

Series: The Riches of His Glory; *Sermon:* **Making Known the Riches of His Glory**
Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; *Date:* **September 11, 2016**

Bible text explored: Romans 9:1–29

¹I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—²that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

⁶But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, ⁷and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” ⁸This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. ⁹For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁰And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, ¹¹though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—¹²she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” ¹³As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

¹⁴What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! ¹⁵For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” ¹⁶So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. ¹⁷For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” ¹⁸So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

¹⁹You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” ²⁰But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” ²¹Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? ²²What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—²⁴even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’”

²⁶“And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

²⁷And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, ²⁸for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” ²⁹And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,
we would have been like Sodom
and become like Gomorrah.” [ESV]

Review and application:

After Paul confidently affirms the security of “those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1), he shifts abruptly to “great sorrow and unceasing anguish” for his fellow Israelites, who appear to mostly not be included.

1. Paul’s evangelistic passion (vv. 1-3) causes him to say he “could wish” he were “cut off from Christ.” Why is this *not* a literal possibility?
Why *does* this (perhaps echoing Moses in Exod. 32:32) accurately express the intensity of Paul’s emotional commitment?
2. What advantages (vv. 4-5) should have made Paul’s ethnic grouping informed responders?

3. Pastor Moody referred to John Knox, who prayed, “Give me Scotland or I die!” Is there anything about which you feel this strongly?

What lost individuals or groupings can you see yourself targeting in sustained evangelistic prayer?

Pastor Josh said we need to bring our pain to the Bible to learn how God intends to display the riches of his glory. He maintained that Paul’s overarching argument, in verses 6–29, isn’t hard to understand, but perhaps difficult to swallow: We are worse than we think, all rebellious and deserving hell; we are loved more than we could hope: all eligible for rescue through his mercy.

4. The Jews’ resistance (vv. 6-12) does not mean that God’s plan has been derailed since spiritual Israel doesn’t equal physical Israel. How is this illustrated by Isaac and Ismael? How is it illustrated by Jacob and Esau? (“Hated,” [v. 2] is better rendered “rejected.”)
5. How (vv. 14-18) is God just in condemning our natural hard-heartedness? Why is declining to rescue Pharaoh from his own rebellion God’s prerogative alone?
6. How (vv. 19-29) should realizing we are outsiders indebted to God’s mercy alone affect our self-assessment? How should realizing no one is ineligible for God’s rescue affect our compassion?