

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, October 18, 2023

Romans 9:1–5

1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

Grieving Sacrificially Over the Lost

Main idea: As grace conforms us increasingly to Christ, our grief over the lost—and specifically over lost relatives and lost Jews—increases.

Introduction: How should we think of ethnic Israel? i.e. How should we think of the Jews? A necessary precaution when about to consider that God's set-apart people on earth is the new- covenant church under Christ.

1. Amazing Grief, v1–2

- a. A very strong oath statement in v1. Why? Not to distinguish it as more true, but to give us more help because of how amazing this truth is.
- b. Great sorrow
- c. Continual grief
- d. In my heart
- e. Do not hide yourself from the truth, or from your fellow man, for fear of the pain that will come. The grace-changed heart grieves! (it also is comforted in the Lord, and rejoices in the Lord, but it grieves!)

2. Sacrificial Love, v3a

- a. "I could wish"—hypothetical because not possible. But the reason that this is the love of believers for the lost is because this is the love of Jesus for the lost (cf. Lk 23:34; Ac 7:60).
- b. What can you give up for the lost? Complacency of heart. Time and effort to pray. Time and effort to evangelize. Worldliness. Approval.

3. Especially for...

- a. **Our relatives**, v3b. His brethren, jointly-begotten. The nearer the relation, the more we ought to grieve sacrificially if they are lost. (and the more rejoice if they are not). What a great interest we ought to have in our family's souls!
- b. **Church members who apostatize**, v4.
 - i. "To whom pertain the adoption" (cf. Ex 4:22–23; Hos 11:1; Jer 31:9). But how much more, now, members of the NT church!

- ii. “The glory” (cf. Ex. 24:9–11, 16–17), tabernacle, temple, etc. But how much more, now, members of the NT Church! (cf. Heb 6:4–5)
 - iii. “The covenants.” Plural (Gen 3, Gen 9, Gen 12, Sinai, 2Sam 7). How much more those who have been baptized, identified with the church, partaken of the Supper, etc.
 - iv. “The giving of the law, the service [worship] of God, the promises.” All of these looked to Christ and bring us to Him. They are therefore the more to be appreciated (cf. 3:2) but the more to be pitied.
- c. **Ethnic Israel**, i.e. the Jews, v5.
- i. “Of whom are the fathers” (cf. Heb 11). If we are to care more for our genetic lineage, how much more for our spiritual lineage? Not all Jews were ever saved, but for dozens of generations, nearly all the saved were Jews! The saved from all the nations are glad to have “Zion” on our spiritual birth certificates (cf. Ps 87:4–6).
 - ii. “From whom, according to the flesh, Christ came” (cf. 1:3–4). Christ, the ever-blessed God of 1:25b (cf. 8:35–39), selected this people through whom to come. Christ is our nearest relation of all (cf. 8:17); shall we not grieve for the lost of His family as we do of our own?

Conclusion: Christ Himself has always been the true Israel. There is no “replacement” theology, because even when the visible church was under Abraham, Moses, or David, Christ was always the substance of it. As we come to learn that “they are not all Israel who are of Israel” (v6) and to learn about “vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” (v22), we had better do so with hearts that grieve for the lost as Christ’s own heart—with sacrificial love.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 9, verse 1, through 5. These are God's words. I tell the truth in christ. I am not lying. My conscience also bearing me witness. In the holy spirit. That i have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For, i could wish that i myself were a cursed from christ.

For my brethren. My countrymen, according to the flesh. Who are israelites? To whom pertain. The adoption. The glory. The covenants. The giving of the law. The service of god. And the promises. Of whom are the fathers and From whom according to the flesh. Christ came. Who is? Overall. The eternally blessed god.

Amen. So far the reading of gods inspired and Dinner and twerkt.

What should we think of ethnic israel? What should we think of The jews. That was. An important question at the end of Romans chapter 8, Because in the second half of Romans chapter 8, we had all of those comforting texts in which we have laid hold of christ by faith and we know that god is the one who gave us to do that because sorrow for our sin, Apprehending how glorious and And, Effectual, a savior of the lord.

Jesus is, those are things that do not come from us. That come from god. And since they come according to the foreign knowledge of god, the electing love of god, which we have come to know as what that four knowledge means not seeing into a crystal ball about us.

Not for future prediction about us. But knowing us and loving us ahead of time. Since the law of god for us began outside of time, nothing at all in time. A good put an into it, it cannot end because it didn't have a beginning. But then we see all of these statements that were made to israel as the church on earth.

The, the visible gathered people of god, on earth and no, at the time that paul is writing and preaching these things, many israelites not all, as as going to be part of his answer. But many israelites, the majority even of the israelites are rejecting, the lord jesus christ. They're the lord, jesus came to his own and his own received him not.

The scripture say in john, Chapter 1. So, if the If the electing love of god, Always finds its mark always succeeds. If those whom he foreign you, he glorified to Connect and compress. Uh, the golden chain. How is it? That so many israelites are perishing. As we will. Think about lord willing lord sparing us Next week, in verse 6, has the word of god.

Failed. With respect. To Israel. On the answer is, no, it has not. But the word israel is used in different ways in the bible. There is israel as it were as a church, which we will consider even this evening in verse 4, there is israel according to the flesh ethnic israel.

As we'll consider this evening in verse 5, and then there is the israel of promise. Those to whom belong, spiritually and eternally through faith, in jesus christ, as a consequence of divine election. Those to whom belonged the things that were displayed and announced to israel as a church. And we will be thinking, especially of The israel of promise.

Um, Next. Next week, lord willing. But this question of how then we should think of ethnic israel, that was very important to the apostle, he did not want because of the distinctions that it is necessary to make in order to understand things rightly, he did not desire to stir up the The least disregard for let alone animosity or hatred.

But the least disregard for His people according to the flesh as he calls them here and even more. So as you will call them here, christ's people. According to the flash, In fact, the church that he was writing to, we're going to Discover even more. So, in later chapters they had some difficulty.

Between the Jews and the greeks, and some of that had to do with the pride of jewish christians, which he has knocked down a peg or two or ten. In chapter 2, especially of this letter. And lest those who are gentile christians or Greek background christians despise their brothers and sisters in the church.

He gives some precautions at the beginning of this extended section in chapter 9, through 11. And then at the end, Of this extended section. In chapters 9 through 11. So that he would help believers who? Whom he wants to bring to a proper understanding. Of who are the people of god visibly, who are the visible church on earth from this point until the return of the lord jesus christ.

And who are the people of god eternally spiritually by election by the application of redemption? He wants to tell them the the truth about those things. But he wants them. To think properly. Of ethnic israel and even more than that, to feel properly toward ethnic israel so

that they will join him not only in the same heart's, desire that he talks about at the beginning of the next chapter chapter 10, but even in prayer to god for them.

The beginning of chapter 10, even in magnifying, his ministry as he did doing, what the Lord had given him in his life. That would be a part of the way by which every israel i was both and israelite of the flesh and, and israelite to the promise would be saved.

And so also we would have not just heart and not just prayer, but to participation in the In the work of god in the application of redemption that seeks as part of its goal. That Jews would be saved. That those who are not only the israel of god. According to the flesh.

But who are the israel of god according to the promise, and in the visible church, That they would be saved. And that's an important question for us right now. In. In our, Time in world history. Because again, there has been the The. Terrorist murderous. Attack upon Jews just because that's what they're called.

And, you know, they're not Near particularly ethnically pure Jews. Even But, They are descendant. From. This apostles kids men according to the flesh from the people of whom, Are the fathers and from whom christ came, according to the flesh. And so, it's an important question in our day. How should we think?

About the jews. And what we see is he, As he answers this question. Is an amazing grief. An amazing grief, a grief that really belongs to all those who are perishing. And an amazing grief, then that, that But comes from, And produces more of sacrificial love. So we'll see that in a second place, an amazing grief for the lost and the sacrificial love for the lost.

And then he Gives. Some reasons why the jews for him in particular and some of these reasons are going to have different application to us because we are not Jews. But reasons that intensify, that identify for us, who should be the particular objects. Of our Great grief of our sacrificial love.

And so in the first place, we see an amazing grief. Listen to verse one. I tell the truth in christ. I am not lying. My conscience also bearing me witness. In the holy spirit. It's a very strong oath formula, isn't it? As he as it hear. As as it were swears to what he's about to say in verse 2.

Now, we probably have learned, not to say, i swear. Or i i promise or even worse. I swear on And then, Fill in, whatever comes next. We do take oaths and vows before god, but Uh we've learned to make our yes yes and our no no. That we are to be so truthful that we don't have to use.

Formulas like this, when we speak. Well, isn't the apostle truthful? Why does he use a formula? Like like this, i tell the truth in christ, i am not lying. My conscience. Also bearing me witness in the holy spirit. Well, one of the reasons that he says this is of course not because sometimes he is lying.

And sometimes what he says is unreliable. But, Much for the same reason that we sometimes. Make vows. Swear olds before God. To underline the seriousness of what we are saying. Not from the flesh trying to add by an oath, the the force of our own fury or our own will But we take oz in situations.

Where we need to remember and others need to hold us accountable to The gravity, the seriousness, the importance, importance of, what we are testifying to, or what we are promising. Another thing. Another reason we take them and that isn't necessarily why he is doing so here, Is because we are so weak.

In our resolve to do, right? That it actually helps us to To add another reason. So we actually only promised things that are right already to promise it would not, it would wouldn't be right. Take a bow to something that wasn't already, right? But when we do so, Then we load our conscience as it were with, not only the rightness of what we are promising.

But the necessity of keeping the word, That by which We have promised. So here's a very strong post statement. What is What is so waiting? So serious. So great. That he would use a statement like this. Verse 2. That i have great. Sorrow. And continual grief. In my heart.

You see, he's describing something. That is in christ. He's describing something. That the holy spirit, not only A tests to. But has himself produced. That the apostle has sorrow. And not just sorrow, but great sorrow. That the apostle has grief. And not just grief, but continual grief. And that this great sorrow and continual grief is something that he feels at the core of who he is.

In his heart.

We who don't like pain. We need to learn That the grace of god gives us not only that through to the spirit, which is joy in the lord. So that the scriptures instruct us dent, they to rejoice in the lord, always and praise god. The lord always is with us and always will be But we need to learn.

That grace produces sorrow in our hearts. So long as that which is grievous continues. The lord jesus was a man of sorrows. In this life and not just because he was afflicted with what we deserve at the cross. We often see him in the gospels. Grieving agonizing, especially over unbelief.

Nothing is so dishonoring to god as unbelief and nothing is so destructive to man. As unbelief. In fact, some of the moments in which we see him express, the greatest grief in the gospels, Are those moments leading up to his death in which he considers? What is going to come upon jerusalem for not recognizing its day of visitation?

And so we are tempted to hide. Ourselves. From the truth about what is coming upon unbelievers around us and we are tempted even to hide ourselves from our fellow man who is perishing? Because of the pain of grappling genuinely with the fact that there is a hell that sin deserves, and there is a day of wrath that is coming.

But the grace changed heart ought not do these things. It ought to have an amazing grief. By god's amazing grace. Yes. Grace comforts us in christ. That teaches us to cling to him so that the god of all comfort, who comfort us in every affliction with a comfort that we may offer to anyone in any affliction.

Second Corinthians chapter 1. And grace makes us to rejoice in the lord, but it ought to make us to grieve over the loss. And if we are not grieved for those who are perishing, How far along could we possibly be? And the grace that conforms us to the lord jesus christ.

And the second place. We see sacrificial love. The greatness of this sorrow and continued the continuity of this grief in the heart of the apostle. And then as expressed in verse 3 4, i could wish that i myself were a curse. Anathema. Some of us still use that word, you hear that word sometimes in church history.

For instance, when you hear about the church, Making the, the very sobering and grievous statement that someone has Put themselves outside of Salvation, it means. Literally cursed to hell. He says, i could wish that i myself were of cursed from christ. For my brethren, my countrymen, according to the flesh.

It's a hypothetical wish I could wish because it's not possible. He cannot be a curse. And he cannot even actually wish himself to be a curse. But what he's doing is he's obeying the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. To feel the pain of the hell that they are under and if they remain apart from Christ, they will be under and in forever.

As if it were his very own.

The reason that this is the way that believers love the lost is because this is the way that Jesus loved the law lost. We're referring to Christ's expressions of grief and feelings of grief and agony over unbelief in the Gospel's a few moments ago, but here is one of the greatest Jesus on the cross in the agony of God.

Uh, Uh God pouring out his wrath upon them. And, though one time until the end when he says, Father into thy hands. I commit my spirit. Concerning himself. He says my God, my God. Why have you forsaken me? Concerning his murderers? He addresses God as Father. He claims. The privilege of sonship.

Not. For his own sake to be delivered. Like he had the night before. Praying that his father would make the cup pass from him. But he addresses God as his father to pray for his murderers. Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do. The love that we see in the apostle for these for Jews who have repeatedly tried to murder him.

Is one that we see. First of all, in the Lord Jesus Christ and one that he saw. The first time. Reflected in another one. The end of Acts chapter 7. When Stephen is being murdered and we read at the beginning of chapter 8, that Paul was concurring in the murders.

Even as he kept the coats. For others, so that they could be more free to throw rocks. With greater potency. Not a disinterested observer. It says that Stephen knelt down. And cried out with a loud voice. Lord, do not charge them. With the sin. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Which, of course, talking about his death. He fell asleep in the Lord. The reason. Believers. Love the lost this way. Is because their love comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you and I do not love the lost in a self-sacrificial way feeling the pain of their hell as if it were hours.

Then we need to plead with God. To continue the work that he has begun in us and conform us to Christ that we would have the mind of Christ, the affections of Christ and us. Now, we cannot give up our salvation for the laws. But what can we give up for them?

For the very first, the one that is most necessary, a point and a half into this sermon is that we need to give up the complacency of our hearts. That condition of living, as if it's okay with us, that they are all perishing. So that we are unaffected. We can give up at least.

Some time and effort to pray for them. And in our various connections and callings. We must give up some time and effort to evangelize them. We must give up our worldliness. Where we value our salvation. So little and the blessed appearing, the blessed hope and appearing of our God and savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So little that we don't even communicate. By the way, we embrace our own salvation that there is an eternal and weighty age to come.

It is extremely cruel that believers live worldly in this present age.

Rather than by contrast at least demonstrating. To the one who is perishing? That there is an age to come.

We can give up for them loving their approval, so much That we shrink back. From warning them.

Now. For whom, especially We're finite. We are not able. To feel intensely about everyone. And to pray specifically for everyone. And to evangelize everyone. But we do have in this passage The apostles own testimony, that enables us to identify three groups. Three groups for whom especially. We should grieve with this amazing grief.

And we should love With this sacrificial. Love the first star is our relatives. The second. Our church members. Who reject the faith? Reject christ. And the third is ethnic israelites. Those whom we would call Jews. First, then our relatives. This we see in the last part of Verse 4 says, i could wish that i myself were a cursed from christ for my brethren.

My countrymen, according to the flesh. That's very interesting to see paul used the word brethren With respect to the jews, particularly the unconverages that he's talking about here. Because that's a word that is ordinarily, about believers. In the new testament. And yet, there is a brotherhood that is according to the flesh.

This word that is translated, countrymen here is another one of those words where you have the prefix that means together with and this time, the, the word that it's attached to is begotten. Literally those with him, i have a common ancestry. Now, we all have a common ancestry. But for many of us, you have to go back to noah.

To find your common ancestry with the jews. Paul's daddy paul himself. Was. And he gives us then a, a Principal here. The near the relation, the more commonality you have in your ancestry. The more you want to grieve sacrificially? If they are lost and the more you ought to rejoice, If they are not, I think that for us, it's most painful to think about a parent, A brother or sister a cousin.

Maybe a child. Who has rejected the lord and apostatized From the faith. And yet, we must not. Ignore. Just because of the greatness of the pain, it is right? That we should have that pain, that grief. That love for them. That grace would produce in us. Great sorrow and continual grief in our hearts.

How much more though? For the parent, the brother, the sister, the cousin, the child, the spouse. Who has been brought to faith? Oh, we rejoice. Over the evidence of grace in their lives. Over the prospect of entering glory. Together with them. We ought to have a great interest. And increasingly great interest in the souls of those to whom we are near relations.

And therefore, especially in our own houses. Isn't it remarkable? How easy it is? For a husband or a wife. Or a father or a mother, or a child, or a brother or sister in our own homes.

To. Go without go some time without thinking of the condition of one, another souls of not being interested enough. And one another souls. This is one of the reasons why children when we fight a We have conflict in our homes. We fight against one another as enemies. Whereas if we had been thinking about and caring about the spiritual condition of our brother and our sister, the moment they sinned against me, i would be more concerned with recovering them from their sin, the way matthew 18 talks, Then making sure that that i get vindicated and i get what to do to me.

But we should. Uh, we should grieve. Over the lost and love them sacrificially especially if there were our relatives, especially if they are members of the church, Our time is running long, so we have to abbreviate this a little bit, but He then calls them israelites verse 4. But he specifies, what he means by that and the rest of verse 4 And he highlights all of these things that belong to them as the visible church.

To whom pertained the adoption. So, The lord when he was addressing Moses. He said, israel is my son. My firstborn. Let my son go. That he may serve me. And when he is describing his forming israel, as a visible church referring to that and hosea 11 verse 1. He says when israel was a child, i loved him and out of egypt, i called my son.

Then jeremiah 31 verse 9. For, i am a father to israel and Ephraim is my firstborn. That there is an adoptive relationship in time between god and the visible church, Just as he teaches the church to pray together, our father,

And that they're having been part of the church makes it that much worse for them. When the natural branches are cut off to them, belongs the glory. The glory that was displayed to their elders on the mountain and exodus 24, or that was displayed to them. And In the tabernacle, or Uh, in leviticus 9:23 or the temple second Corinthians.

Uh, seven one through not corinthians. Second chronicles seven, one through three to them belong, the covenant's plural. You see the covenant of grace has gone through many progressive administrations? From the the promise and the identifying of a line of the woman, the godly and genesis 3 through the covenant made with noah and his children in genesis 9.

The covenant made with abraham genesis 12, and reinforced in chapter, 15 and 17. And then with Isaac, and with jacob, The covenant made with israel as a church that the lord formed for himself at sinai. Under moses the covenant made with david and second samuel chapter 7. The word covenant is not used in second samuel 7.

The covenant with david is referred to as a covenant later. And so we know that it is a covenant. And so the word covenants, plural here is describing the progressive administrations of the covenant of grace. And no one says replacement theology, when you talk about the covenant with abraham, No one says replacement theology, when you talk about the covenant under Moses and no one says replacement theology, when you talk about the covenant under david, And neither should they?

When we talk about the covenant under christ, Because the true israel through every one of those administrations has always been those who hoped in christ. Jesus. Is the true israel from everlasting to everlasting? And although the visible church the the identifiable on earth, corporate entity. That is the covenant people has.

Progressively focused more and more towards the lord jesus christ. All of these administrations. Are precious for christ's sake.

And how? Dreadful then when those who have been part of the church of jesus christ,

Turn away from him. Leave or are put out become ex communicated to use that word. To them. Also, belonged all of these things that pointed forward to jesus. The giving of the law. The service which is the word for worship. It's the word from which we get that where our word liturgy, the service of God, the worship of god, the promises.

All of those looked forward to Christ and design to bring us to christ. These are what we're summarized in chapter 3 and verse 2 as the oracles of god.

Israel. The Jews. Are all descendant. From the visible church, which means That if they are now outside of the visible church, They are natural branches that have been cut off because they refuse. To repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. It is all the more dreadful and these are reasons.

Not to despise them. But to pity them and grieve over them more. There is a sense in which When someone has excommunicated from the Christian church, We ought to grieve more over their lostness.

And then also, because then also they are We are to grieve more over ethnic Israel. Why? Because of them are the fathers. Now, if we are to care. Uh, if we are to care, especially about our genetic lineage, How much more should we care about our spiritual lineage? The entire list or almost the entire list.

Of people in Hebrews 11 who are our fathers in the faith. Who would not receive the promised inheritance apart from us. Their Jews. Ethnic Israel are their countrymen, their family members. And we ourselves have not a genetic lineage. But a spiritual lineage, isn't that what Psalm 87 is describing for us?

I will make mention of Rehab in that case. It's a nickname for Egypt. And Babylon. To those who know me behold. Oh, Philistia and Terebinth with Ethiopia. This one was born there and of Zion, it will be said this one, and that one were born in her and the most high himself shall establish her.

The Lord will record when he registers the people's this one was born there. Which is to say, if you could have a spiritual birth certificate, Not the one for when you were born but for the one, the one for which you were born again, City of birth is the same on all of them.

It would make a horrible, you know, password reminder question. What is the city of your spiritual birth? Because that all say, Zion.

Of whom are the fathers. But even more near. From whom according to the flesh Christ came. Christ to us is the ever blessed God. Chapter 1, verse 25 God who has blessed forever? Amen. This this Tremendous declaration of the greatness of God's glory that was being denied by sinful humanity.

And he became man. And when he became man, He came from the Jews. According to the flesh. Now, if we are to Grieve for and love. Are nearest relations most of all than what about those who are related to Christ, according to the flesh because Jesus is the believers nearest relation.

Shall we not grieve for the lost of his family? As we do for the lost. Of our own. And so, when you see, Israel or Jews. Under. Attack by. Terror. And Bombs and missiles, and

That is not the reason. To grieve for them. You should have empathy for them. You should love them. You shouldn't allow any despising thought in your heart towards them. But the great reason to grieve for them. Is because they're outside of Christ. Because they're not believers. Their perishing in their sins, the vast majority of them.

Sure, there are many, who are converted? The converted ones are persecuted by both sides.

But we see some of the pictures and we read and hear some of the reports and those who have a shred of empathy, those who haven't abused theology to become inhuman. Let alone ungracious. We're deeply moved by what they are. Endure it. But it doesn't hold a candle.

To what they will endure at the last day, if they are still outside of christ. And we should be much more deeply moved by that.

And so as we come in following weeks to learn To make that distinction in verse 6. They're not all israel, who are of israel. We should still come with special empathy, and sympathy and love. For, even those who are only ethnically. Israel. And when we come in verse 22 to read about vessels of wrath that are prepared for destruction, we must come with the love of christ for those who are prepared for destruction.

Not taking lightly taking something lightly because it's Appears in. A phrase to be a small thing. May the lord give us by his spirit hearts that grieve for the lost. As christ's own heart. With sacrificial, love. I'm in.