, I've heard about the old theologians say we have limited free will we as a fallen Person I have the ability to choose my sin but not to do anything That's eternally good in God's eyes because only he can lead that because he only knows what he's doing right?

[@41:39](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2499.48) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

That's that's their argument. I got you So so I think if we all agree we've got some level of free will and we've got some level of faith according to scripture, right?

So let's let's at least hold that for a second And the question might be like how much control does God then have over us or how much control do we have in response to God or choose Right, so so I get that's the question

and we may not all see that the same. Okay, that's fine. But let's hold on to the things that we at least have come for right now.

Let's dig back into Romans chapter eight. Let's go back to Romans chapter eight. Let's read verse 30. And again, let's dig into this a little bit more.

So chapter 30, verse 30 says, Moreover, whom he did predestinate, Demi also called and to whom he called, Demi also justified.

And to meet justified, Demi also glorified. Okay, so let's break up or understand some of these words here. It's a, and of course, said predestinate means to determine beforehand or to ordain or confer orders, holy orders, or decree on something.

Okay, so we understand that word. Now the word called in the Greek means to bid or invite to give a name to.

So sometimes this translation, if it was, if it's saying called, it's not really the clear translation there. think the word invite is probably little more clearer because it's like God is giving us orders, but he's inviting us to participate.

He's not forcing us to do it. So predestin means to give orders, right? So God gives us orders, but he's not forcing us to do it.

He's inviting us to participate. That word justified means to be freed or render righteous. So to be freed or to set free is like he's inviting us to become free.

That word glorified means to honor, make glorious, celebrate, adorn with luster or hear, clothed with splendor, clothed with splendor.

So now if we understand those words better, we kind of get this idea that he's giving us orders to participate, inviting us to participate.

So we might be free. and clothed with something other than what we're already clothed with. And in this case, splendor or righteousness.

So it's kind of like you have to RSVP to the invite. You can invite to a wedding or to some big shower or to some big party.

You don't automatically get to go because you have to RSVP. have to respond first based on the invite. Well, let's read about this.

Let's also understand what has got clothing us with. Let's go to Revelation chapter 2. Revelation chapter 2, let's read verse 17.

And Kristin, do you want to read for us today?

[@44:41](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2681.84) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

Revelation 2, 17? Yes, sure. You say 2017?

[@44:57](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2697.24) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yes, thank you.

[@45:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2700.0) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

He was in here, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I'll give some of the hidden manna, he, and I'll give him a white stone, an armed stone, a new name written, which no one knows, accepts him to receive it.

[@45:20](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2720.56) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Thank you. So he's inviting us to what, overcome, and remembering the King James Version, it says overcome it, and that little teach in the end means too continuously.

So it's this idea that we don't have just one victory. We have to fight for it every day, kind of like Leanne was saying, there's life that happens, you know, we get distracted at times and things happen.

We fall, we get back up, we have to overcome continuously, we have to fight for it. We have to participate, would probably be a better word in this context of what we're talking about.

When we're invited, we have to participate every day, right? And then there will be a reward in doing so if we stay faithful to God.

Let's connect this with more of Revelation chapter 3 verse 12 Revelation 3 verse 12 Margot. Do you mind reading it for us today?

[@46:11](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2771.86) - **Margo**

Yes, I can give me one second sure He who overcomes I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go out no more I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God the new Jerusalem Which comes down out of heaven from my God and I will read on him my new name Thank you.

[@46:52](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2812.94) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

So again here in this verse. We have this word over cometh again implying the continuous victory We continue his participation

Right and again, there's reward and it's similar. We have this connection of a name just like we did in Revelation 217 The name was in the white stone in that verse and the white represents purity represents righteousness right God's inviting us clothing us with Righteousness what to replace who we are?

What's the name a name is identifying who we are a name especially in the in the Bible Represented the character qualities of personality of that individual with the name So and the human side we have this name.

We're building these qualities characteristics about us, right? We're building a reputation. You mentioned Rick Stevenson the people who know me are gonna go Oh, yeah, and they they don't just know me.

They know of me. They know they know what makes me up They know how I behave and how I speak right that Simple name is tied into all that and what Jesus is saying here is the he's pretty

He wants us to participate so we can be changed, like we talked about in John chapter 3, about being born again into who he originally intended us to be in a deep relationship with him, because now he's writing his name on us.

The character of his name carries so much more than we do, like Mike was saying. We can't do anything worthwhile spiritually in and of ourselves.

But we invite God to come in and he starts to write the story. He writes his name in our life, and not only that, but he makes us a pillar.

pillar is immovable, stable, it's a structural form. Let's continue Revelation chapter 6, verse 11. Alicia, would you mind reading that, please?

6, verse 11.

[@49:01](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2941.66) - **Alicia**

Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters were killed just as they had been.

[@49:14](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=2954.74) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Okay. So the mention of the white robe, I want to pause there and then go to Revelation 7, let's read verses 13 and 14, Julie, you mind reading that, please?

Yes, please. Then one of his elders answered saying to me, who are these are white robes and where did they come from?

And I said to him, sir, you know, so he said to me, these are the ones who come out of the great tribulation and wash their robes and made them white in the blood of the loin.

Okay, thank you. Now, again, importance of translation in the King James, it says, there they which came out of great tribulation, doesn't use the words the great tribulation.

And that's important because we think When we studied this before in our discussion about end times and revelation, this means we face tribulation all day long.

Again, like Leanne was saying, we have these difficulties, these troubles, right? But if we align up with Jesus, we surrender our free will, every decision we got to make towards Jesus, he's leading us, he's predestining these orders for us to become the person he wants us to be.

And he wraps us in white robes, white righteousness, white representing righteousness, whose righteousness, his righteousness. Robes represent covering over something we've already got on, right?

He's covering over what we used to be, who we used to be with his righteousness. And it's all about coming out of the difficulties, coming out of the trials and the sin that we find our human side in, because we can't do it on our own.

We need his help to pull us through that. But the thing we overcome with is the word of for our testimony in the blood of land, the boarding description, right?

And what is the word of our testimony? It's making that free will. When I have a thought, the only way I can exercise that thought is expressing with the word or carrying out an action.

Those are the only options I have. So a thought enters, but I have to flip the trigger, exercise the free will, the word of my testimony, right?

This is about exercising your free will, every moment, every second, every day to surrender to God so that He can clothe you in righteousness.

So He can give you the victory in your life. Coming back to Romans 8, where we were reading in verse 31, if we do these things, it says, what shall we then say to these things?

If God be for us, pause, we know that He is, does, then who can be against us? And the answer to that is only ourselves.

because of this idea of free will. Does this make sense? Questions, thoughts, anybody? Okay, so moving on. So what we get is this idea that God knew ahead of time and He's created a path for us so that His goal is that we might look like or resemble Jesus.

So we get this whole idea of predestined that really should be this idea that God knows beforehand and decides before, in other words, He's laid out every possibility or plan, like I mentioned, like those adventure books I talked about, and He's hoping that we choose to follow Him.

So let me sum up Romans 8 for you. If you read the entire chapter of Romans 8, this is essentially the idea.

Romans 8 begins by telling us the difference between living in the flesh and living in the Spirit. and then why it's important to live in the Spirit and be led by God.

Paul continues his writing and says that it's important to understand that there is suffering in this world like we talked about, but now our suffering gets joined with Christ and therefore is not comparable but is part of the longing that creation has for God to be fully manifest in this world.

Until that happens, we patiently wait with hope knowing that will come in the meantime God's Spirit to help us, especially in what to pray for.

God set the path before us and to develop into the image of Christ who suffered for us and revealed the love of God to others so that we too can do the same.

Paul encourages us that it's possible because God is for us helping us through the challenges we might face. He reminds us that God will never stop loving us, which is the motivation that should carry us down the path.

That we've chosen to live for God in his spirit rather than for the world. Now that's my summary of Romans 8.

Go and read the chapter yourself. Come back to the video which I post on my website rickstevensonmusic.com. You come back to watch the video of this section again and see if I'm close or not, right?

You Acts chapter 2. And we'll read verses 21 through 25. And Leanne, would you mind reading that for us please?

Acts chapter 2, 21 through 25. Oh Leanne, you're on mute.

[@55:01](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3301.54) - **Lee Anne P.**

All of these news-bangled contractions. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Fellow Israelites, listen to this, Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God, to you by miracles, signs, which God did among you, through hands, as you yourselves know.

This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge, and you that the help of the wicked men put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

But God raised him from the dead, braiding him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep his hold on him.

David, that's a great thing.

[@55:50](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3350.94) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah, verse 25, please.

[@55:53](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3353.36) - **Lee Anne P.**

I've David said to him, said about them, I saw the Lord always before me, because... He is at my right hand.

I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices. My body also will rest in hope.

[@56:09](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3369.88) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Okay, thank you. So here we have this idea that tells us that God loved Jesus to be crucified because he already had set the plan.

He already had this in mind. The King James says in verse 23, him being delivered by the determinant he did.

He says delivered by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge, same word we've talked about before, or pre-arrangement of God, right?

So God, before that he spoke the world into existence, he already knew what would happen. And he already had the plan of Jesus in mind.

It took thousands of years for it to come to pass. But this is why we understand that Jesus, we understand Jesus God wanted the same thing with us.

we talked about that before, but God knows everything. He knows every outcome, every possibility. so, you know, the only thing that can keep us from God is ourselves, is this exercise of free will.

And go ahead.

[@57:19](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3439.94) - **Mike**

Along those lines, I believe what you're saying, God has a plan, you know, life is very complex. Just as you pointed out, I could make the choice to turn this off right now.

But because all the choices we have, especially in America, are so very, how can I do any of that without the Holy Spirit always guiding me?

didn't choose to listen or not, but how can I do any of that by my own free will?

[@57:49](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3469.18) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah, that's a very good question. I think I think the goal is that we should all become that over of God in that every choice we make.

And I know this is going to sound silly, maybe even a little redundant, but, you know, I go to brush my teeth.

God, do I use Crest or Colgate? God, do I use a hard medium or soft bristle? God, do I use cold water, lukewarm water, or hot water when I brush my teeth?

I mean, those are all decisions you make, but we don't think about it when we go to brush our teeth.

We just grab the toothpaste, we grab our brush, we turn the water and we brush, right? But like, God wants to be that intimate in every detail and decision we make, but to get to Mike's point, if I go through my day trying to make those decisions all day long, I mean, it's going to take me an hour to brush my teeth instead of three minutes, right?

So it's almost like we need to surrender to the spirit and just flow, right? We want to get to the point where we are just totally surrendered, that we go, God, I don't even have to make that decision because I've already put it in our hands.

And so I trust. When I got into that relationship that is so deep and so meaningful that I trust when I go pick up the toothbrush and the toothpaste It's the right kind.

It's the kind God wants me to use, right? You know if that even concerns him Because I'm so surrendered.

[@59:15](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3555.06) - **Mike**

I Read somebody that said when they were in Bible college They knew a lady that she prayed over everything which is too far one way But the other way is not to pray about anything the big issues of life where you should know who you should marry Yeah, so there's a there's a warm area there that you go too far either way.

[@59:34](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3574.46) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

I agree with you.

[@59:35](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3575.7) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

I agree with you Yeah, go ahead Chris So for me, but I know this that I I can hear from God more when I removed distractions When I make those decisions to move the shakions And I can hear from them better and I

I think that I'd remove those distractions intentionally because of the fear of the Lord. So as we all live our lives and go through tribulations, then we can instill fear of the Lord in our hearts.

And I mean, not everyone does it, obviously, but I think like for me personally, the fear of the Lord says in the Bible it's the beginning of wisdom.

So when I have failed or fallen and it's caused my life to go really bad, then that's what made me run to God and it made me take additional decisions to remove distractions and be able to focus on him more on a daily basis.

So that all comes from himself well. Right? It was my decision to do all those things but y'all can't.

from having that fear.

[@1:01:04](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3664.54) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah. Very good. Thank you for sharing that. I agree. Yes, we do. Yeah, I don't know if you're a Julie, but she said it's like hearing that still small voice of God.

He's in the wind. He's not in the thunder. What is this? Let's go to first Peter. And I know we're nearing the top of the hour and if anyone has to drop, I totally understand.

We have about four or maybe five more scriptures to get through. We should move a little faster through these if you can stick it out.

So appreciate that. So first Peter, chapter one, let's read verses two through five, like what you mean reading for us first Peter, first Peter chapter one versus two through five, elect according to the four knowledge of God the Father in sanctification of the spirit for obedience and spirit.

[@1:02:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3720.0) - **Mike**

cycling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace to you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom according to his abundant mercy has been gotten us again to a living hope to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith, for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

[@1:02:37](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3757.8) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Thank you. So here again is a verse that uses that word for knowledge in the beginning of verse 2.

It may have been translated differently in life's translation, but it looked according to the foreknowledge. So there it is.

And in verse 3, we get this idea, begotten us again, and let me reread that verse. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant

Bunam Mercy have begotten us again. That word again ties us into John chapter 3, or how did God, the word begotten, means born again.

In other words, from the dead born again, or from Bunam Mercy have begotten us again born again. He's tying us into John chapter 3.

What is the foreknowledge that God knew we'd mess up? So he gave us Jesus. He put that in his part of the plan from the day spoke it into existence that we would need this to connect because we couldn't do it on our own.

But if we will follow, there are those rewards we read about in Revelation to that inheritance, incorruptible, undefidable, that it not faded away reserved.

Remember I said about RSVP to the invite? He's inviting us to participate in this path that he's laid out before us to be born again, but it's up to us to RSVP.

Well, it's like this. You can make dinner reservation. and somebody can make them on your behalf, right? But in the restaurant will actually set aside the table for you, but until you actually show up, nothing's gonna happen.

It's all set aside, it's all there ready for you, but if you don't actually follow through the reservation and go and participate, nothing's gonna happen.

Continuing in first Peter chapter one there, let's read verse 20. Kristen, would you read that, please?

[@1:04:37](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3877.66) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

Indeed, with four days before the foundation of the world, but with that effect and these last times for you.

[@1:04:45](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3885.72) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Thank you. So Peter's talking about Jesus when he says who, it's Jesus. He was four days before the foundation that word means to conceive before he conceived of the world.

He manifest and that means manifest. This means appeared, shown, or declared, what? So this is where we get the idea, like I said, before God even spoke anything into existence in Genesis, He was sitting down, if He will, the big drafting table of God.

He said, if I do this thing, what am I gonna do? Because I see everything that's gonna happen. Oh, I'll put Jesus in the cross in the plan here.

He already knew it ahead of time. So we talked about this idea of exercising free will. Can we walk away from God at any time?

Can we choose to come to God at any time? Can how much control over this thing do we have?

And these next three verses I want us to read will show us. Ezekiel, let's go to the Old Testament in Ezekiel.

Excuse me, Ezekiel chapter three. And Margo, would you mind reading verse 20 of Ezekiel three?

[@1:05:59](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3959.4) - **Margo**

Sure.

[@1:06:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3960.0) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Thank you.

[@1:06:01](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3961.34) - **Margo**

Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits inequity and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die, because you did not give him warning.

[@1:06:14](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=3974.14) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

He shall die in his sin and his righteousness, which he has done, shall not be remembered, but his blood I will require at your Okay.

So, excuse me, and this is the idea that, and it says, I lay a stumbling block before him. God puts the stumbling block, but did he make him do it?

No. It's this idea of what we talked about with Pharaoh. God put these choices and we exercise our free will.

Pharaoh chose the stumbling block. He fell over it, right? He made the wrong choice, but God didn't make him make the choice.

He knew the choices he would make. So, in essence, that's why. He said, I've hardened Pharaoh's heart, but now no scripture says I'll amount the two or three witnesses let every word be established.

Is this really a principle we can sink our teeth into? Well, Ezekiel chapter 18, let's go there. Ezekiel 18, let's read verse 24.

Julie, would you read that please? Yes, please. But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits an equity and just reporting through all of our nations that the wicked man does shall be lived.

All righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered because of the unfaithfulness of which he was guilty and the sin which he was committed because of them that he shall die.

So we kind of see the same thing, don't we? They're kind of saying the same thing. So we've got two out of the three.

Let's go to Ezekiel chapter 33. Ezekiel 33, let's 3rd verse 18, Alicia, would you read that please?

[@1:08:05](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4085.42) - **Alicia**

Sure. If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and does evil, they will die for it.

[@1:08:21](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4101.84) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah, so we see the same exact thing. doesn't work in reverse. Yes, because would you mind reading verse 19, And if a wicked person turns away from their wickedness and does what is just and right, they will live by doing so.

Thank you. So you see, this, this the power of what we've talked about, a free will or the power of choice.

All day long, every moment, every decision, we have the free will. And what God is hoping for us for us to overcome it.

Remember the little T.H., he wants us at every moment, every decision to overcome, to exercise our free will. In the choice.

is a participating in his invite because he knows that he's got something good for us and let's conclude with this verse from Jeremiah chapter 29.

Jeremiah chapter 29 and let's read verse 11. And Christian would you read that for us please?

[@1:09:23](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4163.16) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

Or I know the thoughts I think toward you says the Lord's thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future and hope.

[@1:09:31](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4171.22) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Hey thank you. Now your version said give you a future and the King James it says an expected end and if you study the Hebrew word there for a future or expected end it really means the thing that I long for.

So let's read with that terminology to give you the thing that I long for. What is the thing that God longs for?

it's relationship, it's connection with him. How do we see that? We see that from the verses where we read in Revelation that I will write my name upon you, that I will give you a white stone with a name or not.

I will give you white robes, right? It's that connection that expected in that future that the path that he has laid out for us is to get to know him.

That's what he's predestined us for.

[@1:10:26](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4226.0) - **Mike**

Did I ask anything? He's talking about a loss of salvation or just God's chastisement of believers.

[@1:10:37](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4237.18) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Clarify a little bit when we are you asking that because of what we read in Ezekiel?

[@1:10:42](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4242.0) - **Mike**

Well, just let's say a niacin Sephara and those who sleep because they take the Lord's Supper unworthy. I imagine those are Christians, right?

But they did something against God's will and do you believe? I don't want to get too heavy, but do you believe that they were so?

Saved, and God just rebuked them and showed the other believers his displeasure.

[@1:11:07](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4267.66) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Well, this is where I said before, what do you mean by the word saved? And in my opinion, the word saved is equated or equal to the word relationship.

When we have a relationship, a good, meaningful relationship with God, we are saved, right? And how do we know that?

Because in the Gospel, he's going to say to some, depart, I never knew you. That word no means an intimacy, that only comes like in a marriage relationship, right?

Again, it's all about relationship. So if we turn from God, as we've read in Ezekiel, we sin, we intentionally sin, we turn from God, we commit sin, we break that relationship, we don't want to have relationship with it.

Then, yes, I believe we are lost. We're doomed to punishment with it, right?

[@1:12:03](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4323.5) - **Mike**

So when Paul talked about it, we thought you were sorry for one more thing, Mike, if I made. I'm sorry.

[@1:12:09](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4329.64) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

In a relationship. Now, we know in natural relationships, we're going to have times of tension and times of we've offended each other.

But that doesn't mean the relationship is over from the first offense. So when my wife and I may have an argument, that doesn't mean we're going to walk, it shouldn't, most for a Christian, it shouldn't mean that we walk out the door and never see each other again.

What it means is we have an opportunity now to dig into a deeper, more meaningful relationship by clarifying and clearing the air and repairing the hurt that when the damage that was caused.

[@1:12:49](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4369.02) - **Mike**

Are you quitting the, the obedience of the relationship to salvation?

[@1:12:54](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4374.62) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yes, I believe that salvation and relationship are equal.

[@1:13:00](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4380.0) - **Mike**

Well, when it comes to heaven, we're positive that, you know, he doesn't always do the things he wants to do and who will deliver me from this body of death.

And then he praises God for Jesus Christ. And then eight one, of course, we know. also, there are other things in first John that speak that we're all sinning.

And I don't see a real loss of salvation in any of those.

[@1:13:28](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4408.66) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

And that's what I was trying to clarify there, Mike, because none of us are perfect. It's not a perfect relationship.

Even Paul said, I see through glass darkly dimly. You know, none of us will be perfect. When my wife and I got married and we entered into that committed relationship, neither one of us were perfect.

In fact, we had a long way to go. And none of us even neither one of us understood each other fully at that point.

We knew several things about each other and probably more than we ever shared with other people, but we had not shared everything with each other.

30 years ago, and still 30 years into the relationship, we're still learning about each other, right? It doesn't, but that doesn't mean I don't have a committed relationship to the money I said I do.

So when I say salvation and relationship are equal with God, what I mean is that when we exercise our free will and say, yes, God, I want to be committed to you.

Yes, God, I want, I want to be in a relationship with you. He says great, and he starts to develop us.

Now, we're going to have misunderstandings because we don't fully understand God, we're going to sin, but that doesn't mean he breaks it off.

Okay, unless we turn away and say, you know what, I don't want anything more to do with this. When we exercise that free will, then we have seven.

So disobedience doesn't equal I can't, the only thing I can say is that it, it depends. On the motivation of the heart and nobody knows the heart but God.

I have a hard time knowing my own heart But if David had not repented he would have lost out on that relationship He'd been lost, but he First John is really good for Christians about Christian sinning.

It says if we say we have no sin We we call God a liar, basically Exactly I was right you and we get the hope on the lifeline of if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness So this is like what I'm saying when when we have a disagreement in a marital relationship, you know

or we sinned when our relationship with God, it doesn't mean it's over. It's only over if we allow it to be over because we don't take the next step of confessing our sin and going down saying, I'm sorry, I repent, right?

But that's a matter of free will, exercising the free will to say, yes, I was wrong, I'm sorry. Or we could exercise that same free will and say, you know what, I'm going to hold on to this growth.

I'm going to hold on to this misunderstanding. I'm going hold on to the way I feel. And that separates the relationship.

And then the flesh and the spirit until you feed is who's going to lead you. So one last concluding thought, one second, Leanne, I want to wrap up soon, but I want to give everyone the chance to express.

But this was the last thought I wanted to share as far as the study. In Jeremiah 29 verse 11, it also said, for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, it knows it's not thought.

For I know the thoughts that I thought about you, that would mean past tense. What it's indicating is present tense.

God is always thinking about you. God is always longing for that relationship with you. It's a matter of whether you want it or not.

[@1:17:11](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4631.8) - **Lee Anne P.**

Go ahead, Dan. Oh, this is some time ago. You really threw me for a loop when you said you don't even know your own heart.

[@1:17:23](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4643.44) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

I mean we think we know our own heart, but what does the Scripture say? The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked.

Who can know it but God? That tells me that I don't even know my own heart because why? Because I lie to myself in the subconscious.

We think we know our own heart and we probably know it better than anybody else besides God. who knows it absolutely perfectly?

God does. And so that's why it's important for us to surrender our free will to God's will. Because since he

knows us completely. He knows what's best for us as well.

[@1:18:04](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4684.1) - **Mike**

Yeah, Charles Spurgeon said to paraphrase him, he said, when somebody said something about you, don't get angry because you're probably worse than they think you are.

[@1:18:17](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4697.74) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yes, that is good. That is good. So as we conclude our other thoughts or ideas, or how does it impact you today?

know we've had a great discussion today. And this is what it's all about. So other thoughts or ideas, or again, how is this impacted you today?

[@1:18:38](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4718.72) - **Margo**

I think for me, what I recently realized is, the more that I do trust myself and search and go through confusions and, you know, even like daily understandings, that it's all okay and that as long as

I am attempting to connect with him and myself. It's almost like it coincides with self-trust and self-love and then also trust in God and love, love for God and of God.

So that's how I understand it, the difference.

[@1:19:19](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4759.62) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah, that's very cool. We're all progressing. I think that's what I would use in the world to sum up what you said.

we're progressing as long as we keep progressing, God's happy with that. As long as we keep moving forward with him, that's awesome.

[@1:19:34](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4774.34) - **Mike**

I believe that if you're the Lord, it doesn't matter how far you go outside of his will, like Jonah, he'll set it up like he prepared the fish.

[@1:19:44](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4784.46) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

He'll bring it back. Yeah, because again, that's a perfect story about relationship, right? I mean, God loves Jonah. He loved Ninevites.

He was hoping the two would get on the same page and reluctantly, you know, the first Joe didn't want to, but in the end, he did, and God was able to use him to minister to them.

So, you know, I think that's an excellent story about relationship, you know, and it shows that Jonah got upset with God, you know?

Well, you didn't, you didn't smite him, you know, but God didn't let that get in the way of their relationship.

He still gave him the gourd. He still gave him the shade. He took it away to try to teach him to help him grow in his own relationship with God.

[@1:20:27](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4827.42) - **Mike**

Yeah, I guess Jonah had prejudice against those people.

[@1:20:30](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4830.74) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Yeah, he sure did. He sure did. Other thoughts or questions about today's lessons?

[@1:20:38](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4838.32) - **Lee Anne P.**

Yeah, this is very insightful. My mom has been getting worse and worse for ALS, which means the mind is still there, but her body is failing her breathing or for swallowing.

she's a Catholic. So she was, you know, dissuaded from studying the Bible. You know, it's only what, you know, the Pope says, the Bishop, the Archbishop of Cardinal, however, to order it is flowing through the priest and through the angry nuns, you know.

Yeah, I do have a resent. That's my issue. And what I do is I try to go over the Bible study with her.

She doesn't want to participate, you know, actively, and thank you for putting the scripture list up because I copy it and I make no.

And this has really been very salient for me. I think it's a tool to help my mother enormously to stop her from going to that dark.

in her head and thinking negative thoughts, not because of the ALS, she's always felt that way. It's just because I'm sober and I'm here now in the present with her that I've noticed these characteristics.

And so this is, wow, this is, you know, it's a good shot. Thank you. Yeah.

[@1:22:28](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4948.78) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Well, thank you for sharing. And we're definitely going to pray for your mom as we conclude here when we get prayer requests.

But before I take other prayer requests, any other thoughts or ideas? How am I being packing you today? Okay.

Well, let's go ahead and take prayer requests. like I said, Leanne will pray for your mom and ALS.

[@1:22:51](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4971.52) - **Mike**

Any other prayer requests? Pray that I'll pick the right state and city.

[@1:22:57](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4977.06) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

I still have some choices to make. Please pray for my mother Marina Marina anything specific or just in general health.

Okay. Any other prayer requests.

[@1:23:19](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=4999.62) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

Oh yeah, I'm going to break up and then also my parents are going to travel here next weekend. Not this Saturday, but the next week.

So I think I arrived here pretty well.

[@1:23:34](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5014.86) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

And you said you live in Utah, where are they coming from?

[@1:23:38](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5018.84) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

San Diego.

[@1:23:40](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5020.26) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

San Diego?

[@1:23:41](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5021.68) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

Okay.

[@1:23:43](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5023.48) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

All right. So are they flying or driving?

[@1:23:47](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5027.6) - **Cristian Alburquerque**

They're going to fly.

[@1:23:48](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5028.8) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Okay. And just so people know the reason I'm asking is it the more specific we can pray, you know, the more honed in God gets, if you will.

All right. So I'm not trying to be in. So I appreciate your, you know, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, go ahead.

I think he's good. Go ahead, Margo.

[@1:24:10](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5050.68) - **Lee Anne P.**

Okay. Specifically for my mom, she just want a point comfortable and so she did, you know, go on to heaven.

She just wants us to be over what she's given off. And, you know, we're keeping her comfortable, but she just wants to go.

[@1:24:34](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5074.76) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Go ahead. Okay. So comfort.

[@1:24:42](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5082.5) - **Margo**

Yes, if I can add from my mother, she's just finished cancer treatment. And so she's having a lot of mental and physical ailments.

And so if you can. Yeah. Thank you.

[@1:25:01](https://fathom.video/share/U7s1CWzqWWPJvsW8QDBLv-9Snz6xymLc?timestamp=5101.64) - **Rick Stephenson (wisdomwell.guru)**

Sure. Sure. Got it. Okay. Anything else? Otherwise I'm going to jump into prayer here. Okay. Well, Lord Jesus, we are grateful for our lesson today.

We thank you God for speaking to us and the good discussion that we had Lord because obviously this is important to you.

And so it stirs us and Lord, we really want to know you. We want to know you more. We want to know your words.

So we thank you, God, for just speaking and directing and clarifying today. And we just pray that as we walk away with your word that you continue to get us to think and to dive into your word and do a deeper relationship with you.

We thank you that you crave relationship with us. We thank you that you don't walk away from us and you give us opportunity after opportunity to know you.

And I just pray that we would seize those opportunities. I pray God that we'd be aware of them and that God, we would value those opportunities and really pursue you with everything.

within us. Lord, up Leanne's mom, that Lord, she would be granted comfort. Touch her body, touch her muscles, Lord God.

She's afflicted with ALS and we pray God that you'd move that reflection. Remove that Lord God and help her to feel some mobility and flexibility, God, and just give her comfort, remove the pain.

God, bring clarity to her mind and her spirit. We thank you for speaking to her through the Leanne and Lord God.

We pray that you give Leanne wisdom, guidance, and direction. We thank you for sending angels to her right now for comfort.

Because you said that the angels are ministering spirits. Lord, we ask that you lose them right now to her.

And Lord, we lift up like and we pray God you give wisdom and discernment to know the decision he should make of where to move the city and the exact state and even the exact neighborhood and location God that you will just direct his steps.

The steps of a good man are ordered by you. Lord God, and I know Michael loves you, and I know Lord God that he wants to do your will.

So Lord, lead him, guide him to the exact place you want him to be. Let him have signs and wonders that just point to the place.

Lord lift up Margot's mom, we ask God that you would heal her. We ask God that you would strengthen her, bring clarity to her mind.

you for getting her through the cancer treatments, and Lord, you strengthen her. We just continue to pray that you strengthen her more and more every day that she finds the clarity and the strength and the ability Lord God that she lost would return.

Let it return, let her be raised up in strength, and that it would encourage her in you. In Jesus name, give Margot wisdom, give Margot the words to speak to her Lord God that just show her love and respect and kindness.

And Lord, thank you for blessing, Marina. Lord, we lift up Christ, and we pray God that you would touch his heart, Lord, a separation of the

This relationship is difficult on both ends. And God, him to work through that. Help him to just trust you, to rely upon you.

Again, you're the God of all comforts, of comfort him in this time. Put a shield of protection around his parents as a fly to visit him in Utah, Lord, everything go well from the time that they traveled to the airport, to the time they reach his location, the time they fly back, Lord God, let this be a time of enjoyment, a time of closeness, time of warmth, that they would enjoy each other's company, that they'd enjoy the time spent together and that they'd feel close together, that they'd be able to feel close to you as well, Bless them, keep a hedge protection and let your warrior angels go with them at all times in Jesus' name.

And Lord, we thank you for the weeks ahead. We ask a special blessing to my friends here that the Lord God, you would just bless them in the next few weeks and help them keep you in mind and all.