

Title: Trading Places

Text: Romans 9:1-5

People Need the Lord (1983)

- *Everyday they pass me by
I can see it in their eyes
Empty people filled with care
Headed who knows where*
- *On they go through private pain
Living fear to fear
Laughter hides their silent cries
Only Jesus hears*
- *People need the Lord, people need the Lord
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door
People need the Lord, people need the Lord
When will we realize people need the Lord?*

The Gospel has Serious Implications for Humanity

You must take into Consideration Your People's Eternal Destination!

What upsets you lately? What are you in agony over?

Your political rights? Your civil right? Your physical rights?

What do you agonize over?

There is something the Apostle Paul agonizes over and it has nothing to do with the temporary life we now live and has everything to do with the eternal reality we all face.

Do you care that your neighbor, cousin, co-worker is destined for Hell?

Main Idea - Do You Agonize Over Those Outside of God's Kingdom?

If I am going to be honest with you, I do not agonize over this. I might have a twinge of sadness and maybe some guilt, but agonize? Not so much.

After going over this passage and seeing the heart of the Apostle Paul, I'm shocked at his attitude and I am praying God will break my heart for my people the same way he broke Paul's heart for

his.

So I determined to learn from Paul in these verses.

How can I grow in this?

Three ways...

1. Cultivate a Broken Heart for the Lost (vs. 1-3)

Do you ever get passionate about something, and it shows up in your speech or your writing?

Well, the Apostle Paul certainly was passionate about the topic we are studying today. Don't believe me? Listen to his words...

Romans 9:1-2 ESV

¹ I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

Speaking truth/not lying

Conscience bears me witness/in the Holy Spirit

What is the witness? What is the truth Paul speaks?

In other words, his words, conscience and the Holy Spirit are all working together and convicting Paul's heart.

Look again at these emotional words and phrases Paul uses...

“I have **great** sorrow”

“I have **unceasing** anguish”

“in my heart.”

Paul is heart sick!

Heartsick - “Despondent, typically from grief or loss of love.”

I've been heartsick before. I can't sleep well. I can't focus. I can't escape the constant and

reoccurring thoughts plaguing my mind! It's exhausting.

Have you ever been heartsick about something?

It fills your mind. It's bothersome. It's a terrible burden.

Why is Paul heartsick?

Romans 9:3 ESV

³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Please feel the weight of this sentence.

Paul, in his heartsick state of mind, says something shocking!!

His wish is that he could be **CURSED** and **CUT OFF** from the saving gospel of Jesus Christ so that his brothers/kinsmen/according to the flesh.

In other words - the Jewish nation.

Wait, aren't Jews God's chosen people and therefore saved?

No!

Take a look at what Jesus says about the gentile Centurion who had great faith...

Matthew 8:10-12 ESV

¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. ¹¹ I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹² while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

No! They as a nation rejected Christ and now, they are not being dealt with as a nation.

Just because Abraham is their father does not give them the privilege of eternal life.

In fact, even Abraham exercised FAITH in order to be saved.

Romans 4:1–3 ESV

¹ What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”

Do you get the point that Paul is making here?

The Jews, Paul's people, have on mass rejected Jesus Christ as Messiah. They reject the idea that Jesus fulfilled hundreds of scriptures pointing to the fact that he was and is messiah (King).

Old Testament Verses About Jesus as Messiah

1. Messiah would be born of a woman. [Genesis 3:15](#); [Matthew 1:20](#) [Galatians 4:4](#)
2. Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. [Micah 5:2](#); [Matthew 2:1](#) [Luke 2:4-6](#)
3. Messiah would be born of a virgin. [Isaiah 7:14](#); [Matthew 1:22-23](#) [Luke 1:26-31](#)
4. Messiah would come from the line of Abraham. [Genesis 12:3](#) [Genesis 22:18](#); [Matthew 1:1](#) [Romans 9:5](#)
5. Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac. [Genesis 17:19](#) [Genesis 21:12](#); [Luke 3:34](#)
6. Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob. [Numbers 24:17](#); [Matthew 1:2](#)
7. Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah. [Genesis 49:10](#); [Luke 3:33](#) [Hebrews 7:14](#)
8. Messiah would be heir to King David's throne. [2 Samuel 7:12-13](#) [Isaiah 9:7](#); [Luke 1:32-33](#) [Romans 1:3](#)

And because of their rejection, God turned his attention away from them as a nation to all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues. This is the point of the book of Acts and the whole of the rest of the New Testament.

And Paul was grieved to the core that his nation was cursed and cut off from God.

Why are they?

Because they rejected Christ as Messiah

Alon - A Pre Easter Believer.

1 Corinthians 15:17 ESV

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

Understand this clearly.

If you reject the resurrection of Christ, you are no Christian and you are not saved.

You cannot be saved unless you accept that Christ is risen.

Romans 10:9–10 ESV

⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

This is the simple but exclusive reality of our Gospel.

I wonder what kind of anguish you feel for your neighbor that has rejected Christ?

Would you honestly pray that you would trade places with them and that you would be accursed and cut off from Christ so they could enjoy heaven for all eternity?

I'll be honest with you. I don't share the same passion for the lost that Paul has for his lost Jewish brothers and sisters.

So how can we cultivate a heart for the lost?

Meditate on the stark reality of hell

Pray for a spirit of humble obedience.

Review - Do You Agonize Over Those Outside of God's Kingdom?

Cultivate a Broken Heart for the Lost

Transition - There is something else you can do as well...

2. Nurture a Thankful Heart for Your Undeserved, Exalted Position (vs. 4-5a)

I'm not sure how often you do this, believer, but do you spend time thanking the Lord for your exalted position?

Yes, you have an exalted position. You are the son or daughter of the Most High King of kings and Lord of lords.

Well, the Jews had an exalted position as well.

Paul says...

Romans 9:4–5a (ESV)

⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs...

In these two verses are eight ways the Jews enjoy and exalted position because of God's amazing Grace.

1. They are Israelites from Jacob who was later renamed Israel after he wrestled with the Angel of the Lord all night long. Israel = Wrestles with God. Dr. Douglas Moo says it, suggests a people chosen by God to belong to him in a special way and to be the vessels of his plan of salvation for the world."

2. Adoption as sons (Exod 4:22; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1)

3. They had "the glory" - If you recall, God displayed His glory in their midst on many occasions. (Exod 16:10; 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10-11)

4. They had all the covenants that God made with Abraham, Moses, David and even the New Covenant. (Gen 12:1-3; Exod 24:7-8)

5. They received the Law from God Himself. (Exod 20:1-17)

6. Worship - God told them how to worship Him in various feasts as well as sacrifices that the nation was to observe.

7. The promises - God's amazing promises to the Children of God revealed in His Holy Word.

8. The Patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The fathers of the Jewish faith!

They had all these clear privileges as God's chosen people. But instead of being humbled by their privilege, their pride grew!

Evidence upon evidence. Proof upon proof to the children of God that God was their God and He was their people.

Jew at the Western Wall - "We remind ourselves of the great Shema by carrying them in the phylacteries on our head and left hand so that we would be an example of goodness to the world around us."

What?

Excuse me, but God didn't give you all this advantage so you could simply be a good example to the world!

I submit to the Jewish people that He chose you for a greater purpose than that! In the last point I'll share this purpose more fully.

But what about you? You have a pretty amazing position as a child of God!

List benefits of your position as a Christian...

*"God is so boundlessly pleased with Jesus that in him he is altogether well pleased with us."
— Charles H. Spurgeon*

Do you thank God for who you are in Him?

Or have you allowed a prideful attitude to grow because of your undeserved, exalted position in Christ. Maybe in your heart there is a nigging thought that you really deserve God's amazing Grace?

So many Christians who are discontent and discouraged because they are unthankful for who they are and what they have in Christ.

This ought not to be.

Christian, if you keep your eyes on your circumstances it gets really easy to become discontent and discouraged about your difficult circumstances.

But if you keep your eyes on Christ - and the fact that you are IN Christ.

Well, this becomes a game changer.

Why do I bring this up? Because, like the Jewish people, we can become prideful because of our

exalted position and even become diluted in thinking we deserve the position we now enjoy!

GOD FORBID!

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a WRETCH like ME!”

“Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.”

— **John Newton, Amazing Grace**

Ladies and gentlemen, don't you dare EVER forget that you are a GREAT sinner and you DESERVE eternal punishment in HELL! Don't you DARE forget that FACT!

And don't you DARE EVER forget that CHRIST is THE GREAT SAVIOR! And without His determination to DIE as a substitute in your place, you would be lost.

But because he did die in your place...

Romans 8:1 ESV

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

How do you want to be known?

- Angry Christian?
- Frustrated Christian?
- Depressed Christian?

how about...

A THANKFUL CHRISTIAN!

Why? When your life is over - what is the most important thing? Not your money, possessions, health, friends, family, nothing but one thing.

Do you know Jesus and does Jesus know you!

Review - Do You Agonize Over Those Outside of God's Kingdom?

Cultivate a Broken Heart for the Lost

Nurture a Thankful Heart for Your Undeserved, Exalted Position

Transition - And because you are determined to cultivate a broken heart for the lost...

And because you are Nurturing a Thankful Heart for your Undeserved, Exalted Position in Christ...

There is only one logical thing for you to do...

3. Develop a Purposed Heart that Shares Jesus (vs. 5b)

Paul gives one last benefit that the children of Israel enjoy. I would submit to you that this benefit outweighs all the other benefits times 1000!

Take a look at the text...

Romans 9:5b (ESV)

...and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Do you get why I said that this benefit outweighs all the other benefits times 1000?

And from their race? = Human ancestry of the Messiah!

Romans 9:5b (CSB)

...and from them, by physical descent, came the Christ, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen.

Can I show you something interesting?

Luke 3:23–24 ESV

²³ *Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,*

Luke 3:38 ESV

³⁸ *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, **the son of Adam**, the son of God.*

Jesus Linage goes back to Adam.

Matthew 1:1 ESV

¹ *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

Matthew 1:16 ESV

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

*Luke's genealogy moves backward, from Jesus to Adam; Matthew's moves forward, from Abraham to Joseph. Luke's entire section from Joseph to David differs starkly from that given by Matthew. The two genealogies are easily reconciled if **Luke's is seen as Mary's genealogy, and Matthew's version represents Joseph's.***

Thus the royal line is passed through Jesus' legal father, and His physical descent from David is established by Mary's lineage.

Luke, unlike Matthew (see note on Matt. 1:3), includes no women in his genealogy—even Mary herself. Joseph was “the son of Heli” by marriage (Heli having no sons of his own), and thus is named here in v. 23 as the representative of Mary's generation. - The MacArthur Study Bible (Chapter 3)

What is the point?

Jesus Christ was not a white man, Chinese man, black man, or an Indian man.

Jesus Christ was a Jewish man!

Galatians 4:4 ESV

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,

God sent His Son into the world by sending Him into a particular people group. This people group are considered the chosen people of God. And God chose them to offer salvation to the entire world!

In light of their purpose, it is so ironic that they, God's chosen people, rejected the one who came to redeem not only them but the entire world!

John 3:16–17 ESV

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Jesus Christ entered this world 2000 years ago through a specific people group, lived a life free from sin, went to the cross as the one and only sacrifice for your sin, was buried, and on the third day rose again thus beating death and giving you the way to eternal life with God.

And if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved. If you do not, you are condemned already.

There is no other name under heaven by which you can be saved.

Call on the name Jesus and you will be saved from eternal death - hell - condemnation.

The Jews, on a whole, missed this.

You can't!

The Jews had the opportunity to be the "City on the Hill" spreading hope to all then nations. They failed.

We can't!

What is the mission of the church?

Don N. Howell Jr. says,

The Mission of the Church

"Biblical leadership maintains a laser-like concentration on God's clearly stated agenda, that is, the evangelization of the lost, the edification of the saved, and the establishment of vital churches." - Don N. Howell Jr

Don N. Howell Jr., Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003), 301.

How is she doing?

1. Are we evangelizing the lost or shuffling the saints?
2. Are we edifying the saved or entertaining the saved?
3. Are we establishing vital churches or sitting and soaking in our preferences and comfort?

I cannot answer for all the churches in America. But I will give an account to the Lord for this church. And by God's grace we will become a church that is passionate about...

1. Evangelizing the lost

2. Edifying the saved
3. Establishing vital churches.

I especially want to focus on the first of these three.

Are you sharing the good news that people do not need to go to hell? That they can be saved. Are you having these kinds of Gospel conversations?

“I’m so busy!”

“They don’t want to hear about Jesus.”

“I don’t have the gift of evangelism.”

Listen to Spurgeon on evangelism...

“Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you're not saved yourself, be sure of that!”
— Charles Spurgeon

“Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.”
— Charles H. Spurgeon

You, my Christian friend, have been entrusted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Don’t sit on it. Share it.

You don’t need to save anyone - that’s God’s job.

But you do need to share. That’s your job.

How are you doing with the responsibility God has given you?

Allow me to give you yet another simple tool to help you in your glorious privilege and responsibility to “seek and save the lost.”

PRAY – Pray for unbelievers daily. Ask God for opportunities.

PRAISE – Praise the Lord **IN FRONT OF OTHERS** (friends, family, neighbors, everywhere and with everyone).

PROBE – Ask them to explain their **BELIEF SYSTEM**. Listen, don’t argue!

PROMOTE – Ask them if they would like to hear more about **YOUR BELIEFS**. Give them a tract or the gospel of John and FTT card. Share the Gospel with them in some way.

PERSEVERE – Don't give up! Shake the dust off your feet if you need to and move on to the next person, but **never quit!**

Dear friends, WE LIVE IN AMAZING TIMES! The contrast between Bible people and the world is tremendous! You are salt and you are light!

With the world in upheaval people are looking for hope and purpose.

Jesus gives us hope and purpose.

The Jews blew their opportunity. But God is not done with them as we will discover in chapters 9-11.

Can I give you some amazing news...

We will not blow it!

Acts 1:8 (ESV)

*⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **YOU WILL BE** my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

You **WILL** be my witnesses.

Develop a Purposed Heart that Shares Jesus!

*"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for."
— Charles H. Spurgeon*

Review - Do You Agonize Over Those Outside of God's Kingdom?

Cultivate a Broken Heart for the Lost

Nurture a Thankful Heart for Your Undeserved, Exalted Position

Develop a Purposed Heart that Shares Jesus

Transition -

Why did Jesus come to the Jewish people? To save them and the entire world.

They didn't do a great job with the messaging.

God's still getting his plan accomplished in spite of their failure!

Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

He left this task to us. You and I have the privilege to seek and save the lost.

People Need the Lord (Con't)

*We are called to take His light
To a world where wrong seems right
What could be too great a cost
For sharing life with one who's lost?*

*Through His love our hearts can feel
All the grief they bear
They must hear the words of life
Only we can share*

*People need the Lord
When will we realize
That we must give our lives
For people need the Lord*

Connection Group Reflection Questions