

## Romans 9

Sometimes we can become so engrossed or driven by our witness or desire to see others come to Christ that our relationship with them can suffer. Paul understands that some of his words might be difficult for his fellow Jews to assimilate. Paul wants all to know, Jew and Gentile alike, that he in no way looks down upon the Jews nor does he separate himself from them.

1. Can you think of a time when your desire to witness to someone close to you actually caused you to lose patience with that person?

This may seem a simple question, but how important is maintaining your love when introducing others to Christ? Please explain.

2. Verse 1 begins with Paul's words, "I tell you the truth in Christ...." Why do you believe Paul begins with this phrase?

Have you ever used a phrase like this when speaking about Jesus? Please explain.

It is common for someone to say, "Honestly," or "I'm telling the truth." Yet Paul adds the phrase "in Christ" to his statement. What does it mean to you to tell the truth in Christ?

What does it mean to you to tell the truth "outside of Christ?"

Does the world recognize more than one truth? Please explain.

Can you give an example of conflicting truths in our world today?

3. Paul also says that his conscience confirms this truth in the Holy Spirit. What does this mean to you?

Can you think of a time when the truth was confirmed by your conscience in the Holy Spirit?

How did this confirmed truth affect you?

Who or what do you think led to this confirmation?

4. What does verse 2 tell us?

Is there anything in the world that causes you unceasing anguish? If so, why?

Why do you feel Paul feels such sorrow and anguish?

How would such feelings affect your relationship with Jesus? Your prayer life?

5. In verse 3, Paul reveals his wish. What is it?

Who are his brothers?

What does this wish tell you about Paul? About his brothers?

How would you describe the spiritual condition of your nation at this time?

Who are our brothers and sisters?

What does "cut off from Christ" mean to you?

Do you think Paul is serious when he says this? Please explain.

Can you remember a time when you passionately wanted a loved one to come to know Christ? What were you willing to do to help that person?

Can we "save" another person? Please explain. (See Acts 4:10-12.)

How would you respond to those who believe that there are alternate ways to be saved or that God would not send good people to hell?

6. Paul considers all believers, both Gentile and Jew, his brothers. Specifically, about whom is Paul speaking?

There is an old belief in the church that is called "replacement theology." It states that because of Israel's sins, God has replace Israel with the church. How would you respond to this idea?

Looking at Paul's words, how can we tell that Paul does not believe God has forgotten the Jewish people?

In verses 3 and 4, Paul tells us what is unique about the Jewish people. What are thiese "advantages" that Paul lists?

What is a covenant?

What is the difference between a covenant and an agreement?

What are some of the covenants that God made with Israel?

Are these covenants still valid? Please explain.

In what way or ways have we entered into a covenant with God?

What does it mean to you that Israel has received the adoption as sons? (See Due. 7:6.)

7. Who are the patriarchs Paul mentions in verse 5?

What does Paul say about Christ?

What covenant did God make to Abraham? (See Genesis 12:2-3.)

Do you still believe this covenant exists? Please explain.

If so, what implication does that hold for us?

Where or how does the church fit into this covenant with Abraham? (Look ahead to Romans 11:16-18.)

8. What does Paul tell us in verse 6?

Can God's word ever fail? Please explain.

Read Numbers 23:19. What does that verse mean to you?

What does it have to do with Paul's words in verse 6?

We are living in a time when some believe that God's word has "failed." The creation is only a myth. The flood is just a story to teach us certain lessons. Hell is not forever. Jesus is only one way into heaven. How would you respond to this belief that God's word fails or changes?

If not everyone who is descended from Israel (Jacob) is Israel (the nation), then who are Israel?

How would you define a Jew? (See Romans 2:28-29.)

9. Verse 9 talks about the promise given to Abraham. What was that promise?

Who was the child of that promise?

Who were Rebekah's children?

What is the significance of their having the same father?

According to verse 11-12, what did God decide?

Upon what did God base His decision?

If you were asked why some people are chosen for greater works, how would you answer?

Does this mean God loves some more than others? Please explain.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9. How do they related to these verses concerning the promise?

Why is it important that we cannot gain God's favor or promises through works?

10. What does verse 13 tell us?

This can be a difficult verse to understand. Verse 11 stated that God chose Jacob before either Jacob or Esau was even born. So, how do you explain that God loved Jacob but hated Esau?

To better understand this verse, look at Malachi 1:2-3. What does God say in these verses?

In Malachi, to whom does Jacob refer? To whom does Esau refer?

Paul is not referring to Jacob and Esau as individuals but as nations. What nation sprang from Esau? (See Malachi 1:4).

Why did God "hate" Edom?

11. Paul, anticipating questions about God's fairness after his statement about God's hating Esau, asks a question. What does he ask?

Have you ever felt that God acted unjustly? Please explain.

Is it possible for God to be unjust? Please explain.

If it is impossible for God to be unjust, how do we approach verses like verse 13 that seem unjust?

How does Paul answer this accusation against God? (See verse 15.)

What does God's statement mean to you?

Is it unfair of God for God to exercise His divine right to show mercy or not to show mercy? Please explain.

Can you think of a time when God showed mercy to Moses? When God did not show mercy to Moses?

According to verse 16, upon whom or what do God's decisions rest?

Would you like it better if we could earn God's mercy or compassion? Please explain.

12. Now Paul touches on a subject that has led to many conversations. According to verse 17, why did God raise up Pharaoh?

What does Exodus 9:12? Does this mean Pharaoh had no choice?

Therefore, what does Paul conclude?

In verse 19, Paul addresses a question that has been asked for ages. Why would one think that God was not being fair?

How would answer someone's claim that God is blaming us?

13. Is it wrong to question God? Please explain.

What is the difference between questioning God and talking back to God?

How do you react to verses 20 - 21?

How does it make you feel to be referred to as a "lump of clay"?

Look at Psalm 8:4-5. How does this fit with the "lump of clay" statement?

Some are made for noble purposes and some for common. Does this mean some are more important than others?

14. Who are the objects of wrath in verse 22?

How did God's showing patience with them demonstrate His power?

Who were the objects of mercy?

How did this event demonstrate God's mercy and riches?

How does Paul's argument show that God's wrath and/or mercy is never arbitrary?

15. Paul is speaking to the Jews who did not like the idea that Gentiles were saved by grace. They felt the Gentiles would shame the Jews because the Gentiles knew so little. How does Paul's example of Pharaoh and Israel address this issue?

Can you think of another example when God's mercy was made evident by a demonstration of His wrath?

In verse 23, Paul talks about those whom God prepared in advance for His glory. Is this predestination? Does it mean that we have no choice in who is selected for glory?



Because the Jews reacted negatively to the Gentiles' being saved by grace, God's grace actually became a stumbling block to the Jews. Can you think of any personal examples where you have experienced His grace being a stumbling block?

Read verses 23-24 carefully. Who is the "us" to whom Paul refers in verse 24?

16. Paul refers to Hosea to show that he was not preaching a new doctrine. Why is it important to know the Scriptures, both Old and New?

What does God say to Hosea?

Who are the ones God refers to as "not my people" and "not my loved one"?

What will God say to them?

What did this mean to the Jew? To the Gentiles? To us?

17. Now look at verse 26. Paul is referring to Hosea 1: 9-10. What do those verses say?

What do they have to do with Paul's present argument?

What do these verses mean for us today?

What did Israel or any of us do to earn God's favor, grace, or love?

18. Now comes a difficult truth. What is the implication of verse 27?

This verse also addresses the question that many ask about life before Christ was born. According to Isaiah, who is the remnant that will be saved?

Look at Matthew 7:21. How do Jesus' words to us mirror Isaiah's words?

How is it possible to know the law as the Pharisees did yet not do the will of the Father?

Verse 28 talks about God's acting with speed or without delay and with finality or certainty. What does this mean to you?

19. Again, Paul refers to Isaiah. What truth does Paul state in verse 29?

Isaiah, and thus Paul, are referring to the Jews as God's descendants. Are the Gentiles also God's descendants? If so, what meaning does this hold for the church?

According to verses 30-32, how did the Gentiles obtain God's righteousness? What kept the Jews from obtaining that righteousness?

Why do you think people still try to obtain this righteousness through the law or legalism?

How would you explain the difference between knowing the law and knowing Jesus?

20. Read Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16. What was Isaiah saying?

How is Jesus still causing people to stumble?

What does Jesus promise those who trust in Him?