

Romans 9 Community Group Discussion Guide

10.18.26

Big Idea

Leader Reads: God's promises have not failed, and His purposes have not been defeated. Romans 9 reminds us that salvation rests on God's sovereign grace and mercy, not on our goodness or our ability to earn His favor. Although we may not fully understand all of God's ways, we can trust His wisdom, remain humble before Him, and be confident in His faithfulness. These truths should change how we live. God's sovereignty should not make us indifferent toward the lost, but deepen our compassion for them. His mercy should not make us proud, but fill us with gratitude. And His authority should not lead us to distrust Him when we don't understand, but to trust His character and surrender to His purposes.

1) Leader Says: Paul begins Romans 9 with a broken heart. Although he understands God's sovereignty, he is deeply grieved that many of his fellow Israelites have rejected Jesus as the Messiah. His confidence in God's purposes does not make him indifferent toward those who are lost. Instead, his love for God and his trust in Him move him to care deeply about others.

Group Member Reads Romans 9:1-3

Discuss:

- How does Paul's example challenge the idea that believing in God's sovereignty might make us passive or indifferent toward those who don't know Christ?

2) Leader Says: Israel had received extraordinary spiritual privileges. God gave them His covenants, His law, His promises, and the history through which the Messiah would come. Yet many rejected Jesus, the very One to whom those promises pointed. Paul reminds us that having spiritual privileges is not the same as possessing saving faith. Being around God's people, hearing His Word, and participating in the life of the church are blessings, but they are not substitutes for personally belonging to Christ.

Group Member Reads Romans 9:4-8

Discuss:

- Why is it important to understand that being around the things of God is not the same as having saving faith in Christ?

3) Leader Says: Paul anticipates a difficult question: If so many Israelites have rejected Jesus, has God's Word failed? His answer is clear: absolutely not. God's promises have always depended on His sovereign purpose, not simply on physical ancestry or human effort. Paul points to Isaac and Jacob to show that God's saving purposes have always

moved forward according to His gracious choice. Salvation is not something we earn or control. From beginning to end, we depend on God's grace.

Group Member Reads Romans 9:6-13

Discuss:

- How should the truth that salvation depends on God's grace, rather than our accomplishments, shape the way we view ourselves?

4) Leader Says: Paul knows that God's sovereign choice raises difficult questions. Is God unjust? Why does He show mercy to some and harden others? Paul points us back to God's own character and reminds us that mercy is not something God owes us. Justice means receiving what is rightfully due. Mercy means being spared the judgment we deserve. Grace means receiving favor we have not earned. God is never unjust when He judges sin, and whenever He saves, He demonstrates His mercy. We may struggle to understand all of God's purposes, but we can respond with humility and gratitude, recognizing that our salvation is entirely dependent on His goodness.

Group Member Reads Romans 9:14-18

Discuss:

- When you consider that God's mercy is not something we earn or deserve, what response should that produce in your heart?

5) Leader Says: Paul addresses one more objection: If God is sovereign, how can He hold people responsible? He responds with the picture of a potter and the clay. The potter has authority over the clay, and the clay does not possess the potter's full perspective. This does not mean we should stop asking questions or studying Scripture. It means we must approach God's Word with humility rather than assuming our understanding is greater than His. We must allow Scripture to shape our thinking instead of trying to make God fit our preferences.

Group Member Reads Romans 9:19-21

Discuss:

- When something in Scripture challenges your understanding, how can you respond with both honesty and humility?

Closing

6) Leader Says: Let's bring this home. The question is not simply, "What do I believe about God's sovereignty?" The question is, "How should I live in light of who God is?" If salvation is by grace, we should be humble. If God's sovereignty does not diminish Paul's compassion, we should care deeply about those who do not know Christ. And if God's wisdom is greater than ours, we should trust Him even when we do not understand everything He is doing.