

The Necessity of Divine Sovereignty

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Date: 23 July 2005

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] As has become our custom, when we complete a verse-by-verse examination of a chapter, we go back over that chapter and attempt to incorporate the entirety of it into one session.

So this morning, that's what we're going to be doing with chapter 9. We have recently spent 9 or 10 hours of investigation together in these 33 verses, but this morning we shall attempt to reduce that 9 or 10 hours to just 1 hour.

In fact, for what we have on the overhead and allowing time for questions and answers, we will be clipping along, averaging about one verse a minute. Some will demand a little more time than that and some a little bit less, and I see your smirks out there.

You think it can't be done, but we're going to just move right on through. Romans chapter 9.

Anybody who would like a more thorough exposition of the chapter, than what they will be getting in the upcoming hour, is reminded that this same content is available on tape, and of course much more detail is given.

The first major section of chapter 9 is found in verses 1 through 5, and I should like to read them for you. I am telling the truth in Christ.

[1 : 13] I am not lying. My conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ, for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the temple service, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever.

Now as you read these first few verses, you may well be struck by the same fact that a number of commentators have been struck with, and that is, what in the world does this content have to do with what has gone before?

It seems as though, when Paul moves out of the doctrines he is covering in Romans chapter 8, which closes with no separation in Christ, that he then jumps into a totally unrelated area, talking about the nation of Israel, and the manner in which they had been in a privileged position, and then had subsequently been set aside because of their unbelief.

What in the world does that have to do with what he has stated previously? It appears as though the apostle has just completely jumped the track and taken up a totally unrelated subject.

And this has led some to believe that this is a parenthetical portion that is strictly and only parenthetical, Romans 9, 10, and 11.

[2 : 48] And I would be the first to conclude and to agree that it is parenthetical, but not strictly. In other words, there is a relationship between that no separation, which Paul concluded in chapter 8, and this great theme of Israel here in 9, 10, and 11.

And I think basically it is found in this. He has related all of these magnificent things that are provided for the believer in these last few verses, all of the things that cannot separate him from the love of Christ, and then it is as though somebody says, well, what about Israel?

They were in a favored position with God. They enjoyed the blessings and the benefits of God.

They had a peculiar relationship, and look at them now. They are cast aside in unbelief.

Paul takes up that theme and explains that that is true, but it is strictly a temporary situation. As there is no separation for the individual believer in Jesus Christ, neither is there any separation regarding the covenant people of Israel from the plan and program of God.

So as you read on through Romans 9, 10, and 11, when you come to chapter 11, it becomes very, very clear that Israel is going to be restored. They are going to be brought back.

[4 : 02] Hath God cast off his people whom he foreknow, that is with the idea of permanence? No! He's going to bring them back again, so that ultimately there still is no separation.

There are two classes here we must distinguish, however. One is the individual. There is no separation for the individual who is in Christ. There is yet another class and another election, and that's national, and that is the nation of Israel.

You must keep those two in mind. So, in verses 1 through 3, he talks about the cost of caring. He makes a stupendous statement, which he knows is likely to be challenged or questioned, and that is why he qualifies it by saying, I am telling the truth in Christ.

All right. I am not lying. All right, Paul, we believe you. What is this that you're going to say that requires all this affirmation? And then he adds a third, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit.

It is as though Paul is saying, now brace yourself, because I'm going to say something you're going to find hard to believe. So he goes over this again and again and asserts the truthfulness of that statement which he is going to make, and then he makes it.

[5 : 12] In verse 2 and 3, I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart, for I could wish the idea being were such possible. It isn't because there is no separation in Christ and I am in Christ, but were such possible.

I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh. Paul makes the bold statement here that I would be willing to take my kinsmen's place.

I would be willing to swap places with them if such were possible. That is how great his burden was for his people Israel.

There is only one love that we have any record of that has ever surpassed this love here in verse 3, and that is the love which Christ manifested when he went to the cross.

Paul is not talking here in idle terms. He isn't saying this should be my attitude, he's saying this is my attitude. And here is a man who continually delivered himself over to be broken, abused, bantered about, beaten, shipwrecked, and everything else to prove the reality of that remark.

[6 : 33] Indeed, he was willing to spend and be spent in order that he might reach his countrymen with the gospel. And it was from those same people that he received the worst abuse and the worst rejection and the worst denial from those whom he loved the most.

Isn't it true that no one can hurt you so much as those whom you love the most and those who love you? Well, that I have labeled as the cost of caring, and that is a costly thing that causes people to spend themselves and be spent in order to reach someone else, especially when you realize they don't want to be reached.

They want to be left alone. It is almost as though you're willing to risk your life to break into a burning, flaming house to rescue someone on the inside who doesn't want to be rescued.

That's the kind of picture that Paul is setting forth here. The great heart of this apostle was yearning and burning to reach these people. He further indicates all of the advantages that they have going for them.

These things in verses 4 and 5 point out the ultimate in national privilege and position. No nation enjoyed this. No nation on the face of the earth, certainly not including the United States of America, enjoys the covenant privileges and benefits that Israel did, which are described here in verses 4 and 5.

[7 : 56] He says, first of all, they are Israelites. That is, they are descendants from Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel in Genesis chapter 32 and the covenant was established.

Then he says, to whom belongs the adoption. That means their legal status. God says, I've adopted you. I've called you my sons. And in Exodus chapter 4 and Deuteronomy chapter 14 and Hosea 11, this is set forth.

He further indicates that they are possessors of the glory. The word glory here has reference to the presence. The presence of God. No nation, no nation enjoyed the presence of God, as did Israel.

All the way back from the burning bush in which God manifested himself to Moses in the wilderness, to the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day.

That was the Shekinah, the presence of God, and the presence of the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat where God dwelt in glory among his people.

[9 : 05] This is the same glory that filled the temple when Solomon prayed and dedicated the temple. It was the glory that Moses experienced when he went into the mount and received the tablets of the law from Jehovah.

It was the presence, the manifestation of the being of God. No nation had that kind of coveted privilege, but Israel did.

And then the covenants. With what nation has God made covenants? Only Israel. Nobody else. Only Israel. You see, what Paul is doing is he is stacking a case for and against Israel.

He is saying, Israel had all of these things going for her. And each one of these positive benefits also involved a positive responsibility.

No nation had ever received so many blessings and benefits and advantages, and no nation has ever been held as responsible before God for what they do with him as this nation Israel.

[10 : 15] Covenants are all embraced in what God gave to Abraham in chapter 12 regarding a seed, a land, and make him a blessing. They are particularized in the Palestinian covenant in Deuteronomy chapter 30 where the subject matter deals with the land.

All this land will I give you and your descendants. And then the seed, that is an offspring. An offspring is encompassed in the Davidic covenant as outlined in 2 Samuel chapter 7 and Psalm 89. And then the new covenant described in Jeremiah 31 which provides the blessing. So all of these are incorporated in the covenant that God made with Abraham, but they are finalized, reaffirmed, and particularized in these three individual covens, Palestinian, Davidic, and new.

And what other nation enjoys those kind of covens? What? We're talking about a kind of legal agreement. A legal agreement that is on file in the courts of heaven between God, the God of the universe, and a small aggregate nation of people here on earth.

And there's only one nation that has its name in the heavenly file like that. Only one. Israel. They are the only ones to whom the covenants belong and the giving of the law. God never gave his law to Babylonians.

[11 : 42] He never gave his law to the Persians. Never gave his law to the Assyrians. Only to the Israelites. The Gentiles, Paul says, all Gentiles are non-Jews.

And Paul describes the Gentiles in Romans chapter 2 as having not the law. Never have had the law. Never were under the law. Still aren't under the law.

Only the Jew received the law. Deuteronomy 5 Exodus chapter 20. And the temple service. Ritual, sacrificial system, burning of incense, the offering, the feast days, the new moon, Sabbath days, all the rest of it.

These were never given, never imposed upon any other nation. Each one of these things was a teaching tool. Every one of these religious institutions had tremendous significance behind it.

And every one of them ultimately pointed to Christ and no other nation had that. And then the promises. Romans 1, verses 1 and 2. Romans 15, 8.

[12 : 46] Israel is a direct recipient of the promises which God made to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Not through Ishmael, the Arabs.

Not through Esau, the Edomites, but through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then the last is according to the flesh. Here there is a disputed rendering in verse 5.

Of whom is the Christ according to the flesh who is over all? God blessed forever. Amen. You'll recall we spent quite a bit of time on that dealing with whether this is continuative or doxological.

And basically that means just how you read it here. Should it be read the way it appears in verse 5? And that's the way I take it. That is certainly the least awkward grammatically. That it is in reference to Jesus Christ according to the flesh who of course came from Israel who is this Christ who is over all and who is God and who is blessed forever.

And I take it the way it reads here for it is very good Greek and it is structurally grammatically correct both in the King James Version and in the New American Standard. Most other translations render it this way.

[13 : 59] Some scholars however are of the opinion that what Paul has done is he has stopped and placed a period there so that verse 5 should read this way.

Whose are the fathers and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh? Period. Then they go on and say may God who is over all be blessed forever.

That is really not grammatically permissible and even if it were it would counter a great many other passages of scripture that do assign deity to Jesus Christ.

So we are not saying that Paul placed a period there and then offered this doxology to God. In the first place that would not be a place for praise and doxology to God because Paul has just poured out his heart in anguish over the lost condition of his people Israel.

That's no time to break into a doxology. He is unburdening his heart here. We allow the rendering to stand just as it is. It is in reference to Jesus Christ who is according to the flesh and who is over all God blessed forever.

[15:08] So although these things are true of Christ or are true of the nation of Israel and although the nation of Israel has rejected Jesus as their Messiah none of those above advantages are abrogated or nullified because of Israel's disobedience.

Paul is not saying this used to be Israel's position. He's saying this is. Whose are? Whose are? Whose are?

That was the present reality. And even though they are temporarily set aside in unbelief those things still count and they will once again come into play. So we would say that Israel is out of the picture temporarily but not out of the plan of God.

In chapter 11 we'll bring them back in. Verse 6 tells us that not all are Israel who are Israel. That's so important. Oh I really want you to latch onto that concept.

He is saying there are Jews and there are Jews. We saw that in chapter 2. He is not a Jew who is one outwardly. You can be anything outwardly. It is the same thing as saying hey they are not all Christians who are Christians.

[16:27] Same principle. Same principle. You can call yourself Christian just as these could call themselves Jew but God looks at the heart and you can make any kind of profession you want with your mouth but if the reality of the profession is not inward if it isn't within you in reality then you may profess to be whatever you wish to profess to be outwardly but it is of no consequence.

And Paul is saying it is one thing to be a Jew to be able to say oh Abraham is my father because my father was so and so and his father was so and so and his father was so and so and you go all the way back and you ended Abraham and I am a son of Abraham.

Big deal. That's the same thing they told Jesus in John chapter 8 and they said we have Abraham to our father. We can trace our pedigree back. It's like people our ancestors came over on the Mayflower you know well whoop-de-doo.

So what? And what Paul is saying there is or what Jesus said to the Pharisees is oh I know you are Abraham's seed. Physically speaking I know you're Abraham's seed but you're not like Abraham. You don't have the spirit of Abraham. You're seeking to kill me. Abraham wouldn't have done that. Then physical seed must also be spiritual seed.

[17:55] That which makes you a true child of Abraham is faith. The same thing that saved Abraham. Now in verse 7 the sovereignty question surfaces and that takes up the balance of the chapter.

God must exercise sovereignty in order to realize his goals. God must be a sovereign God if he is ever to realize his goals.

The God of the universe does not rule over a chaotic or random universe. he rules over an ordered universe.

God isn't going anywhere. He's going somewhere. He has a specific plan and a specific purpose and he has let us in on it in some respects and in some other respects he has reserved things unto himself.

God is not sovereign. There is no way that he can realize his ultimate objectives. Please do not think of the deity of heaven as being one who has subjected himself to the behavior and the actions of men.

[19:16] He hasn't. God isn't operating some big chess game up in heaven where man does this and then God tries to counter with this and man does that and God tries to counter with it.

He is in complete control. There is no question as to the outcome. It is not point and counterpoint and this kind of thing. There is no contest. God is sovereign.

He's going to do what he pleases. It has pleased him within the sphere of his sovereignty to give unto us certain privileges, certain opportunities, certain benefits.

That doesn't mean he's abdicated his throne. Just means that he has chosen in his sovereignty to give us a will, to give us volition, to allow us to make decisions.

That doesn't in any wise thwart God's plan and program. God is sovereign. We might define that as saying God has the right to do as he pleases, how he pleases, when he pleases, and with whom he pleases, whether we like it or not.

[20 : 22] Whether we agree with it or not. That's God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty means this is his world. This is my father's world. And he can order about the affairs of men howsoever he pleases.

He's in charge. He's just allowing us to live here. We don't call the shots. It's his world. He makes the rules. Someone has said, nobody, nobody breaks the rules of God.

You may break yourself against them, but the rule will stand when you're finished for. And God's rule and God's objective stand. For man to lose sight of that, and a lot of men have, for men to lose sight of that, God has the right to do as he pleases, how he pleases, when he pleases, and with whom he pleases.

And for us to lose the sight of that, is to lose sight of our creaturehood, and of God's creatorhood. We tend to get these things mixed up, you know.

We tend to reverse the roles. And a lot of people have. Therefore, God exercises the prerogative to choose nations and individuals.

[21 : 42] Now that means that God, if he wants to, can single out one nation, out of all of the nations of the world, and he can establish a relationship with them, he can make promises to them, he can provide blessings for them, and he has the prerogative of doing that.

And nobody can fault him for it. And nobody has any right to criticize him for it. That's exactly what God did. He chose Israel because it pleased him to choose Israel.

And we don't know why he chose them beyond that. But he did. For reasons known to himself. This is culminated in verse 13, which a lot of people really have problems with.

It just is not fitting for God to say that. Just as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. Men often reject or rebel at God's selectivity that doesn't seem to bother him.

He still makes the choices that he wants. But I would have you to understand in connection with verse 13, and this is the key to the whole thing, this is an unemotional love and an unemotional hatred.

[23 : 03] And I don't think we're capable of that. Certainly not in the way that God is. In other words, what I am saying is, God's decision to choose Israel was not based on the behavior of the subjects, nor on the feelings or emotions of God.

You must understand that. That is so critical to the whole issue of God's sovereignty. It is an unemotional selection on the part of God. And we cannot really think too much in terms like that because we are such creatures of emotion and it is such a part of our very fiber and being. We just cannot hardly think of love without emotion or hatred without emotion. But these were unemotional choices that God made. And he certainly didn't make them on the basis of merit, for he would have passed over Abraham, who was an old moon worshiper.

Heathen, pagan, that's all he was. No better than anybody else. But God chose him. Why did he choose him? I don't know. And God chose Jacob and not Esau. Why did he do that? I don't know. And he chose Isaac and not Ishmael. He made Isaac the son of promise. Why did he choose him over Ishmael? Well, for reasons known to God.

[24 : 17] And he hasn't revealed them to us. And I would render this this way. I chose Jacob. I did not choose Esau. I favored Jacob. I did not favor Esau. Now I'm going to make a couple of statements.

And this is the sum and substance of the whole matter regarding this business of election and selection and God's sovereignty. And if you plug into this, you'll have the burden of the chapter. You'll have the burden of election and all the rest of it.

And a lot of people do not. So here's your opportunity. Here it comes. Are you ready? God did Esau no wrong by not choosing him.

He chose Jacob. But he did Esau no wrong by not choosing him. He did not act negatively toward Esau.

Esau. He just did not act. He allowed Esau to go his natural way. He did not intervene. He displayed grace and mercy in choosing Jacob.

[25 : 21] He did Jacob a great service, but he did Esau no disservice because neither were entitled to anything. Now if you understand that, you've got it.

You've got it. It is the positive effect. It is the positive demonstration of God's love poured out upon one of the two, neither of whom deserved anything.

Well, why did he do it for the one and not the other? I don't know. My question is, why did he do it for the one? He wasn't obligated either. If we understand that man has no claim, he isn't entitled to any of God's favor and mercy.

If you understand that when you use the words favor and mercy and grace and deserving in the same context, they are mutually contradictory terms.

The moment you talk about what somebody deserves and then talk about grace and mercy, you flipped it over. They are mutually contradictory. God did not be, let me put it this way, God dispensed justice upon Esau.

[26 : 39] That's all. It's just justice. What did he dispense upon Jacob? Grace and mercy. Why should he be merciful and gracious to one and not the other?

there is a greater question and that is this. In light of the sin of these men, in light of the sin of all sinful human beings, why should God bestow grace and mercy upon anybody?

It's marvelous that he's done that. If you really understand that concept, you'll not have the difficulty with election that a great many did and still do.

many act as though, many act as though, well here, Jacob and Esau, both of them are deserving, but God favored just one.

Isn't that a shame? And when you realize that both of them are totally undeserving and yet one of them, even though he was undeserving, is one who received God's mercy and blessing, that should just, that should overwhelm you with grace.

[27 : 47] that's the proper response. He arrested Jacob and he blessed him. He allowed Esau to go his own way. There are two major objections that are anticipated and both of them are answered in verses 14 through 24.

The first question is, God is unjust in choosing one for favor and blessing while ignoring another. Paul answers that beginning with verse 14. What shall we then say? There is no injustice with God, is there?

May it never be. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. What's that saying?

God is saying, I'll do as I please. I'm God here. This is my universe. I made this. I can have mercy on whomever I wish and compassion on whomever I wish.

and I can refuse it to whomever I wish. Why can he do that? Just because he's God. That's all the reason he needs. That's all the reason he needs.

[28 : 57] He doesn't need to explain it to us. You know, some people have almost as much trouble with the mercy that God chooses to dispense as the mercy that he chooses to withhold. As is evidenced in the Matthew 20 parable of the vineyard and the labors.

So, it then does not depend on the man who wills, that is, human effort, or the man who runs, human determination, but on God who has mercy.

What does not depend on man? This relationship, this selection, this election, this choosing, doesn't depend on man. Doesn't depend on man's behavior, doesn't depend on man's performance.

God isn't up in heaven looking around for some goody-goodies down here. And as soon as he finds somebody nice enough and sweet enough and kind enough and wonderful enough and good neighbor enough, he picks them.

That's nonsense. Utter nonsense. Totally unscriptural. He didn't come to call the righteous. He came to call sinners to repentance. He came to call those who knew they were nothing but rotten old sinners and were honest enough to admit it and who didn't try to pretend that they were something else.

[30 : 09] When a man sees himself like God sees him, he's in a position to do business. But when a man walks around pompous, religious, with his chest puffed out, ringing his own bell, trying to tell everybody how wonderful he is and trying to impress everybody on how religious he is and all the rest of it, that is a stench in the nostrils of God.

He has nothing for a man like that. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. sins. And that, in case you don't understand, is a statement of sarcasm.

He isn't saying there are some who are righteous and don't need me, and then there are some who are sinners and do. What he's saying tongue-in-cheek is that there are no righteous. I have just

come to call those who are honest enough to admit as to what they are, sinners.

For the scripture says to Pharaoh, for this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth. And he made Pharaoh an example.

I think this raising up simply meant that he allowed him to stand, he did not allow him to suffer death as a result of the plagues and so on, because God was simply using this man to accomplish his own end.

[31 : 24] And the man was fighting against God and was opposed to God all the way, and he thought he was getting somewhere. And all the time God was using him to serve his own end. So then, verse 18, he has mercy on whom he desires, and he hardens whom he desires.

How does God harden people? I think he hardens them just by leaving them alone. He doesn't intervene. And those upon whom he has mercy, he calls to himself, he woos them, he softens their heart, he makes them eager and willing to trust the Savior.

And those whom he hardens, he just ignores. He allows them to go their own natural way. He does not intervene. This whole passage is telling me that men who think they are in charge of their life and their decisions and their destinies really ought to awaken to the fact this is God's ballgame. God's calling the shots. I've talked to some people who have even said things like this, I'll get saved when I get good and ready. That's what you think, Buster.

to what you think. You'll be saved when God's ready. And if God ever lets you know that he's ready, then you better be ready too. This isn't something where you hold all the cards and you're doing God a favor by coming over to his side.

[32 : 45] That's nonsense. Nonsense. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, or we're in verse 19, verse 19, You will say to me then, why does he still find fault?

For who resists his will? And the question here is, how could God select one and reject another and that still be compatible with human responsibility? And he says, who are you, O man, that answers back to God?

The thing molded will not say to the molder, why did you make me like this, will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?

Can you deny a potter that right? Here's a man that sits down with a lump of clay. Is it the clay's decision as to what it's going to be? Of course not.

That is the potter's prerogative. And if he wants to make a beautiful bud vase, or is it vase, whatever, he can. If he wants to make a chamber pot, he can.

[33 : 54] If he wants to make a cereal bowl, he can do that. If he wants to make an exquisite work of beauty, he can do that. The point is, it is the potter who makes the clay what he wants it to be.

And there has never yet, Paul says, there has never yet been a lump of clay that stood up to the potter and said, why did you make me this? I wanted to be that. I wanted to be something else. So it is, no man has the right to stand up before God and say, why did you do this? Why did you do that? Answer me. Give me an answer. Satisfy my curiosity. Meet my demands. Answer these questions.

And then I'll let you know whether I'll do this or do that or do the other thing. Paul says, you've got this whole thing all wrong. You are not in a position to bargain. God is sovereign.

He makes the decisions. What if God, and we have a beginning here in 22 through 24, you know, some people, by the way, and even some commentators are convinced that Paul isn't saying that.

[35 : 00] He isn't teaching that. What? What I've been telling you for the last half hour, that isn't what he's saying. That's not what the passage is saying at all. Well, if it isn't, why in the world does he go on for the next three verses to defend that very position?

Why would he attempt to defend a position which he wasn't even taking? But he does. And the point that he is making, beginning with verse 22 through 24, and we saw that as a literary figure of speech called *apposio pisis*.

It is from silence. It means there is the insertion of the *praetis*. There is no apotheis. I'm sorry I haven't time to go over that now, but we looked at it in detail when we studied it. And we suggested that verses 22 through 24 is actually a grammatically incomplete sentence that the reader is intended to complete on his own.

And as you read 22 through 24, what if God, although willing to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And he did so in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom he also called not only from Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

There is a period there, but this sentence has still not ended. The New American Standard put a question mark after verse 22, indicating that that was the end of it, but that wasn't the end of it.

[36 : 16] And there is no such punctuation in the original. And what Paul is doing here is he is going on and on and on and on and on, and he is presenting the he is presenting the praetis. He is presenting the main theme, the main idea, and the result, which is the apotheis, never gets there.

It's just left dangling like that. And the idea is you are supposed to insert it. And what Paul is saying is that since God has done this, and he has, willing to demonstrate his wrath, to make his power known, he endured with much patience vessels of wrath.

Who are these vessels of wrath? They are people. They are the ilk that lived in Noah's time that he endured for all those years.

They are the people of Sodom and Gomorrah whom God endured for all those years until finally his wrath boiled over. They were vessels of wrath prepared for destruction.

He did so in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy. And who are they? They are the elect. They are the believers. Which he prepared beforehand for glory.

[37 : 26] even us. Even us. Whom he also called. Same people that he called in 828 and 830.

They are the called. And what Paul is saying is since God has done this regarding vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy, what happens to your complaint? who has a beef?

Who has a legitimate protest to lodge against God? When you consider that even the vessels of wrath who deserve nothing but immediate justice were those who received all the long suffering of God day after day and month after month and year after year.

He tolerated these people before he let the axe fall. They have no complaint. They got away with far more than they deserved. They have no complaint.

And those who are vessels of mercy whom God has called to himself and graciously blessed they certainly have no complaint. And the idea is there is no one who can find legitimate objection with all that God has done in his sphere of sovereignty.

[38 : 37] Nobody has any right to complain. Nobody has any right to say why hast thou made me thus? Why didn't you do this? How come you didn't? Nobody has any claim. Nobody. God does all things well.

Even the non-elect got far more than they deserved. It's just that the elect got even more than they deserved. But to whom was he unfair?

To whom was he unjust? To nobody. Verses 25 through 29 we have an interpretation that I would apply directly to Israel.

Israel. They are taken from Isaiah from Hosea and they are quotes that are brought over from the Old Testament. They have to do with the restoration of Israel and the restoration of the divided kingdoms in Isaiah but so far as application is concerned they obviously refer to Gentiles and Paul is using them that way when he says in verse 30 what shall we say then that Gentiles non-Jews who did not pursue righteousness attained righteousness even the righteousness which is by faith but Israel pursuing a law of righteousness did not arrive at that law and we have said these are some of the most completely astounding passages in all the Bible.

They're stupendous. He is saying that those who were trying those who were trying to measure up to God's demands who were doing all kinds of religious things who were going through all the motions trying to satisfy God never made it.

[40 : 18] They were rejected. What Paul is saying is that those who tried the hardest failed to succeed and those who did not try at all but just exercised faith in someone who did the work for them Jesus Christ on Calvary were those whom God received.

The difference is this the Jew here in this context with all his effort and all his attempts had this elevated view of himself which said I can do it I can be good enough I can be obedient enough I can keep the law enough I can offer the right sacrifices I can do it I can do it I can do it I can do it and God rejected him flatly.

The Gentile non-Jew irreligious pagan heathen idolater came along and said I can't do anything to make myself morally and spiritually acceptable to a totally holy God I'm wiped out I'm a rotten no good sinner and everybody knows it and I'm not trying to be something that I'm not there's no way I could ever satisfy God no way and someone says do you know that somebody else satisfied God for you and if you will embrace this one as your substitute who died in your place then you can have all of the righteousness that he has put to your account and this Gentile says you gotta be kidding Paul said that's the gospel Christ died for sinners Christ died for people who know they aren't any good if you know that there's hope for you and these Gentiles who weren't doing anything religious who weren't offering any sacrifices like that who weren't trying to appease a holy God embrace Jesus Christ by faith and were gloriously wonderfully saved that is just utterly fantastic we could make this a common we could do this we could bring this up to 20th century and we could say here is a man who goes to church every Sunday without fail who serves on all these committees who gives all this money who does all the religious things who is this he's that he's something else in the community he's such an asset he's doing he's doing doing doing doing he's not going to make it he's not going to make it if what he is doing he is counting on being accepted by God as righteousness he isn't going to make it for the same reason that the Jew isn't going to make it he is putting himself forward and saying here I am God I'm not much but surely I'm good enough and God rejects him flatly and the Gentile who knows he's nothing takes Jesus Christ and sets him forth and says I am nothing I am worthless I am condemned and I deserve your judgment but here is my substitute who died in my place and my trust and my confidence is in him God says that's good enough for me can't improve upon the work of my son but to him that worketh not to him that worketh not to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness fantastic and the one who has so believed Paul says will never regret having done so Paul says he will never be ashamed he will never be disappointed he who has faith in him he who believes in him will not be disappointed you put your faith in people I can guarantee you'll be disappointed you put more confidence and more faith in this preacher than what you should

[44 : 28] I can guarantee you'll be disappointed but you'll never be disappointed in Jesus Christ let's look now quickly at these things if we may for the few moments we have left God is necessarily sovereign in salvation now what I want to share with you is the best it is the most concise the most logical presentation of this argument that I have ever seen it isn't original with me I am indebted to William R.

Newell for it and William R. Newell was a Bible teacher of the late 19th century he was a personal friend of D.L. Moody in fact William R. Newell was employed was used by D.L. Moody to go around teaching Bible classes where he had been and conducted these great evangelistic services and they would leave hundreds of new believers behind wherever Moody held a campaign and William R.

Newell would go into that area after Mr. Moody had gone and organized Bible classes and get these believers grounded in the faith and this is what he set forth in his commentary on Romans God is necessarily sovereign in salvation interesting to note that this man who believed so strongly in sovereignty was very closely linked with an evangelist some people think evangelists don't believe in sovereignty or they just quit preaching you know what's the use but biblical evangelists preach because they do believe in sovereignty man was lost he could not save himself that's the first premise I think everybody will agree with that secondly he was guilty none could pardon him but the God he had sinned against I see some of you trying to feverishly write we'll provide these things in print later okay if you want them three he was by nature a child of wrath not deserving good nor being able to change his nature

Ephesians 2 verse 1 for he was allied with God's enemy and had a mind at enmity against God Romans 8 a mind not subject nor able to be subject to God's law or will man is born a rebel 5 he knew he was doing things worthy of death Romans chapter 1 but not only persisted in them but was in league approval with those of like practice he was of the world not of God now these are all situations that are true of man's plight I don't care how good a man or how bad a man he fits in this mold he's of the same lump of clay and we are all alike in this therefore and here's here's the pivot therefore if any move be made toward man's salvation it must come from

[47 : 32] God not man why because man is dead he's dead in trespasses and sins he cannot do anything to help himself Romans 5 says for in that while we were yet without strength utterly

helpless if anybody if anything is going to happen it has to happen from outside the center it cannot happen from within the center there has to be an intervention from outside the person and that intervention of course is God 7 God being God knew beforehand that the attitude of every man by nature toward his overtures would be to oppose them men are not fleeing the world and flocking unto God they are fleeing God and flocking unto the world there is none that doeth good no not one there is none that seeketh after God they are all together become unprofitable none that are seeking after God since any real response to those overtures therefore must come from God's grace he must elect to effectually man's resistance resistance he must elect to effectually overcome man's resistance you mean

God is willing to save man and man is unwilling to be saved that's about the sum of it yes you've heard the story or the poem the hound of heaven and there is only one reason that anybody has ever come to Christ and that is because the hound of heaven pursued you until you gave in since any real response to those overtures therefore must come from God's grace he God must elect to effectually overcome man's resistance either in no case either God is saying well you know man is naturally alienated from me he is opposed to me he doesn't want my salvation I could I could overcome man's resistance through irresistible grace and bring man to myself I could do that but I'm not going to now

God could exercise that option you realize he isn't obligated to overcome man's resistance in any case he just doesn't owe us that he could do that in no case or he could do it in every case some believe he has some believe that God is such a sentimental person that he just simply cannot bear the idea of being separated from any of his creatures and he's going to save everybody everybody just be one big happy family everyone's going to be saved some believe that they're called universalists of course that totally negates the death of Christ you realize if salvation comes by the law or if salvation comes through any other means or salvation comes automatically then Jesus Christ is dead and died in vain for nothing for nothing eventually everybody's going to be saved anyway or and this I think is a biblical position God has elected to effectually overcome man's resistance in certain cases certain cases certain cases which certain cases those whom he has elected why those cases

I don't know I do not know don't profess to know I know God knows that's all that matters nine to hold God unable to overcome man's resistance in any case is to limit his power but to hold that God is unwilling to have certain saved is to deny his repeated word 1st Timothy 2 4 who would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth Ezekiel 33 11 as I live saith the Lord Jehovah I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live God you may be sure has no receives no joy gets no kicks out of people perishing item 11 therefore it would seem that only in those cases in which it would no longer be consistent with God's glory that is consistent with his holiness and righteousness and his just government of his creatures would God withhold or refuse longer to employ his gracious operations in behalf of any creature and our last one when we consider election we must remove our thoughts wholly from this world the first Adam the sin of man and his attitude toward God the purpose of God according to election is not of works but of him that call it is outside human history altogether it is of God all I can say then further in in closing is that there are a number of things that are true of God that are embedded in his infinite mind which he has never been pleased to reveal to us in our finiteness so that we could understand them to our satisfaction and this is one of them but that does not give us the prerogative of skirting around this difficult issue just because we do not understand it obviously [53 : 29] God wants us to know something about it or Romans 9 would not even exist now may we open it for questions or comments that you may have can't believe it well which is it did I do that poor job or that good a job no comments okay if you were to come away from here with this sentiment it's undeniable this is God's world and God is in charge and God is sovereign and he can do whatever is pleasing in his sight and

I am just so grateful to God that for reasons I do not know but for reasons that pleased him he included me I marvel at his grace I know I'm no more worthy of it than anybody else why he chose me I don't know but I know that I love him because he first loved me and I didn't choose him so much as he chose me if those are your sentiments you have really latched on to Romans chapter 9 if on the other hand your feelings are I don't care I don't like it it isn't fair and I don't believe it then you just don't understand what Paul is saying and that no doubt is partly my fault and probably partly your fault because I didn't put it out too well and you didn't take it in too well maybe next time

around whenever that might be wherever it might be you'll latch on to Romans 9 when I first heard this as a freshman or sophomore in college it came across to me as the most repugnant unfair untrue can't be that's the way I received it so if you find it difficult why I'll understand and you'll know where I was coming from when I first heard it yes Wayne well I hear what you're saying Wayne his comment was he's amazed that so many churches use the same Bible and use the same passages of scripture but they never get to this point and I do not want to be what shall

I say I do not want to be unkind I do not want to toot my horn and mute their horn but I will say this there is a vast difference between taking a passage of scripture reading a few verses and then preaching a sermon there is a lot of difference between that and teaching what the verses are saying word for word verse for verse there is a distinction to be made between preaching and teaching and don't get me wrong I enjoy good preaching there isn't much of it around I am not a preacher I gave up on preaching a long time ago it's just not my thing I am not comfortable preaching and I don't communicate when I preach so I have given up preaching for teaching and you can preach about the

Bible and you can preach from the Bible but those are not the same as teaching the Bible there is a difference you may as I have attended functions where there are pastors or different men on the platform and they may stand up and read six or eight or ten verses of scripture and you just naturally think that they are going to explain that passage of scripture or at least another passage that deals with the same truth and they take off and they preach for a half an hour or 45 minutes and what they have said and have a thing in the world to do with that passage and you wonder what in the world they read that for you couldn't see any connection between and many times it is done because you should always read a passage of scripture before you preach it doesn't make a difference that you're not going to preach on that but you ought to read something you know that's law the Medes and the Persians so sometimes that goes on there are I think there are now more churches that are doing more teaching and are engaged in more of a teaching ministry than what there have been for a long time

[58 : 53] I see a resurgence in teaching I'm very encouraged by the fact that this is going on but many times it is pretty much centered in large churches like John MacArthur's church in California and some other churches where there's some real significant teaching going on but the main thing people need I am really persuaded the main thing people need is information they don't need to be preached at they need information they need to be taught what the Bible really has to say and then allow the Spirit of God to make the application to their own life and that's what I try to do I know I don't always say Lord if anybody got anything out of that mess it's got to be grace I just feel like I really failed miserably this morning to communicate and then maybe somebody will come up and say boy that was just exactly what

I needed and that was right on target for me and then you just know that it has to be the Lord that isn't you