

03/20/22 Message

Part of Romansthe Life of Faith - the Power of Grace

March 19, 2022

Message: Death to Life

Series: Romans

This is our tenth message in the series Romans: the Life of Faith – the Power of Grace.

As one of Paul’s epistles (or letters), Romans is considered the greatest of all his letters. It’s been called one of the most foundational documents of Christianity.

Introduction

Paul was incredibly concerned about the spiritual lostness of both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). More than anything, he wanted them to be “saved.”

Let’s talk about being saved. We talk about being lost so much, a better word than saved might be found. That might be true if we were talking about physical location. Being spiritually lost is much different than being physically lost.

—Pastor Chad

Jesus’ death on the cross secures salvation for those who accept Him as Lord and Savior, believing in Him. It involves regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

- Soteriology – the doctrine of salvation
 - Regeneration – new birth; through God’s grace we are born again
 - Justification – full acquittal; righteous through the eyes of God, forgiven
 - Sanctification – journey to spiritual maturity; lifelong process
 - Glorification – the reward; we receive our glorified body in

heaven

Being “saved” starts with being born again (regeneration) and culminates with being born again (glorification). It’s crossing over from death to life!

Paul’s Message

Romans 11 (NLT)

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not!...

5 ...for a few of the people of Israel have remained faithful because of God’s grace—his undeserved kindness in choosing them.

6 And since it is through God’s kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God’s grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved.

7 So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the hearts of the rest were hardened.

8 As the Scriptures say, “God has put them into a deep sleep. To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see, and closed their ears so they do not hear.”

- God has not REJECTED you (v1)
- His grace is FREE and UNDESERVED (v6)

The language in v7 reminds us of what Jesus said in Matthew 7.

Matthew 7:21-23 (NLT)

21 “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.

22 On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’

23 But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

“Many” will be told depart from Me, I never knew you... “most of the

people” have not found the favor of God. Some have, but most have not.

- Their hearts were HARDENED (v7)
- They became SPIRITUALLY BLIND (v8)

In verse 8, Paul uses two Old Testament passages:

Isaiah 29:10 (NLT)

For the LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep. He has closed the eyes of your prophets and visionaries.

Deuteronomy 29:4 (NLT)

But to this day the LORD has not given you minds that understand, nor eyes that see, nor ears that hear!

Rejecting God

Why would God put them in a deep sleep? Why would he make them blind or deaf to spiritual things? Why would a loving God do that?

First – God opened the floodgates of heaven and poured His grace on them. They had every opportunity to turn to Him, to be saved. But there’s a point where He knows you won’t turn back and at that point hardheartedness and spiritual blindness take over.

Second – The imagery here is death – deep sleep, closed the eyes... It’s the permanent state and consequences of rejecting Him.

The two implication above are not “God’s action” as punishment, it’s a response to “our action” if/when we reject Him (we get what we want).

Paul makes that clear when he says...

Romans 11:15 (NLT)

...God offered salvation to the rest of the world... their acceptance will be... life for those who were dead!

God offers you salvation – accepting His gift of salvation will give you life! That’s how you take death off the table. That’s how you take the dread, fear, hurt of death away. Exchange it for life – eternal life!

- Exchange DEATH for LIFE

Romans 11:22 (NLT)

Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off.

When Paul speaks of being “cut off,” think about pruning a tree. That’s how Jesus describes it...

John 15:1-8 (NLT)

1 “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener.

2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.

3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you.

4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

5 “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned.

7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!

8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

Paul wants them to know – the moment you turn to God, regardless of how long or how far you’ve ran –

- It’s where they $\neg\neg$ BELONG (v24)

It’s where we all belong!

The Depth of God’s Love

Romans 11 (NLT)

29 For God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn.

30 Once, you Gentiles were rebels against God, but when the people of Israel rebelled against him, God was merciful to you instead.

31 Now they are the rebels, and God's mercy has come to you so that they, too, will share in God's mercy.

33 Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways!

36 For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen.

- God's GIFTS to you and His CALL on your life can never be withdrawn!

Whatever God is calling you to do - do it today - by faith through the power of grace!

Cross over from death to life - do it today - by faith through the power of grace!