

**Lesson Five**  
**The Certainty of Our Predestination**

**Goal**

To set forth on the basis of Scripture the reason why God has given us this teaching: to comfort us with the assurance that our salvation depends on God's grace from first to last.

**1. The comfort of predestination does not lead to security**

***1 Corinthians 10:12,13***

***Luke 12:32***

- A person may fall from faith and therefore reveal himself or herself not to be of the elect. Should this make us worry?

***Philippians 2:12,13***

- Evaluate: Do Paul's words imply that the Christian must cooperate with God in order to be saved? Explain your answer.

***2 Peter 1:10***

- If our election is secure, why does the apostle Peter say "make your calling and election sure"?

**2. Overcoming how Satan confuses this comforting doctrine**

- How would you answer the following challenges Satan often throws at Christians?

"If you call yourself one of the elect, why do you continue to sin?" or "If you claim to be chosen by God, why aren't you so faithful in studying the Word and in your prayers?"

"Don't worry about sin. If you are one of the elect, God will see to it that you remain in the faith until the end. Think of the thief on the cross."

"You can't escape your fate. If you are not elected, nothing will help. If you are, you have it made."

"If God chose some to be saved, he must have chosen others to be condemned. How can you be sure that you fall into the first category?"

"Since it is up to you to choose to believe, God chose to predestine you because he saw you would accept his offer of salvation."

"The stronger your faith, the more sure you can be that you were elected. So grow in faith so you can be sure."

"Being certain that you are predestined is a mark of arrogance. Isn't it a mark of humility to be uncertain to a small degree?"

- What do all these temptations have in common?

### 3. Being sure of our predestination

- Read the following passages. How does each assure you that God elected you?

**Romans 8:38,39**

**Hebrews 13:8**

**1 Peter 1:18,19**

Luther summarized the matter of certainty well:

When sins trouble you, flee to the gospel. . . . “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). When doubts arise, cling to the promises in Scripture, which can never be taken away: Christ has come into the world, taken on flesh and blood, lived and died that sinners may have life everlasting. The punishment we had coming was placed squarely upon his shoulders. God can never deny the sinner entrance to heaven, when the reason for entry is the plea, “Not me, O Father, but the merits of your Son!”

When predestination is taught in this context, it comforts us with knowing that God alone is responsible for our faith and salvation and that he will keep us in faith until the end.

**Romans 9:11,12**

**Romans 11:5,6**

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

- If you were asked, “Why did God choose you?” what would be your answer?
- What strength and motivation should God’s election give us?

**John 14:2,3**

**Matthew 25:34**

- How did Jesus assure us and his disciples that we will enter eternal life?

**John 8:31**

**John 20:31**

- Why does the doctrine of predestination drive us to the Word?

### Summary

We who believe in Christ can be sure that God has predestined us to believe and receive eternal life. As long as we focus on Christ, the teaching of predestination gives us the comfort God intended it to give us. Satan, in order to rob us of comfort, tries to make us think about predestination apart from Christ. Knowing this, we will want to use God’s Word where the Holy Spirit reveals Christ to make us sure that God’s mercy is ours.

### During the week

1. Review this lesson by reading *Predestination*, pages 49-67. You may order this book at Northwestern Publishing House [www.nph.net](http://www.nph.net) or calling 1-800-662-6022 Catalog Item Number: OL-150607 \$14.50
2. You can also read in the Lutheran Confessions: Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article XI
3. Read “The Election Controversy in the Synodical Conference.” <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/RardinElection.pdf>
4. Ask a friend who belongs to another church what he or she believes about predestination. Be ready to share what you find with the class.