

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 15TH-16TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

PRIVILEGES (ROMANS 9:1-5)

OBJECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

As Paul writes his letters, he seems to often think of those who might either object to what he's written or to those who might have questions. One of the questions Paul anticipates comes from what he's just written in chapter 8. If nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (8:39), then why are so many Israelites outside salvation?

PAUL KNOWS THE ANGUISH OF UNBELIEF

Paul was once on the outside looking in at Jesus and His followers. But God graciously called Paul out of darkness into light. While Paul knows it's impossible, he loves his people so much he would willingly give up his salvation to give it to the Israelites.

- For Paul, God's grace is truly amazing and he wants his people to receive it.

PRIVILEGES DON'T GUARANTEE ANYTHING

If any people should embrace Jesus it should be Israel because their privileges point to Him. They were adopted by God, they were entrusted with the covenants & the Law, God's temple was in their country and Jesus descended from their birth line.

- Many of us have had the privilege of hearing the gospel for many years.

FAILURE? (ROMANS 9:6-13)

HAS GOD FAILED HIS PEOPLE? NO!

There's never been a time when every Israelite believed and received all of God's promises. Physical descent has never been a guarantee that one was truly a part of the promises to Israel. Prove it, Paul.

- Paul first builds his case using the history of the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac & Jacob, the founders of national Israel, as his proof.

ABRAHAM'S KIDS

Abraham had more children than Isaac. His oldest son was Ishmael, by Hagar, which meant he should receive the inheritance. But God had promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son, Isaac, and through him God's covenant would be realized.

- Ishmael was a child of Abraham but not the child of promise.

ISAAC AND ISHMAEL PROVE NOTHING

They were half-brothers, but God had promised Sarah, not Hagar, that she would bear the child of promise. Of course, God worked through Isaac, Sarah's son.

- But Isaac had children by his wife, Rebekah. They had 2 sons, twins. God chose to work through the younger, Jacob, and not the older, Esau.

GOD'S CHOICE WASN'T BASED ON WORKS

If you read the OT you'll find that neither Jacob nor Esau's works gave much glory to God. Esau despised his inheritance and gladly sold it to satisfy his physical desires. Jacob was a deceiver and gladly stole Esau's inheritance for his own selfish desires.

- No one is worthy of God's blessings because we all fall short of His glory (3:23).

WHAT IS HIS CHOICE BASED ON THEN?

Paul says it was based on election and quotes God saying in Malachi that He loved Jacob and hated Esau. God chose (elected or determined) which line He would work through to accomplish His purposes: Seth over Cain, Shem over Ham & Japheth, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Judah over his brothers, David over his 7 older brothers.

GOD IS THE ULTIMATE DETERMINER OF ALL

Paul is building the case that God is God and will do what He wills. Yes, man has free will to respond to God or reject God. But God always has the final say.

- For those of us who were once far from God but now are His children, do we despise God for His work in us? **NO! We praise God for His overcoming grace!**

MERCY (ROMANS 9:14-18)

SOME WILL SAY THAT GOD IS UNJUST

Some might say, "Why not me? Why does so and so get good things and I seem to always get the crap, the leftovers?" Grace and mercy are always unmerited or they cease to be grace and mercy. **Grace is when we get what we don't deserve and mercy is when we don't get what we deserve.**

- **Do you want God to be just with you?**

THE MYSTERY OF GOD AT WORK IN HUMANITY

All I know is that I've done things for which I'm ashamed and for which I deserve eternal separation from God. Unless I'm teaching only perfect people, each of you is in the same boat as me. Pastor Corey said it

last week, the Bible doesn't deal with the sin "out there," but with the sin in me. **But God in love calls us out of darkness into His light.**

SOMETIMES GOD LEAVES US TO OUR DESIRES

In Romans 1:28, Paul says that God sometimes delivers the God-suppressors over to their corrupt minds. Here in ch. 9 Paul uses the example of Pharaoh in Exodus. Pharaoh saw all the miracles that God performed through Moses and rejected God. God turned Pharaoh over to his corrupt mind and let him continue down the path to destruction.

DID MOSES DESERVE GOD'S MERCY MORE THAN PHARAOH?

No! No more than Jacob did over Esau. But to display His power to save, God allowed Pharaoh to continue in his rebellion so that God's glory might be praised.

- God raised up Pilate and the Jewish leaders so that they might deliver His Son to death for His glory and our good!

SOVEREIGNTY (ROMANS 9:19-29)

PAUL ANTICIPATES YOUR QUESTIONS

If God is the ultimate determiner Who shows mercy on whom He wills, then how can I be the ultimate determiner of my own life? Spoiler alert: you're not!

- Yes, you make real choices in a real world with real consequences. All the while our sovereign God is at work for His glory and for our good if we will turn to Him.

THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

If God is the Creator of all things, including us, we, His creation, don't stand over Him demanding He submit to us, but God stands over us calling us to submit to Him.

- God doesn't call us to a bargaining table to negotiate our terms to be saved, He calls us to the cross where our only response is unconditional surrender to Him.

EVERY HUMAN WILL DISPLAY GOD'S GLORY

We will either display His glory through His grace and mercy or through His justice and wrath. God's justice and wrath remind us that no one ever gets away with it, whatever "it" is. With all the injustice in our world we have a just God Who misses nothing which is why vengeance belongs to Him (Romans 12:19) and not to us.

NO LONGER ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Paul says that Gentiles (that's us) used to be outside God's privileges that belonged to only Israel. But God had a sovereign plan that through His Son, a Jewish man, salvation would be made possible to all who would repent and believe.

- **We haven't replaced Israel, by grace we get to join in on His promises to them!**

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY & MAN'S FREE WILL

The big question is how can they both exist? Doesn't one negate the other? The Bible clearly teaches both. Antinomy is when an unresolved tension exists between two clear truths. We don't have to reconcile these truths, we believe them and submit to them.

- Charles Spurgeon, when asked, said I never reconcile friends.

BARRIER (ROMANS 9:30-33)

SO WHAT ABOUT ISRAEL?

Paul says that the problem with Israel is the problem with many of us, they think salvation is found anywhere else but in Jesus alone.

- **As Jesus said in John 14:6 "no one comes to the Father except through me." As Peter said in Acts 4:12 "there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."**

JESUS IS EITHER A BRIDGE OR A BARRIER

Israel would rather trust in their own righteousness through their laws than the righteousness of Jesus received by grace. Jesus isn't the real barrier, it's their pride.

- And that's the problem with many who will reject Jesus' free offer of salvation. **They would rather boast in their works and pridefully deny their only hope is Jesus.**

HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

- Is your God the Creator of all things, including you, to Whom you must submit?
- Do you believe that God is working all things out, even the hard and difficult things, for your good and His glory?
- Are you willing to let God be God, even when you can't see or feel Him working?

ARE YOU IN OR ARE YOU OUT?

- The only way any of us are in is by grace through faith in Jesus alone.
- God is patient with you not wanting any to perish, but there will be a time when His patience will come to an end.
- **There is no one within the sound of my voice that's so far gone that he or she cannot be saved!**