

ROMANS

THE GRACE OF GOD: A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

God's Sovereign Choice

• Romans 9 : 1 - 29 •

Week 17

DEVOTION

In 1859, a man named Charles Blondin became famous for walking across Niagara Falls on a tightrope. Thousands gathered to watch as he performed daring stunts—walking backward, doing somersaults, even pushing a wheelbarrow across the rope. One day, he turned to the crowd and asked, “Do you believe I can carry someone across on my back?” The crowd cheered—they had seen his skill, they believed he could do it. But when Blondin asked for a volunteer, no one stepped forward.

This story mirrors how many people view God’s sovereignty. We say we trust Him, but when it comes to surrendering fully to His plan, we hesitate. Romans 9 challenges us to wrestle with the deep truth that God is in control. Paul, burdened for his fellow Israelites, grieves over their rejection of Christ. Yet he reminds us that God's promises have never failed—His plan has always unfolded according to His purpose, not human effort.

This chapter also teaches us about God's mercy. He chooses whom He will save, not because of anything they have done, but because of His grace. That can be difficult to grasp, but instead of leading us to fear, it should lead us to worship. If salvation depended on us, we would have no hope. But because it depends on God, we can rest in His faithfulness.

As we walk through Romans 9:1-29, let’s approach it with humility. Even when we don’t fully understand, we can trust that God is good, just, and merciful. And unlike the crowd watching Blondin, let’s not just say we believe—let’s step forward in faith, surrendering completely to the One who holds the universe in His hands.

Monday

Reading: Romans 9:1-5; Exodus 19:5-6; Matthew 23:37-39

Paul’s Grief and God’s Faithfulness: Paul is deeply sorrowful because Israel, despite being God’s chosen people, has rejected Christ. They had every spiritual privilege—God’s promises, the law, the covenants—but missed the fulfillment of them all in Jesus.

But does their rejection mean God’s promises have failed? No. God's faithfulness is not dependent on human response. He always keeps His word.

1. What does Paul’s sorrow reveal about his love for the lost? How does that challenge your own heart?
2. How do these verses remind us that God’s faithfulness remains, even when people reject Him?
3. Who in your life do you need to pray for with the same urgency Paul had for Israel?

Tuesday

Reading: Romans 9:6-13; Genesis 25:21-23; Malachi 1:2-3

God's Sovereign Choice: Not everyone physically descended from Israel is part of God's true people. Paul uses the examples of Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau to show that God's purposes are carried out according to His will, not human effort.

This reminds us that salvation is always an act of God's mercy, not something we achieve. His grace is a gift—one that humbles us and fills us with gratitude.

1. How does God's choice of Isaac and Jacob demonstrate that His plan is based on grace rather than human effort?
2. Does this passage make you feel uncomfortable, comforted, or both? Why?
3. How does knowing that salvation depends on God's mercy impact the way you see your own faith?

Wednesday

Reading: Romans 9:14-18; Exodus 33:19; Exodus 9:16

Is God unfair?: Paul anticipates a tough question: Is God unjust? His answer is clear—God has the right to show mercy as He chooses. No one "deserves" His mercy; it is a gift.

He uses Pharaoh as an example. God hardened his heart, but Pharaoh had already chosen rebellion. God used even Pharaoh's resistance to display His power and accomplish His purposes.

1. Why is it difficult for us to accept that God gives mercy as He chooses?
2. How does Pharaoh's story show that God's power and purposes are never thwarted?
3. How does this passage challenge you to trust God's wisdom, even when you don't understand His ways?

Thursday

Reading: Romans 9:19-24; Isaiah 29:16; Jeremiah 18:1-6

The Potter and the Clay: Paul uses the image of a potter and clay to remind us that God, as Creator, has the right to shape His creation as He desires. Some vessels are for honor, others for common use—but all are in His hands.

This reminds us that God is patient, giving people opportunities to turn to Him. His justice and mercy work together perfectly, even when we struggle to understand.

1. How does the potter and clay analogy help us trust God's sovereignty?
2. In what ways do we sometimes resist God's shaping in our lives?
3. What's one area of your life where you need to surrender more fully to God's plan?

Friday

Reading: Romans 9:25-29; Hosea 2:23; Isaiah 10:22-23

God's Mercy to all nations: Paul ends this section by reminding us that God's plan was never just for Israel. Through Christ, people from all nations are being brought into His family. This is the beauty of the gospel—salvation is not about heritage but about God's calling and mercy.

Even when only a remnant remains, God's promises never fail. His mercy is greater than we can imagine.

1. How do these verses show that salvation has always been about God's mercy rather than human effort?
2. What does this passage teach us about God's heart for all people?
3. How can you be part of sharing God's mercy with those who don't yet know Him?

Conclusion

Romans 9 reminds us that God is both sovereign and merciful. His ways are higher than ours, and while we may not understand everything, we can trust that He is always good.

This week, let's rest in the assurance that our salvation is based on His grace, not our works. Let's respond with gratitude, trust, and a heart that desires to share His mercy with others.