

Romans part 40

“The Patience of God”

Good morning, we are continuing in our study on the book of Romans; the last few weeks, people have been asking me, “when are we going to get our of Romans chapters 9-11?”

This part of Romans can challenge us, it is getting to the correlation between the way the Jews in the early church acted to the gentiles and how we in the church behave towards those who do not yet know Jesus and His loving grace.

The Jews were “self-righteous” and Paul pointed out that they knew God, they loved God, they should have been the ones who embraced the plans of God, but God did not do things the way they wanted, and so, they rejected His drawing the gentiles, they demanded that the gentiles “proved” they were serious followers and they put rules on them, faith plus...

Now, we don’t do that, do we? Do we sometimes think that we know what Jesus is doing in someone else’s life? “Jesus wants them to get saved and then...” and we will now they are saved because they do... and don’t do...

Now do not shoot the messenger, Jesus is going to change us, He demands we change and grow, we are to mature, we are to go deep... salvation is to lead to transformation, ***Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***

But I am not the Holy Spirit, I do not have a plan or a timeline in someone’s life, I can pray, I can intercede, I can give Godly direction.

And that is what the Jews were doing, they did not want gentiles to be a part of the church until they became, “Jew like” ...

But the fact is that some people become Christians and they are not content with the Lord, they still hunger for what the world has to offer, they almost act like serving Jesus is a “job and an anchor” not life giving and so they “backslide”.

That is a dangerous game, we then become enslaved to forces we invite back in and it is worse than before we “gave” our lives to Christ.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? Romans 6:15-16

Of course, at any point we can repent and come back to Jesus, in fact He walks 999 steps and asks us to take one... that should impress the world, “God loves you that much!!!”

1. The patience of God.

What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, ²⁴ even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

²⁵ As He says also in Hosea:

***“I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved.”***

***²⁶ “And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,
‘You are not My people,’
There they shall be called sons of the living God.” Romans 9:22-26***

Now lets look at this in a different translation: NLT

In the same way, even though God has the right to show his anger and his power, he is very patient with those on whom his anger falls, who are destined for destruction. ²³ He does this to make the riches of his glory shine even brighter on those to whom he shows mercy, who were prepared in advance for glory. ²⁴ And we are among those whom he selected, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles.

²⁵ Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea,

“Those who were not my people,

I will now call my people.

And I will love those

whom I did not love before.”

²⁶ And,

“Then, at the place where they were told,

‘You are not my people,’

there they will be called

‘children of the living God.’” Romans 9:22-26 NLT

So the early Christians faced some radical persecution and it raised the question, why does God put up with this, why doesn't He fry them? He did in the past...

In the book of Deuteronomy, the 28th chapter, it lists all the bad things that are going to happen to bad people, why not let it happen now, why does He wait?

Paul's answer was that it wasn't passivity, but instead it was another example of His amazing faithfulness, based on His knowing who and who would not choose Him, and in His love for people He chooses to put up with all kinds of pain to wait for all the rebels to finally decide to choose Him...

It is interesting that Paul understood that the person God had been most patient with was him! Paul was the most self-righteous person there was, he was the best Jew, his words, there was and of all people, he deserved punishment.

Some people are very stubborn me one of the worst, but God does not stop pursuing us, He knows who will choose Him and He doesn't give up!

2. A prophet's wife.

Can I say something here? I would not have wanted to be a prophet in the old testament!

The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beer, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The Family of Hosea

² When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea:

“Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry

And children of harlotry,

For the land has committed great harlotry

By departing from the LORD.”

³ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. Hosea 1:1-3

Hosea was like an actor in the screen play of God, he is literally a walking illustration of God's love for you and I. Israel was like a prostitute to God, that no matter how much He loved her and did for her, she kept chasing after other lovers!

- **It's not about the rules.**

The heart is always the issue with God, it is not about you following all the rules, it's always about, “do you love me; will you be loyal to me?” letting our heart fall in love with other gods is just like being disloyal to your spouse.

What God wants is for us to be passionate about Him, be in love with Him, but when we put other things before Him, it is like going out on your spouse! It is like flirting with people on facebook, or at the office; how would you feel if that happened to you??

Like Israel of old, we can be fickle; after making promises to God, we break them...

But, after giving God every reason to divorce us, He keeps pursuing us and refuses to abandon us.

Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.”

² So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. ³ And I said to her, “You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, will I be toward you.”

⁴ For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. ⁵ Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.
Hosea 3:1-5

No where in the bible is God’s love for us demonstrated more vividly than right here, if we walk away from God, He will not walk away from us. He may chasten us, but not for revenge, but to quench our passion for the gods of this world.

3. The promise.

Shortly before Moses died, he prophesied that Israel would leave God for other gods and that they would fall under a curse for it.

These are the terms of the covenant the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites while they were in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Mount Sinai.

Moses Reviews the Covenant

² Moses summoned all the Israelites and said to them, “You have seen with your own eyes everything the LORD did in the land of Egypt to

Pharaoh and to all his servants and to his whole country—³ all the great tests of strength, the miraculous signs, and the amazing wonders. ⁴ But to this day the LORD has not given you minds that understand, nor eyes that see, nor ears that hear! Deuteronomy 29:1-4

Then the generations to come, both your own descendants and the foreigners who come from distant lands, will see the devastation of the land and the diseases the LORD inflicts on it. ²³ They will exclaim, ‘The whole land is devastated by sulfur and salt. It is a wasteland with nothing planted and nothing growing, not even a blade of grass. It is like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD destroyed in his intense anger.’

²⁴ “And all the surrounding nations will ask, ‘Why has the LORD done this to this land? Why was he so angry?’

²⁵ “And the answer will be, ‘This happened because the people of the land abandoned the covenant that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ Instead, they turned away to serve and worship gods they had not known before, gods that were not from the LORD. Deuteronomy 29:22-26

Now please hear me, I have lived a long time, I have seen God’s people and I myself have wandered, it is not that God does this because of revenge, it is the price of sin.

4. Godly sorrow.

Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:9-10

If you think about it, God puts up with an amazing amount of garbage from us, He will let us treat Him like Gomer treated Hosea, but when we do, He will lift His hand of protection from us and let things get so bad we will cry out to Him.

Not because He is seeking revenge, but because He has given us the choice to love Him and live for Him or not...

He will walk 999 steps, and He asks us to take one step.

I realize there may be people here on this campus or online who have walked away, and perhaps you have become sorrowful to the point you would say it is time to come home. As we close, I want to give you the opportunity to do just that, I have friends who are up here ready to pray for you...