

## ANSWERING CRITIQUES OF OUR WORK "MAKING SENSE OF GOD'S ELECTION"

### **Part I: Answering A Calvinist's Claim That Our Ordo Salutis, Or "Order Of Salvation Events," Is Errantly Arminian, And That Romans 8:29-30 Is The Correct Ordo Salutis**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. A Calvinist critic of our work, "Making Sense Of God's Election" has claimed that its Ordo Salutis, or "order of salvation events," appears to be errantly Arminian, and that Romans 8:29-30 offers the correct Ordo Salutis.
- B. We answer this critique here (as follows):

#### **II. Answering A Calvinist's Claim That Our Ordo Salutis, Or "Order Of Salvation Events," Is Errantly Arminian, And That Romans 8:29-30 Is The Correct Ordo Salutis.**

- A. The Calvinist's charge that the Ordo Salutis in our work, "Making Sense of God's Election," appears to be Arminian and hence errant presupposes that we adopt Arminian views on the doctrine of salvation itself. However, we have noted in our work, "Making Sense of God's Election" that **both Calvinism and Arminianism err** in making faith a "work" in the salvation process -- Arminianism in making it a work of man, and Calvinism in making it a work of God. We rather claim that faith is **NOT** a work, that man alone thus authors it and God alone saves him totally apart from man's expression of faith itself, the argument of Romans 3:21-28. As such, our Ordo Salutis is not errant, but it is the product of Bible exposition to find the correct order of salvation events.
- B. Then, a Calvinist's claim that Romans 8:29-30 presents the correct Ordo Salutis poses a problem for himself:
  1. Doctrinaire Calvinism holds that "no event can be foreknown unless . . . it has been predetermined," Loraine Boettner, The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, 1972, p. 42.
  2. However, Paul wrote in Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate . . .," so Calvinism would leave Paul claiming, "Whom he predestined (to be foreknown) them He also predestined (to be conformed . . .)," a tautological, or needlessly redundant and thus illogical claim according to the definition of logic we noted in the introduction of our work, "Making Sense of God's Election."
  3. Also, Jesus Himself revealed foreknowledge apart from predestination in Matthew 11:20-24, claiming that had His works that had been performed in some Galilean cities in His day been done in some Gentile cities of antiquity, the Gentile cities would have long before repented and/or remained to His day! Such divine knowledge apart from predestination implies God's ability also to foreknow apart from predestination!
- C. In addition, an exposition of Romans 8:29-30 reveals that it offers **NO** comprehensive Ordo Salutis:
  1. Paul in Romans 8:29 KJV wrote that believers were predestined of God "to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
  2. This Romans 8:29 conformity to the image of God's Son occurs at the rapture, for it also occurs in the context of the rapture in 1 Corinthians 15:49 (with 1 Corinthians 15:51ff).
  3. The Romans 8:29 phrase of Christ's being the "firstborn among many brethren" can also be seen as a reference to the rapture with the believers' glorification since the same term "firstborn" is used in Colossians 1:18 of Christ in regard to His bodily resurrection from the dead.
  4. Also, Romans 8:29 is connected to the theme of the rapture in the preceding context of Romans 8:18-23, further indication that Paul had the rapture in view in Romans 8:29.
  5. Then, as we already noted in our work, "Making Sense of God's Election," Paul in Ephesians 1:3-5 wrote that whom God foreknew as believers He also predestined to be raptured, the same idea we suggest is presented in Romans 8:29!
- D. Thus, Romans 8:29-30 is **NOT** an order of salvation events, it is not an Ordo Salutis. Rather, it is a discussion in Romans 8:29 of God's plans to rapture those He foreknew would believe, with no discussion about how their faith is authored. Then, in verse 30, Paul added the steps that God in grace would take to get the Gospel to these folk He foreknew that they might be called of Him to believe and be justified to become His people, only later to be glorified by Him in the rapture. One must look elsewhere for the Ordo Salutis.

***Lesson:*** (1) *Our work's Ordo Salutis is not errant because it is not Calvinistic or because it looks more like the Arminian than the Calvinistic Ordo Salutis, for we hold a doctrine of salvation quite distinct from both Arminian and Calvinist schools of thought in support of man's total authorship of faith and God's total authorship of salvation itself.* (2) *Also, Romans 8:29-30 is NOT an Ordo Salutis, but Paul's description of how God graciously planned to get all He foreknew would believe in Christ to be glorified in His presence via the rapture, the same theme our work established occurs in Ephesians 1:3-5. One must look elsewhere for the Ordo Salutis.*