

Romans 9.14-33

“Deep Waters of Scripture”

LAST SUNDAY > God has a Plan - Particular Plan - For His People

SOMEONE > “Well, if God has planned out my life, why live?”

MY RESPONSE > “Fact that God has plan for my life, is my only reason to live”

WHO IS THIS GOD > God of MERCY, WISDOM, AND GRACE

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ > Abba, Father

8.28 GOD WHO WORKS ALL THINGS TOGETHER FOR MY GOOD

REJOICE > World Not on BLIND COURSE headed for Cosmic Accident

NOT ON PLANET EARTH AS VICTIM OF LUCK, FATE, or CHANCE

MY LIFE, MY ETERNITY > in Sovereign Hands, pierced for my Redemption

GOD has a Particular PEOPLE > Chosen by MERCY > Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

Romans 9 > HARD CHAPTER > DEEP THOUGHTS OF GOD

Tonight > We launch into EVEN DEEPER WATERS OF SCRIPTURE

WHAT ABOUT THOSE NOT CHOSEN? > Ishmael, Esau, now Pharaoh

Esau I HATED / Pharaoh I HARDENED < DIFFICULT TEACHING

REPROBATION > those NOT CHOSEN by God for SALVATION

MANY > Monstrous Doctrine > God Characterized as Cold, Indifferent Deity

ARBITRARY ASSIGNING DESTINIES > Like Picking Petals Off Daisy

SOME MOCK & DISTORT DOCTRINE > Seek to Humbly & Carefully Know

“Election cannot stand except as set over against reprobation” John Calvin

Another word for REPROBATION is DOUBLE PREDESTINATION

PLACE TO BEGIN > as in ALL our Seeking for Truth > SCRIPTURE

v. 17 “The Scripture says to Pharaoh”

REMEMBER STORY > Moses says to God “I can’t speak”

GOD > “No problem, Aaron is GOOD SIGN MAKER” / Egyptian Hieroglyphs

WRITE SIGNS for Pharaoh to Read the Word of God

NO! NO! Moses SPOKE to Pharaoh

SCRIPTURE IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE WORD OF GOD WRITTEN

“It was not the not yet existent Scripture that made this announcement to Pharaoh, but God himself through the mouth of his prophet Moses...this passage shows an absolute identification...of “Scripture” with the speaking of God

B.B. Warfield

Bible’s Twin Towers > 1. God’s Sovereignty 2. Man’s Responsibility

1. God’s Sovereignty

a. Reprobation in Scripture > some NOT CHOSEN by God

“The LORD works out everything for his own ends-- even the wicked for a day of disaster.”
Proverbs 16.4

“For this reason they could not believe, because...He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn--and I would heal them.”
John 12.39,40

JESUS REFERS TO JUDAS "I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: `He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'
John 13.18

JESUS PRAYED “While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.”
John 17.12

To those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone, " and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for.
1 Peter 2.7,8

v. 13 GOD DETERMINED Jacob I love, Esau I hated > Before they were Born

“Esau was not merely excluded from what Jacob enjoyed but was the object of displeasure”
John Murray

v. 17,18 For Scripture says to Pharaoh: “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

GOD HARDENS PHARAOH > God’s Power seen In him

b. Reason for God’s Selection >

BACKGROUND CONTEXT: NONE ARE WORTHY/ None Deserve Salvation for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Romans 3.23

SURPRISE NOT THAT SOME ARE PASSED OVER

TRUE SURPRISE – THAT ANY ARE SAVED

“Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5.7

15 X’s Pharaoh’s HEART HARDENED / Sometimes by Self, Others by God

“Neither here nor anywhere else is God said to harden anyone who had not first hardened himself”
Leon Morris

Greatest MAN on EARTH > Pharaoh of Egypt > Sovereign God Rules Him

TOO Rom 1 – 3 X’s “God gave them over” > Released them to their Sinful Choices

GOD GAVE THEM OVER > Did not Release them from their Responsibility

QUOTATION from EXODUS 9 > 6 Plagues Passed > Mild, No Repentance

MOSES BEFORE PHARAOH > 7th and More Terrible Plague is Coming

As Pharaoh RESISTED > God's Judgment got MORE STRONG & Terrible
 "The LORD said to Moses, "Confront Pharaoh and say to him, `This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.'" Exodus 9.13-16

"Pharaoh sinned because he chose to sin, and he resisted God and hardened his heart because it is in the nature of sinners to resist God and the nature of sin to harden hearts. But, having noted that, we must not deny that the text also says that God chose to deal with Pharaoh this way because he wished to show his power in judgment to the world through him. God was under no obligation to save Pharaoh, as he saved the Israelites, and he was not unjust in choosing him as the one in whom his justice and power would be known." James Boice

1. God is not responsible for the sin of men and women, and he passes by those he has chosen not to save, after the fact of their sin and not before.
2. God retains the freedom to save whom he will and judge whom he will.
3. In both cases his name is glorified."

v. 18 "Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. BUT WHY? > WE JUST DO NOT KNOW!

"Sovereignty pure and simple is the only reason for the differentiation by which some are consigned to hardening while others equally ill-deserving are made vessels of mercy." John Murray

c. Right of the Potter

v. 14 What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all!

CHALLENGE TO JUSTICE OF GOD > Is Election Unjust?

ANSWER > God is Just, He owes man Nothing > Salvation by Grace & Mercy

v. 19 One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?"

Reveals Man's Deceitfulness > Denies God's Right to Sovereignty

NOW TRIES TO DENY GOD'S RIGHT TO HOLD US RESPONSIBLE

BEHIND QUESTION > Concept of our INNOCENCE / We are NOT GUILTY

How DARE God Damn someone who has No Chance? What Right He have?

QUESTIONS REVEAL Man's RESISTANCE to GOD

ANSWERS THESE 2 QUESTIONS WITH 3 MORE QUESTIONS –

v 20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? -- GREAT GULF btwn US

COMMON OT IMAGE OF GOD A POTTER > Jeremiah, quote here Isaiah

GREAT GULF BETWEEN CRAFTED OBJECT AND CRAFTSMAN

“Any wisdom the creature possesses must have been received from the Creator; and if the Creator has the power of forming rational beings, must he not be infinite in wisdom?... it must, then, be the greatest abuse of these faculties to employ them to question the conduct of him who gave them.” Robert Haldane

1. PAUL is NOT AGAINST QUESTIONS, neither is God > Romans has many

2. PAUL REBUKING HAUGHTY & PROUD / Not the Humble & Penitent

3. USING ANALOGY > People are MORE THAN Lumps of Clay

Made in IMAGE OF GOD / Body & Spirit / Moral Agents / Rational

d. Revelation of God's Purposes > God of Wrath and God of Mercy

vs. 22,23 *What if* God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath--prepared for destruction?

What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory-- even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?

1) Great Patience of God with those under Wrath

“Whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.” John 3.18

WRATH of GOD LIKE STORM CLOUD Soon to BREAK OVER ALL of US

“He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”
2 Peter 3.9

WE ARE SOMETIMES BLIND TO GOD'S PATIENCE – We Have
Christian Homes – Freedom to Worship – Access to Bible – Health & Peace

DO WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE GIFTS FROM GOD?

We PLAN for many things in Life – School, Romance, Work – How about God?

How DARE we walk into WORSHIP half hour late with UNPREPARED Hearts

Is that how you would Appear before AMBASSADOR at your EMBASSY?

2) Continual Refusal of His Mercy makes His Wrath MORE DREADFUL

Example – Pharaoh > REJECTED MULTITUDE OF WARNINGS FROM GOD

“Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.”
Romans 2.4

WE WILL ALL GIVE GLORY TO GOD > Willingly or Unwillingly

Actively or Passively > God calls in Christ, WILLINGLY GIVE GLORY NOW

FARMER LIVED ACROSS the STREET FROM CHURCH > never entered

Plowed his fields during worship services / Members heard him every Sunday

OCTOBER – Crops were HARVESTED > Bigger Harvest than Church-goers

Wrote LETTER to NEWSPAPER > Boasting, worked every Sunday, Not Judged

EDITOR – Printed Letter > “The Lord does not settle his accounts in October”

3) Careful and Tentative Language

vs. 22 & 23 Both BEGIN WITH What if... > Both Times Question Unanswered
v. 23 “objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory”

CLEARLY GOD IS CREDITED as the GLORIOUS PREPARER of MERCY

v. 22 “objects of his wrath--prepared for destruction?” WHO IS PREPARER?
HAVE THEY PREPARED THEMSELVES BY THEIR OWN EVIL DOING?

“Certainly God has never prepared anybody for destruction” John Stott

“We may not insist that God is not viewed as fitting them for destruction”
John Murray

CARE AND TENTATIVENESS > Warns us about our Theological Systems

DO NOT DRIVE OUR THEOLOGIES LIKE A BULLDOZER THRU BIBLE
Plowing down every Text which seems to Contradict it / Eliminating all Mystery
GOD AND HIS WORD ARE BIGGER THAN HUMAN THEOL. SYSTEMS

“Beware of systematizers of religion! Instead submit to everything the Scriptures teach, including the antinomies which cannot be neatly systematized or reconciled to one another...the truth lies neither at one extreme, nor at the opposite extreme, nor in a confused mixture of both extremes, but at both extremes, even if we cannot reconcile them” Charles Simeon

e. Remnant of God's People > 4 OT Quotes / 2 – Hosea / 2 – Isaiah

POINT – Do not be Surprised by God's Electing Plan - All this was Prophesied

HOSEA: Proph. to Rebellious N. Kingdom of Israel / Married Adulterous Gomer
Three Children > Whose? > Names Reflect God's Judgment on Unfaithfulness

2nd Child Daughter = Lo-Ruhamah > “not loved” / God will no longer love Israel

3rd Child Son = Lo-Ammi > “not my people” / Israel was no longer God's people

NAMES OF JUDGMENT CARRIED PROMISE OF FUTURE HOPE

NOW IN CHRIST IS THAT TIME OF HOPE > Gentiles become God's People

v. 25 "As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one,"

Outsiders welcomed In / Aliens become Citizens / Strangers now beloved Family

PROPHET ISAIAH > preached to Unfaithful Judah in 8th C

Nation destroyed by Assyria > Few Survivors Left > REMNANT

ISAIAH'S SON = "Shear-Jashub" > "a remnant will return"

EXTREMELY SERIOUS PORTION SCRIPTURE > God of Love & Judgment

FEAR SOME Not BELIEVE THIS > God is not serious, he will not punish me

"Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing" Psalm 34.9

v. 27 "Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality."

For the Lord WILL carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality."

BOTH TEXTS> God saved Faithful Minority from Fallen Majority/ REMNANT

GENTILES occupy places LOST by Unfaithful Jews

DO NOT PRESUME ON FAMILY LINES or RELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS

JESUS "I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 8.11,12

POINT> God NOT UNJUST in Election and Reprobation / Fulfills OT Promises

2. Man's Responsibility

WE ARE NOT VICTIMS / OR PUPPETS > Responsible Moral Agents

Someone asked CHARLES SPURGEON how to RECONCILE – G's S & M's R

“I never try to reconcile friends!”

“No one can deny that there are many mysteries connected with divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Nowhere does God ask us to choose between these two truths, because they both come from God and are a part of God's plan. They do not compete; they cooperate. The fact that we cannot understand how they work together does not deny the fact that they do.”

Warren Wiersbe

BOTH IN ONE VERSE: “The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him.”
Luke 22.22

Pharaoh RESPONSIBLE > Scripture spoke to Pharaoh / Moses > God's Voice

TWO MEN FROM THE PALACE OF EGYPT – Pharaoh & Moses

AFTER HESITATING AND MAKING EXCUSES, FINALLY...

Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say... He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed... they bowed down and worshiped.
Exodus 4.28-31

Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go."
Exodus 5.2

One's Heart was REPENTANT / Another's Heart was REBELLIOUS

“The same sun that melts the ice also hardens the clay”

PARADOX vs. 30,31 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but the

people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal.

Understatement > Romans 1 shows how Gentiles did not pursue Righteousness
Godless, Self-Centered, Lovers of Pleasure rather than Lovers of God

By Contrast > ISRAEL – Fanatical Rituals to Pursue Righteousness / Moral Zeal
PROBLEM – Pursuing an IMPOSSIBLE GOAL – Moral Perfection

v. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works.

“The Jews thought the Gentiles had to *come up to* Israel’s level to be saved; when actually the Jews had to *go down to* the level of the Gentiles to be saved.”

No Matter HOW FAR GO in WRONG Direction / STILL WRONG Direction

SEVERAL YEARS AGO IN GERMANY > driving with Family on Autobahn

Staying one hour NORTH of Frankfurt with FRIENDS in Dillenburg

Needed to go SOUTH to Frankfurt Airport / Approached Autobahn Entry

Toward Giessen or Dortmund > went toward Dortmund

STRANGE > The RIGHT WAY DID NOT LOOK TOO FAMILIAR!

FAMILY BEGAN TO GANG UP ON ME “Dad, you’re going the wrong way!”

“ME, THE WRONG WAY!” > Impossible! So I kept going!

Secretly I hoped that if it was the Wrong way, it would connect with Right Way

I HATE TO ADMIT THIS – I WAS WRONG – HAD TO TURN AROUND!!

NO MATTER HOW FAR I WENT NORTH > even at 180 km/h on Autobahn

Funny thing about Germany - NORTH NEVER DID TURN INTO SOUTH!!

MANY IN ISRAEL TOOK A WRONG TURN AT SINAI

Great Laws & Statues to GUIDE God’s Redeemed, Covenant People BECAME

For Some their MEANS OF REDEMPTION > So they thought

1000 years of TRAVELING in LEGALISM never made it REDEMPTIVE

Religious PRIVILEGES kept them FROM Christ instead of Leading To Him

v. 32 They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

GOD DOES NOT SAVE BY BIRTH or BEHAVIOR > "by grace through faith"

CHRIST CRUCIFIED > Ultimate Stumbling Block to Self Righteousness

BECAUSE JESUS DIED FOR SINNERS > Proof we Cannot Save Ourselves

THOSE WHO WILL NOT BE HUMBLLED WILL STUMBLE

"So everybody has to decide how to relate to this rock which God has laid down. There are only two possibilities. One is to put our trust in him as the foundation of our lives and build on him. The other is to bark our shins against him, and so to stumble and fall."
John Stott

Common Objections to Doctrine of PREDESTINATION / Paul's Example

1. Promotes Pride? > some Chosen, perhaps they can BOAST

OPPOSITE > Ground of Predestination OUR HELPLESSNESS

On our Own we cannot even CHOOSE God / All of Grace

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.
1 Timothy 1.15,16

2. Promotes Uncertainty? > Are we really chosen or not?

UNBELIVER > "dead in sin" = No Spiritual Concern

Conviction of Sin / Spiritual Concern > Work of the Holy Spirit

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. 2 Timothy 4.8

3. Encourages Apathy? > All God's work MAN DOES NOTHING?

BIBLE commands us SEEK GOD / FOLLOW HIM / STRIVE AGAINST SIN

Those who PERISH are HELD RESPONSIBLE for their FAILURES & SINS

pray continually 1 Thessalonians 5.17

4. Entices Lawlessness? > why not live in sin, have FIRE INSURANCE

Predestined to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON

we cannot LOVE what CRUCIFIED our Savior > OUR SINS > Forsake them!

PREDESTINED to become "Holy and Blameless in God's Sight" Ephes 1

I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. 1 Corinthians 9.26,27

5. Creates Narrow-Mindedness? > concerned only with FEW ELECT

PRINCIPLE > Blessed to BE a Blessing / Keep Blessing will Loose It

NOT Chosen to be God's FAVORITES but God's WITNESSES

WE ARE fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household... For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. Ephesians 2.19, 3.14,15

BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF PREDESTINATION > Promotes...

Humility not Arrogance/ Assurance not Apprehension/Responsibility not Apathy

Holiness not Complacency / Mission not Privilege

ONE PASTOR WHO REFLECTED BIBLICAL BALANCE IN THIS AREA –

"God's purpose is not solely to condemn. The demonstration of his power and justice in judging sinners is a part of what God is doing in human history, but it is

not the whole thing. God is also making known the riches of his glory in the salvation of some... Why should you not be among those who are saved? Particularly, since you are hearing these very truths proclaimed? If all God wanted to do was send people to hell, he would not have need to tell us these things, or anything else. There would have been no need for a Bible, no need for preachers to preach a message and explain and teach it, no need for a Savior to be held forth as the heart of the Bible's message. If all God wanted to do was to send us to hell, all he would have needed to do was nothing. We are capable of rushing off to hell, like lemmings running down a hillside, entirely by ourselves. But God has not done that. He has provided a Savior. He has given us a Bible. And His message is "Repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn from your sin now. Today God is setting the way of salvation before you." James Boice

Romans 9.¹⁴ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses,

“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. ¹⁷ For Scripture says to Pharaoh: “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” ¹⁸ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

¹⁹ One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?” ²⁰ But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” ²¹ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?

²² What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? ²³ What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—²⁴ even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵ As he says in Hosea:

“I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people;
and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,”

²⁶ and,

“In the very place where it was said to them,
‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:

“Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea,
only the remnant will be saved.

²⁸ For the Lord will carry out
his sentence on earth with speed and finality.”

²⁹ It is just as Isaiah said previously:

“Unless the Lord Almighty
had left us descendants,
we would have become like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.”

³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.³³ As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.”