



“Unceasing Anguish”¹

Romans 9:1-5

Last fall, when I was tossing around the idea of taking a break from Romans in order to preach a series on the Psalms, Tracy said something like, “The ladies are going to be very disappointed if you do.” When I asked why, she said it’s because the Ladies Bible Study groups have just gone through Romans 9, and they were wanting more teaching on that very difficult, deep and distinguished chapter.

Well, the wait is over! We are here in Romans 9. And, I must admit, I enter this chapter with fearful joy. I pray that our study in these chapters will strengthen your trust and delight in God himself. These chapters end with Paul declaring glorious praise of God’s mysterious ways. And, I hope this study does the same for us!

But this joy will take hard work. We’re going to have to fight for it. Our sinful tendencies won’t like these chapters one bit. One theologian who I highly respect one tells of when he began to understand the book of Romans. He had grown up in a Christian home, but the theology wasn’t very sturdy. In fact, I believe he was taught he could lose his salvation. He always lived in fear. Then he came across the book of Romans. He began devouring the book. He loved discovering the doctrine of justification. He was overjoyed that he could be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. He was amazed at the grace that is greater than all his sin. His love for the Lord was flourishing. Then he said he came to Romans 9. He was sitting in his room reading, and he got so angry, he took his Bible and threw it across the room. He didn’t understand what was being told and it sounded unfair. Thankfully, he didn’t leave the Bible by the wall it hit. He picked it up and began studying more. As he studied more, he grew in his gratitude for the Lord’s mysterious power.

As many of you know, chapters 9-11 have been hotly debated chapters within the church for centuries (if not millennia). And, there are multiple points of contention that people mention: the doctrine of election, the doctrine of reprobation and then one’s view of the Jewish nation. None of these issues are *small*. And, I confess that I feel like a little kid who just got out of the kiddie pool and is now wanting to go off the high dive into the deep end. But even with this fear, I’m going to jump. I’m looking forward to the exhilaration of jumping into this pool of God’s powerful grace.

So, if you have your Bibles, turn to Romans 9, and after I pray, we will read from verses 1-5. [Pray for Chad Steenwyk at Central Ave. Pray for Dennis & Jan Horn.]

9 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I

¹ This manuscript is still in the rough draft phase. I recommend you utilize these notes in conjunction to the sermon to gain greater insight and clarity.

could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. ²

Last week, we were in the end of Romans 8, where Paul asks, “What can separate us from the love of God?” He shows that nothing in all of creation can take us away from God’s love. Because God has declared us righteous and because God has adopted us into his family, we are secure. Nothing, in all of creation, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus! PRAISE GOD!

But then we enter Romans 9, and we read, “I am speaking the truth in Christ-I am not lying. . .” And then Paul talks about his anguish over national Israelites not having salvation. Keep in mind, in the original manuscript, there’s no chapter headings. So, we go from nothing separating *us* – we who trust Jesus – to the Israelites who don’t trust Jesus. Why this transition?

Well, I don’t have a definitive answer; although, I think we can come to a very reasonable answer which will help us as we navigate through chapters 9-11. In chapter 8, Paul declares many blessings that the those who trust Jesus receive. And, for the sake of clarity, I need to emphasize what I mean by “those who trust in Jesus.” I don’t mean those who merely believe Jesus existed or who think Jesus is really awesome because of his miracles. I’m referring to people who have recognized their utter sinfulness and inability to make themselves right with God. These people see how they try to self-justify through their actions: being a good parent, a good student, a good worker, a nice neighbor. Yet, none of those things will take away the stain of your guilt before God. God’s holiness is perfection. Therefore, those who realize this and then see Jesus’ death as taking the punishment they deserved, they turn to God for forgiveness on the basis of Jesus – not themselves.

These people who are rescued through faith in Jesus, Paul says in Romans 8, receive the Holy Spirit. As a result, they can begin to obey God as they ought to – in relationship with him, not merely in doing the deeds externally. Then, Romans 8 teaches that there’s a future resurrection for us. Paul also states that we are daughters and sons, adopted into God’s family, awaiting a glorious future inheritance. Until that day, we are promised that God will never forsake us because God had foreknown us. These, and other statements in Romans 8, would cause Israelites to raise their eyebrows because these phrases were used to refer to Israel in the Old Testament. Take a look at the verses: **Israel promised the Holy Spirit – Ezek. 36:26-27; Israel and a future resurrection – Ezek. 37; Israel as God’s son – Exod. 4:22; Israel’s future inheritance – Isa. 60; God’s promise to never forsake – Deut. 31:6** (see Schreiner, pp. 466-67).

As we see these Old Testament promises, both Jewish and Gentile readers could be confused. For the Jewish people, they could ask, “Has God somehow forsaken us and replaced us with Gentiles?” And the Gentile readers could think, “Since it seems God has forsaken Israel, then what good are his promises to me?” With these questions on our mind, the character of God is on the line in this discussion. Is God faithful to his promises?

So, I think the big idea of chapters 9-11 is this – **Rejoice: God is faithful to his promises.** And, the idea of verses 1-5 of chapter 9 is, **Weep: Many Israelites have rejected the Lord.** Right here, we have a tension.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:1–5.

And, we're not going to answer the tension this Sunday. Instead, we're going to focus on the tension. Live in it, and then simply be called to trust that **God is faithful even when people are unfaithful**. But as you hear this, you could simply have feelings of rest and calm at this. This is actually *not* the viewpoint of Paul. Paul rejoices and weeps. In fact, Paul's weeping does not discount his joy. And his joy does not discount his weeping. While God's faithfulness leads Paul to praise, people's sinfulness causes anguish for him. So, this morning, we're going to focus on this anguish. We're going to discover the reality of it, the extent of it and then the reason for it.

1. The reality of Paul's anguish (vv. 1-2).

Verses 1-2 say, "I 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."³

Paul could be accused of being anti-Jew after reading chapters 1-8. In chapter 2, he confronts the Jewish people, telling them that they're storing up wrath for themselves. At the end of the chapter, he states that a Jew is one inwardly. In chapter 3, he adds that Jews, along with the Gentiles (simply meaning, non-Jewish), are under sin. Then in chapter 8, he states that the blessings the Jews were to receive have seemed to have been handed off to the Gentile world.

When you think of this even in context of this letter to the Roman church, keep in mind that there were more Gentiles in this church than Jewish people. There were issues between these people groups, within the church and we'll see that more when we get to chapters 13-15. But some of Paul's statements could seem unhelpful for the Jews who are already being looked down upon by some of the Gentile Christians.

So, Paul emphasizes how much he actually loves the Jewish people. The sentence starts with "I am speaking the truth in Christ." Paul is almost practically making a vow in these two verses. First, if anyone doubts Paul's love for the Jewish people, he's saying that as a believer in Christ – as a Christian. As someone who is in Christ, he is speaking the truth. He's acting as a Christ-follower, who is to always speak the truth. Just in case people doubt, Paul puts in the negative statement: I am not lying.

Then Paul adds his conscience and the Holy Spirit. He knows he's not being sly or deceptive in what he's saying here. He's not telling a white lie so that his conscience says, "You know this isn't true." His conscience is clear. And the Holy Spirit is not convicting him. His heart and mind are united in telling the truth.

Phew! Now we know Paul is really wanting us to believe he's telling the truth. But what is he telling the truth about? He has great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart. These phrases are stacked for emphasis. And with these phrases, Paul almost sounds like an Old Testament prophet, like Jeremiah or even Moses, who prayed that his name would be blotted out in Israel's place when God threatened to destroy them.

The reason Paul is in unceasing anguish is because many Israelites have not experienced God's salvation in Jesus. We know this by looking at verse 3, when Paul talks about himself being accursed in the place of his brothers, his kinsmen according to the flesh. When he says "according to the flesh," he's making it

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:1–2.

clear that he's referring to ethnic Israel. They're not brothers and sisters in Christ. They're kinsmen by blood. Paul makes this clearer in the following verses.

But I want to get back to the point of verses 1-2. Paul's emphasis of anguish. Some people seem to think that being a sorrowful Christian is an oxymoron. If you're a Christian, you should only have feelings of happiness. Is that true? The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians that he was ". . .sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. . ."⁴ For a Christian, the joy of Romans 8:28 (all things work together for good) and the reality of the Jew's unbelief and suffering causes him anguish.

This, by the way, is the heart of Jesus. Jesus could speak sternly to the religious Jews, calling them to repent, and then he would weep over Jerusalem. Ventura, I'm going to take a side-step here. While Paul is specifically talking of the Jews, his heart for them, I believe, is the heart we should have for them and for all those who do not trust in Jesus. What about our family members? What about our town? Our nation? Our world? The heart of the Savior is a heart for souls.

We live in a day when even professing Christians have no desire to share the gospel with people. We're timid, weak and afraid. Then, the answer to this, we say, "Is to just talk to people." And, maybe that does need to happen. However, I wonder if we need to step back even further and ask ourselves, "Do I even have a concern for lost souls?" When I was in college, the president would sometimes say the following to the whole University: "The most sobering reality in the world today is that." And then everyone would say, "People are dying and going to hell today." Is that not the most sobering reality? Do we really believe in the just punishment of God? Do we really believe sinners who are outside of Jesus will be judged? I believe all Christians ought to take time in their prayers for the Lord to give them burdened souls for the lost.

And, I know, some here might say, "Well, I don't want to be depressed!" God doesn't say "Be depressed." But he does say that there is unceasing anguish for your heart – while still having joy. This is something only the Spirit can work, but I believe that if the Spirit is to bring revival, this is one of the gifts we will have. We'll have a concern for people's souls. And, by the way, that doesn't just mean "Get 'em saved" and who cares about anything else. A concern for souls is a concern for *them*.

Pray that we as a church would have anguish for souls, like Moses, like Paul, like Jesus. This is the reality of Paul's anguish. Now, look at

2. The extent of Paul's anguish (v. 3).

Verse 3 says, "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."⁵

In verses one and two, Paul shows that he had unceasing sorrow. That communicates a timeframe on it. It's never goes away in this life. Then, in verse 3, he speaks of the extent of the sorrow. How much does the anguish reach him? He says he could wish that he were accursed and cut off from Christ. These two phrases relate to each other because to be cut off from Christ means that you are accursed, and to be accursed means you're cut off from Christ.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Co 6:10.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:3.

But these terms help to define what Paul is saying here. The word “accursed” is the word “anathema.” In Paul’s writing, it always had a negative sense, and it means to be devoted to God for destruction. And, of course, outside of Jesus, people are going to experience that.

I know that’s not a popular belief that’s believed by many. It’s often not preached. However, it’s a reality that must be proclaimed because people are on their way to destruction. If they love and serve the things around them. If they suppress the truth about God and embrace lies. If they adore their stuff more than turn to the Lord, those things are their gods. And those gods will not rescue them in the judgment.

Paul says here that he could wish he were accursed in the judgment in the place of the Israelites. Right here, you might say, “Paul wants to deny his salvation? He doesn’t want Jesus?” Please get the wording. He doesn’t say he wishes. He says that he *could* wish. He’s using hyperbolic language to describe that he’s willing to suffer in the place of others if that would actually save. But in reality, it won’t save. The only One whose suffering actually counts is Jesus’ suffering. He did stand condemned, even though he was righteous, and through his condemnation, many were made righteous! But Paul here expresses the heart of a Christian. Are we willing to suffer for people’s welfare?

Sometimes I think Christians are more angry at the world than they are caring. We speak of the opposing political party like enemies. We speak of the neighbor living in sin as though they’re an enemy. They don’t sorrow over them, we can sometimes speak as though we’re cursing them. But how does Jesus say we are to treat our enemies? With love!

This was the heart of Paul, which was the heart of Jesus. Don’t ever think Paul was an unfeeling man who knew a lot of theology and wrote in ivory towers. He was a man who experienced persecution, pain, beatings, imprisonment. You’d think, in some ways, he could be hardened. But he wasn’t. He was broken for souls!

The 19th century British pastor, Charles Spurgeon, “**May the Lord plough your soul deep, dear friend. . . . May the ploughers make deep furrows upon your heart, as once they did upon your Master’s back. You are not fit to carry souls on your heart till it has been bruised with grief for them. You must feel deeply for the souls of men if you are to bless them**” (see: <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/concern-for-other-mens-souls#flipbook/>).

This attitude is helpful as we come into Romans 9 – a chapter that speaks of powerful election. The election of God does not negate the heart of God. The election of God cannot negate a concern for people’s reconciliation with God. But getting back to Paul’s point here. He’s concerned about the Israelites specifically. Why? Because if God doesn’t keep his promises to them, how will he keep his promises to us? Or, to put another way, does the faithlessness of the Israelites mean God is unfaithful?

Paul shows us the great faithfulness of God in verses 4-5. And here, we discover

3. The reason for Paul’s anguish (vv. 4-5).

Read verses 4-5 with me again: 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. ⁶

Why is Paul sorrowful specifically about the Israelites? It's not only that they've rejected the Lord, but it's the amount of their rejection that causes greater sorrow. In Romans 2, Paul speaks to the Jews, saying that "God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" ⁵But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed."⁷ When I preached that sermon, I gave an illustration of a miser who receives gold coins, and every time he gains the coins, he puts them in the attic of his house until the attic can't hold it any longer and the gold comes crashing down on him, killing him.

This is the idea of God's kindness. He's given tremendous kindness to the Israelites. What they do with God's kindness is presume on it. They presume that they're good and they can just store it up for themselves at their leisure. But the kindness is meant to lead them to turn to the Lord in need for his mercy, forgiveness and grace. So, in verses 4-5 here, Paul lists many of the kindnesses God has given to the nation of Israel. As we look at these blessings, we are also going to see how these blessings were intended to point them to their need for God – and not lead them to take confidence in themselves.

Interestingly, the blessings are written in a memorable way in the Greek. It's a little much for me to explain here, but the first three and the second three go together. So, Adoption and giving of Law, and then glory with worship and covenants with promises. That's how I'm going to address them now.

- **Adoption & the Law**

In Exodus 4:22, Israel is called God's firstborn son. Jeremiah 31:9 states that God is a father to Israel. Hosea 11:1 calls Israel God's child and son. In these contexts, obedience is also paired. God cared for the nation as children. And being treated as children, they ought to have obeyed. However, in Jesus' ministry, he seems to make explicit that the Israelites were forfeiting their sonship. Think of the parable that we refer to as the Prodigal Son. The story is not emphasizing as much the younger, overtly disobedient son as much as it's emphasizing the older son. The older son was externally obedient. He did what his father told him to do. This older son is angry when his disobedient brother comes home and his dad throws a party for him. The parable ends with the father inviting the older son into the party.

This parable is told by Jesus to religious Israelites. He's actually telling them that they're outside the party. They didn't really want God. They just wanted his stuff. The question is whether they will accept his fatherly care or if they'll turn from him.

You could say then, "Well, if Israel was God's son, then how could some be forsaken by God, as Paul suggests?" Well, the Old Testament is clear that Israel as a whole was treated like a son, but not everyone in Israel was a son of God. Essentially, the Jewish people presumed on God's kindness in leading them, that they thought that if God was kind to the nation, then they're good, too!

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:4–5.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 2:4–5.

To illustrate, you could have people within Ventura. Our children even could grow up in this place and think that if God is blessing Ventura, then they must be blessed by God, too. That's not true. The question is, "Do you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord?" If so, then you are also individually God's child. Only through Jesus do people individually become adopted into God's family.

Oh that the Israelites all would see this kindness is meant to lead them to repentance – to lead them to turn to the Lord.

- **Glory & Worship**

This glory probably refers to the glory God manifested in the nation's worship. God revealed his glory on Mt. Sinai. Glory then called the nation to build a tabernacle to travel with them. His glory was revealed there as well as through the temple. But it wasn't only the supernatural displays where he revealed his glory. He revealed his glory through the rituals in the temple. He showed what kind of God he is. He is holy and he is merciful. He is just in punishing sin, but he is gracious in forgiving sin.

Yet, Israel focused on the rituals more than God himself. I've used this illustration in the past, but I find this to be personally helpful. When you are with a young child and you point at something, they continue to stare at your finger. But you want them to look at something else. This is precisely the point of the rituals in the temple and tabernacle. There's a greater glory to see. But the Israelites acted like children. They focused on the fingers.

So, in John 1:14, the apostle John says, "¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."⁸

Jesus is the effulgence of God's glory! According to Hebrews, Jesus fulfills the temple and the sacrifices. The blood of bulls and goats couldn't take away sins. The Day of Atonement couldn't really atone for sins. Only Jesus, in his life and death could take away our sins! So, as Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:6, "⁶For God . . . has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."⁹ As a result of Jesus, all who trust in him are set free to glorify God in whether we eat or drink. We can truly worship him wherever we are!

- **Covenants & Promises**

The covenants and promises go together. This means that God made more than covenants with Israel. He also made various promises within the covenants and even outside of the formal covenants. Some covenants were conditional. Others were unconditional. So, think of Abraham. He made a covenant to bless the world through him. But did that mean every child of Abraham was blessed? No. Abraham had Isaac and Ishmael. Then Isaac had Jacob and Esau. Not all children of Abraham are the blessed children. But there are children of Abraham who are blessed.

We get to the Jewish people as a nation. God, through Moses, calls them to obedience. If they obey, they will live. They agree to this covenant, which really is a covenant binding them to the reality of their death because they're already sinners. They should have called out for mercy!

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 1:14.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Co 4:6.

Yet, within this covenant, some remember the covenant of grace within God's covenant to Abraham. Then we have a future covenant God says he makes with Jacob, meaning Israel: **"And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the Lord. "And as for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord:**¹⁰

God promises to rescue Jacob. It's interesting he uses the term Jacob. Sometimes using this term refers to their disobedience. So, God promises to show disobedient Jacob mercy. He makes a promise to save them – not because of their works but simply because of his mercy. This is a covenant. This is a promise.

What should these promises breed in the Israelites? Humility, awe, gratitude. They should have led them to Jesus! In 1 Corinthians 1:20, we discover, ²⁰"For all the promises of God find their Yes in him."¹¹ Oh that Israel would have turned to Jesus.

So here we have the three groupings, and then Paul adds that "to them belong" the patriarchs and the Messiah. The patriarchs were mentioned because God promised to bless the people *because* he made promises to the patriarchs like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But what was the ultimate blessing God promised to the patriarchs? The answer is the Messiah.

Paul says here that "from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. . ."¹² Through Abraham, the nations would be blessed. And Jesus came as Jew. He came to bless the nation of Israel and the nations of the world. Now, in saying this, we could think, "Has God failed?" Paul's going to answer that question more as we move in Romans 9. There were many Jews who did accept Jesus as their Savior. But Paul wishes more would! These blessings should have caused the Jewish people to turn to Jesus as Savior, but, they kept looking at the finger instead to where the fingers were pointing.

By the way, this is exactly what Jesus said in his ministry. He says that if they believed Moses, they would have believed Jesus because Moses spoke of him (John 5:46). In John 5:39-40, Jesus says, ³⁹**You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,** ⁴⁰**yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.**?¹³ After Jesus rose from the dead, he taught the disciples the correct interpretation of the Old Testament. In Luke 24:44-45, Jesus says, ⁴⁴**Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."** ⁴⁵**Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. . ."**¹⁴

And, before you say, "Wow, Pastor Timothy, sounds like you're being anti-Jewish in this message," I want to correct that. I'm pro-Jesus! And I would love for the Jewish people to come to faith in Christ. In addition, as I say these things about the Jewish people, I also need to emphasize my concern for the rest of the world, too. Later in this letter, Paul's going to confront the non-Jewish people. He's going to tell them not to get haughty. And I wonder if we live in a day where the church is haughty. I believe many churches have gone the way of forgetting Jesus and presuming on God's kindnesses. Sermons no longer focus their attention on the glory of God in Jesus. They simply focus on how to be better people. They say, "Well, God wants us to act this way; so, let's do it!" But where's Jesus as the Savior? We listen to songs on the radio, and ask yourself, "Where's Jesus as Savior?"

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Is 59:20–21.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Co 1:20.

¹² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:5.

¹³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 5:39–40.

¹⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 24:44–45.

You can say, “Well, there’s nothing wrong with being a moral person.” Well, I am glad if you’re moral, but what if you’re moral and you aren’t dependent on the Lord, loving him and trusting in Jesus as your Savior and Lord? Then that means you’re using God’s gift of morality for yourself and you’re not living by dependent on him. And the Bible says anything apart from dependence on him is sin.

Where are we today in the church? I wonder if many churches think God’s goal is the American Dream. God’s just fine as long as we don’t commit the big sins (whatever that is). No! My heart’s desire is that the church would be revived and repent of their presumption as well.

You see, the disciples understood the Scriptures when they saw that Jesus was the fulfillment of it all. Oh, how the Jewish nation should have been the first to accept Christ. This was the cause of Paul’s unceasing anguish. And we should have this anguish for the Jews (as well as the Gentile world).

Paul closes this paragraph by describing who Jesus is: the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.¹⁵ Rejecting, or even ignoring Jesus, is a serious matter. Jesus is not simply a man. He is God who came in the flesh to rescue people. The Bible says Jesus didn’t come into the world to condemn the world. Instead, the world was condemned in their sins already. Jesus came to rescue from condemnation by taking the condemnation in the place of sinners. This type of love transforms those who turn from their sins and turn to Christ! It leads you to rejoice like Paul. In the middle of his argument here, he must praise Jesus who is God over *all*, *Amen!* Those of us here who are Christ-followers confess he is eternally glorious. We say our hearty AMEN to the Savior who rescued us. I pray you can do the same.

So, if you’re here today and you’ve been playing “Christian.” Or, maybe you’ve not even been with a church for a while (or ever), I want to encourage you today to find me out or someone else here. Ask them questions about Jesus and what it means to trust him. If you’re a Christian here today, but you recognize that you don’t have the burden for people’s souls, I’m going to give you some moments to repent and pray for the Lord’s grace on your life.

But, as we end this sermon today, while we didn’t answer all the questions that Paul sets out to answer, **we have seen the God who makes promises and fulfilled promises in Jesus – and even though people were unfaithful, God is still faithful. So, rejoice that God is faithful and weep for the souls of those who have rejected.**

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¹⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 9:5.