



# 2:42LifeGroups

GROWING TOGETHER IN THE GOSPEL

## Life Group Growth Sheet • Leaders Guide

### God's Certain Plan

Romans 8:29-30

#### Where We've Been

Our study through Romans 8 has taken us to verses 28-30. The theme of these verses is “God’s good plan,” which we see from five angles:

1. Our *knowledge* of God’s plan (“and we know,” 8:28)
2. The *recipients* of God’s plan (“for those who love God . . . called according to his purpose,” 8:28)
3. The *scope* of God’s plan (“all things work together,” 8:28)
4. The *outcome* of God’s plan (“for good . . . to be conformed to the image of his, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (8:28, 29)
5. The *certainty* of God’s plan (“for those whom he foreknew he also predestined . . . and those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified” (8:29, 30).

To this point, we have dealt with the first four angles: the knowledge, recipients, scope, and outcome of God’s good plan.

#### Theme of This Study

Now we focus on the *certainty* of God’s plan, given in verses 29 and 30. The word “for” in verse 29 grounds our confidence (that God works all things for good, 8:28) in an unbreakable “chain” of God’s actions for us: foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification.

We find an ocean of assurance when we remember that the events happening to us right now are actually part of a much bigger plan—God’s eternal purposes that stretch back into eternity past, and will continue into eternity future.

The central theme of this study is that God’s certain plan for his children stirs us to joyful assurance, humble adoration, and obedient action.

#### Pitfalls to Avoid

This passage takes us to the doctrine of election, which historically has been a battleground among Christians. Simply stated, the doctrine of election is the Biblical teaching that God sovereignly chooses whom he will save. Although this doctrine is plainly taught throughout both the Old and New Testaments,<sup>1</sup> it also reminds us how high God’s ways are above ours. Some aspects of this doctrine do not sit comfortably with our minds or emotions. Because of this, we

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<sup>1</sup>A small sampling of these passages include: Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 9:4-6; Psalm 65:4; Proverbs 16:4; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 22:14; 24:31; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; 17:6; Romans 8:28-30, 33; chapter 9; 11:2, 28-36; Ephesians 1:5, 11; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2; Revelation 13:8.



should be alert to the following pitfalls. First, we should be careful to let Scripture speak for itself instead of bending certain parts to fit a system we find more comfortable. Second, we should avoid two extremes: drawing conclusions the Bible does not teach, or ignoring doctrines the Bible *does* teach. Whatever the Bible teaches, God gives us for our benefit. As Moses writes in Deuteronomy 29:29, “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.” Instead of wishing the difficult passages away, we must discover the good God intends for us in them.

### **Discussion & Application**

1. Read Romans 8:28-30. God clearly wants us to know his “purpose” for his children. Why does he want us to know this? Based on what you know of the rest of the chapter (8:31-39), what attitudes and actions should this stir in us?
2. People who feel insecure often pass that insecurity on to others. For example, if someone does not feel loved, he or she may be less likely to affirm and uplift others. Name some ways in which our security in God’s love for us should spill over into the way we treat others?
3. It is important to note that every verb in the “chain” (foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified) has *God* as its subject. That is, *God* is the one who does all these things. What does this say about *our* role in our security of salvation?
4. Read Acts 18:10 and 2 Timothy 2:10. Perhaps for some people, the doctrine of election becomes an excuse not to share the gospel. According to these passages, what did Paul’s belief about the elect encourage him to do? What practical things can we do to follow Paul’s example this coming week?
5. The culmination of God’s plan for us is *glorification*, which is our being “conformed to the image of his Son.” What is true about your life right now that makes you long for that final day?