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| 1  Romans 9:19-33 Sermon Outline  02/16/25  “Vessels of Mercy Prepared For Glory”  **INTRO:**  We are curious creatures  Creature ask = why?  Why this/why that? Children = good example  Nieces = “Why are you eating that uncle Teru?”  Because I’m hungry  But why are you hungry?  Because I don’t have any food in my system?  Why don’t you have any food in your system?  Stop asking questions! | 2  In addition to “why” = “how” equally important  But sometimes God = doesn’t always give us answers to the “why” and/or “how” questions  “why/how” = not answered = Job (explain Job’s suffering)  God’s answers = series of crushing, humbling, unanswerable questions  Starting in Ch. 38:4  “*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you know understanding, Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy? “Or who enclosed the sea with doors When, bursting forth, it went out from the womb, When I made a cloud its garment And dense gloom its swaddling band, And I placed boundaries on it And set a bolt and doors, And I said, ‘Thus far you shall come, but no farther; And here shall your proud waves stop’?* |
| 3  *“Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, And caused the dawn to know its place, That it might seize the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal; And they stand forth like clothing. From the wicked their light is withheld, And the arm raised high is broken. “Have you entered into the springs of the sea, Or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed to you, Or have you seen the gates of the shadow of death? Have you carefully considered the expanse of the earth? Tell Me, if you know all this.*”  But thankfully = we don’t get a Job like answer from God  God reveals to us the “why” he elects and passes over the rest  Because 9:23 “*He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory*.” | 4  **MAIN POINT:**  To put it another way, He chooses some but not all because God desires to magnify His glory, which is manifested on the one hand by His attribute of His just wrath punishing unrepentant sinners forever as vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and on the other hand by His attribute of His loving mercy in saving sinners and making them into vessels of mercy, prepared for glory, from His just wrath against sin.  We won’t get “how” question of how God can send someone to hell without being the chargeable cause for sin and unbelievers  I don’t think we will ever get the answer to the “how” question = maybe when we are glorified, maybe  But God has been gracious enough to reveal the “why” question = that is sufficient for us  Because what He has revealed in His Word is sufficient for all of life and godliness as 2 Pt. 1:3 says |
| 5  **REVIEW:**  Last week = difficult doctrine of election = teaching that God, not us, chooses whom will get saved  Looked at even more difficult doctrine of reprobation = doctrine of sinners are finally rejected by God eternally  Ended last week = Pharaoh’s example of being raised up to be condemned and to demonstrate God’s power and glory throughout the earth  V. 18 “*So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.”*  This leaves us with the question: “If God shows mercy to whom He desires to show mercy and hardens whom He desires to harden, how can God charge us with wrongdoing and sin?”  = Exactly question the Word of God will answer in V. 19 | 6  9:19  “*You will say to me then, Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will*?”  Last Sunday = question = “Is God Unrighteous?”  A: No, not unrighteous, but righteous, good, merciful  Could have condemned all of us = deserved it but doesn’t  Just as how God could have condemned all the Israelites to death instead of only executing 3000 of them = Exodus 32/33  Essentially the new question at hand = “how” question  How is that possible, how does that work?  How can Pharaoh, who was raised up by God to see him fall, eventually to his ultimate demise, still be held fully accountable for his sins? |
| 7  You know the answer to that?  V. 20 “*On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? Will the thing molded say to the molder*, “*Why did you make me like this? Or does not the potter have authority over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use*?”  Instead of trying to answer the “how” Paul takes us two steps back and questions the very foundation and worldview of why we are asking that in the first place  Do you even realize what you are doing here O Man, O Woman? = Oh creature of the dust! = O Man  Have you forgotten that you are but a creation daring to speak back against your Creator?  If you think about it for a moment, where do you get your ability to discern right from wrong, truth from error, the knowing the right thing to do and the wrong thing to do? | 8  Does it come from the goodness of your heart?  No!! = It comes from God! Morality comes from God!  Our sense of justice and righteousness = from God!  So if God who is infinitely higher and greater and of a different kind than us created us and endowed us human beings with a sense of right and wrong…  = How much more do you think God would be perfect and absolutely know right from wrong?  Either God lives according to His absolute view of right and wrong, in which the entire fabric of creation lies in  Or He knows absolutely right from wrong, but doesn’t care about it and does evil, even though he knows it’s not right = obviously that is not the case as  Hab. 1:13 “*Your eyes are too pure to see evil, And You cannot look on trouble*.” |
| 9  We didn’t create God, God created us to worship Him  We don’t have a right to question God’s intentions and purposes  Paul gives us simple illustrations to demonstrate that  Molded = molder = talk about = absurd  You’re making me into a square = I wanted to be a triangle!  But Paul also says God = potter authority = rightful “material” to make from the same lump two different kinds of vessels  One for “honorable” use = other for “dishonorable” use  ILLUST:  Ancient world = honorable vs dishonorable use  Okay, but wouldn’t that make God arbitrary in using a lump of clay to predestine one to salvation and using the same lump of clay/humanity – condemnation? | 10  A: “No” God is not arbitrary  Why?  9:22-24 “*And what if God, wanting to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath having been prepared for destruction, and 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 from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles*?”  In other words, God could have immediately judged/punished sinners for their sin = if he did so, he would have demonstrated wrath/power for all to see  He did demonstrate in the past  Ex: Pharaoh + Herod in Acts 12  But for the most part = endured with the sin of sinners with great patience |
| 11  V. 23 “*In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessel of mercy*.”  God allowed sin to go unpunished/tolerated = so that when He saves us from our sin = see how merciful, patient, glorious He is for saving us = prepared for destruction  And when He does finally pour out His wrath vessels of wrath = see gloriously patient allow time for repentance = glory of His justice in punishing all sin and unrighteousness  2 Peter 3:9  *“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some consider slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”*  That’s the mystery = we all were technically vessels of wrath destined for destruction … yet = because of God’s desire to save us, He made us vessels of mercy before the foundation of the world was laid | 12  Before Adam and Eve’s fall into sin, before death was a thing,  Wait!...but how does that work? How?!  Uh, uh, uh, no, no, no “*Who are you o man who answers back to God*.”  I don’t think even the apostle Paul knew the “how,” I’m sure he wants to know just as much as we want to know, but that area belongs to God where only God can understand His own “God”-ness  But knowing the “what” = sufficient for us  We didn’t earn it, we didn’t deserve it = nevertheless = “called us” irresistibly to His grace = by faith that he gives to us  Paul shows to Jews that we the Gentiles, as vessels of God’s mercy, in addition to Jews have always been included in God’s plan to save the world |
| 13  VV. 25-26  “*As He says also in Hosea, I will call those who were not My people, ‘My people,’ And her who was not beloved, ‘beloved*.’” *And it* *shall be that in the place where it was said to them*, ‘*you are not My people,’ There they shall be called sons of the living God*.”  Paul quotes Hosea to show that not only referring to Jews but also to Gentiles  How do we know?  Because  1) He just mentioned in verse 24 that He effectually called to salvation not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles  2) Paul didn’t quote all of Hosea 1:10 = Full verse reads like this: “*Yet the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered;* | 14  *And it will be that in the place Where it is said to them, “You are not My people,” It will be said to them, “You are the sons of the living God*.”  Paul didn’t quote the beginning = so that he would make it clear that this was referring to the Gentiles as well  But a Jew might object saying “Ah Paul, but doesn’t the first part of Hosea 1:10 mean God is obligated to save all of Israel or that all ethnic Israel will be saved?!”  To that God says 9:27  “*And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; for the Lord will execute His word on the land, thoroughly and quickly*.”  In other words, as Paul has said at beginning of Ch. 9  “*Not all are Israel who are descended from Israel*” |
| 15  Only the remnant that will be saved  9:27 = God quotes Isaiah again  “*And just as Isaiah foretold, “Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah*.”  Only = pure grace/mercy of God = Israel still exists as a nation  Israel should have been wiped out like any other nation going into captivity twice  Yet because God did not forget His covenant with them = they still exist, though they are unbelieving  Without God’s gracious hand upholding them and sustaining them = Israel = total destruction of Sodom/Gomorrah  Yet, if God so loves and cares for Israel, why are Gentiles coming to faith in Christ while the Jews for the most part are not?! | 16  Answer: V. 30  “*What shall we say then*?” *That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, laid hold of righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain that law*. *Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works*.”  Irony = Gentiles = least expected to inherit salvation = not looking for righteousness  Jews = most expected to inherit salvation = pursued righteousness  Yet Jews did not find it, but Gentiles did = faith  What does this all have to with election?  Because on their own, the Gentiles would have never found righteousness, it had to have come from outside of them  From God granting them the faith to believe |
| 17  For those who try to achieve righteousness through your own works, you will never find it, because righteousness only comes by believing and trusting in Jesus Christ and His righteousness alone  How Israel responded to Jesus is just what God prophesied would happen  VV. 32-33  “*…They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and the one who believes upon Him will not be put to shame*.”  Israel was looking for a strong political and military deliverer = but they didn’t get that…instead they viewed the Messiah as:  Isaiah 53  *Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;* *He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him,* | 18  *Nor appearance that we should desire Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*  Jesus said Matt. 21:44 “*he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust (or in other translations “it will grind him to powder”)*  If you oppose JC = you will be broken = unbreakable = only you will be exposed in your folly and shame of not believing in Him  If you resist Jesus and His love for you…eventually the stone that crushes the nations, Jesus Christ will come and grind you to powder eternally in the lake of fire  God’s glory cannot be stopped/hindered by your willful disobedience or sin  One way or another God will be glorified |
| 19  Either He will be glorified through you being the vessel of wrath object of His wrath, glorifying his attribute of wrath, holiness and justice against sin  Or He will be glorified in His attributes of mercy, grace as one who pours his mercy upon vessels of mercy in saving you from your sin  Don’t wait until the bedrock of truth crushes you  Believe in the rock of ages, the precious cornerstone of eternal life and if you believe in Him, you will never be put to shame when He comes back  So believe in Him  Benediction:  Deut. 32:4  *“Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”* | 20 |