

SCRIPTURE: Romans 9:14-26 TITLE: "Mercy"

Intro: Marvin Olasky. Jewish. Orthodox. BarMitzvah 13. Atheist HighSchool. Liberal. Marxist. Protest wars. Communist Party USA. Traveled to Soviet Union. Met heroes. Study Russian for Phd. Needs reading material. Russian NT. Deist. God is real. Jesus is real. Teaching. Early American Literature. Puritans. Bunch of dead guys preached Gospel to him. Saved. *"God's going to get his people. No matter what."*

Thesis: Our Salvation is 100% dependent on the Mercy of God. And 0% in us.

I. Salvation is All Mercy/Grace (14-18)

- A. **Totally up to Him.** Has nothing to do with our obedience, strength, perseverance, improvement, energy, obsession or holiness. Everything to do with God and His work in and for us.
- B. **God hardens/allows rebellion. He could change anyone at anytime.** He's the one who *"turns hearts back to himself" (Elijah). He "grants repentance." (Timothy). We don't choose Him. He chooses us. (John 15). "No one comes to me unless the Father draws him." (John 6). The fact that He doesn't, means He is totally in control. Either way, you're stuck without God's sovereignty.*
- C. **In order that His Name would be known.** His glory. His Praise. His worship. All mercy/grace.
- D. **"It depends not on human will or exertion/effort, but on God, who has mercy." v.16**

ILLUSTRATION: John Piper. "I dropped it! God didn't drop it! I dropped it!" Systematic Theology.

Studying Bible. Galatians. Ephesians. *"Romans 9 is a tiger going around devouring free-willers like me."*

APPLICATION:

1. **Heard/Read story after story, who were angry.** Not alone. Others said *"No idea that was in Bible!"*

ILLUSTRATION: Exploring Attic. Chest full on cash. Jacket. \$100 bill. No idea that was in there!

2. **Response is humility.** Grace. Mercy. Why me? No reason other than His Grace/Mercy. Nothing in me. Nothing I did. Could do. Potential. No reason, other than He wanted to love/save me. **COTTON CANDY.**

II. Why Hold Us Accountable? (19-23) (glad you asked...:-)

- A. **What's the point if everything is predetermined?** *"Who can resist His will?"*
- B. **He commands Repentance & Faith.** He gives what He commands. Justification/Sanctification.
- C. **It's literally Mercy/Grace.** We believe, but He enables to believe. We obey/work, He empowers.
- D. **Then why hold us guilty?** Punishment? Hell? Justice? Wrath? **WHY?**
- E. **"Who are you?"** Kinda like Job. Who are we to question God. Don't like that answer but it's true.

ILLUSTRATION: He's the Potter. We're Clay. *Not even animate object?* No say or power on our own.

- F. **If we can imagine an even somewhat reasonable answer, don't you think God could come up with a perfect reason that we can't completely understand yet, but someday will? Is that possible? Yes. If not, then He's not God. Paul gave us a reason.**

ILLUSTRATION: "What if...?" MARVEL. WHAT IF series. Imagine possibilities.

- G. **Paul's "WHAT IF?"... almost like he's not 100% sure.**

- H. **In order to show the fullness of His glory in His Just Wrath against sin and His grace, mercy, love and forgiveness in Jesus despite sin, "WHAT IF..." He made some people for wrath and others to receive mercy. From the same "lump", some honorable others for dishonorable. Bit Crude.**

ILLUSTRATION: Williamsburg. Ball Room. Nice room in house. Decor. Paintings. Vases. Chamber Pot.

- I. **If there is no punishment for sin, Hell, no judgment, then Jesus, grace, mercy, salvation, forgiveness mean nothing. Justice=hypothetical. And Love, Praise, Joy, Peace, Glory minimized.**

APPLICATION:

1. **We Pray for unbelievers.** B/c only God CAN save them. Begging/pleading/asking. WHY? Preach?

2. **B/c this is God's ordained MEANS to and END.** Eat/Drink to live. Repent/Believe. Preach/Pray.

III. This Was ALWAYS His Plan (24-26)

- A. **Old Testament Promised it.** Foretold it. Predicted it. Covenant. Hosea. **That's us!**

ILLUSTRATION: Prostitute? Porn Star? Gomer. Redeem her. Set her free. Marry her. Love her.

Children: Jezreel *"The Lord sows/gives seed/life". "No Mercy." "Not my people." "Loved."*

- B. **Loves us more than any slave-master/abuser ever could! Goes after us! Mercy!**

APPLICATION:

1. **MERCY. B/c we've been shown mercy, we show mercy.** You have even a shade or hint of Pride?

ILLUSTRATION: Picking up Litter. "Shouldn't be this much litter on this road." "People these days have no sense of respect." Trashy. Lazy. Idiots. **"I used to litter."** No place to judge. Changed by God's grace.

2. **If I'm totally depraved and lost without God, then who am I to judge others who are too?**