

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon  
Wednesday, October 25, 2023

## Romans 9:6–9

6But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” 8That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. 9For this is the word of promise: “At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son.”

### Faithful Word of the Saving God

**Main idea:** God’s faithful Word to us is about the faithful Word, His Son. Being God’s children comes not by our lineage or membership, but by Christ Himself, in Whom God’s promise has its “Yes” for us and our children and as many as He calls to Himself.

**Introduction:** “Can I really hope that my children will be saved?” is actually a form of an even bigger question. “Can I really trust the Word of promise to me and to my children?” If the Word can be negated by my or their failures, then none of us actually have any hope. So this is a huge question.

#### 1. The Word of God has not failed

- a. What fails when covenant children apostatize is not the Word, or the promise.
- b. We are to give/receive the Word from hope in the God of the Word.
  - i. Hope for us.
  - ii. Hope for our children.
  - iii. Hope for all members of the visible church as they receive the Word.

#### 2. They are not all Israel who are of Israel

- a. The basis of distinguishing (ethnically/covenantally/spiritually) how we read “Israel,” even in near proximity to other uses.
- b. Visible/invisible church distinction is one that God Himself makes here
- c. The duty to covenant children and all church members
  - i. To call/consider them “saints,” consecrated to God, with the various benefits listed in v4
  - ii. To hope for them “things that accompany salvation” (cf. Heb 6:9)
  - iii. To plead with them that through faith and patience, expressed in diligent labor of love, they would inherit the promises (cf. Heb 6:10–12)

### 3. Who inherit the promises?

- a. Not those who are merely children of the seed(v7)/flesh(v8)
- b. Children of God (v8)
  - i. Children of the promise that came through Isaac, v7. Abraham not saved by being Abraham, and Isaac not saved by being Isaac, but each saved by the Seed Who came through Isaac.
  - ii. Children of the promise of the Son born in due time. Isaac who came, as a type of Christ, “in the fullness of time.”
  - iii. Children by faith in Christ
    1. A faith that we need from Him by grace (n.b. the contexts of Gen 21:12 and 18:10–14).
    2. It is Christ’s flesh, Christ’s covenantal status, and even Christ’s faith that are our righteousness and salvation.

**Conclusion:** Do not hope for yourself in your lineage, your membership, or even your faith. Hope in the Christ Who has made promises to you, and Who Himself IS what He has promised to you! Do not hope for your children in their lineage, their membership or even their faith. Hope in the Christ Who has made promises to you, and Who Himself IS what He has promised to you! Do not hope for other church members in their lineage, their membership or even their faith. Hope in the Christ Who has made promises to you, and Who Himself IS what He has promised to you!

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Romans 9 verses 6 through 9, these are God's words. But it is not that the word of god has taken no effect. For, they are not all israel, who are of israel. Nor are they all children because they are the seed of abraham But in isaac, your seed shall be called, That is those who are the children of the flesh.

These are not the children of god. But the children of the promise are counted as the seed. For this is the word of promise. At this time, i will come. And Sarah. So have a son.

So far the reading of god's inspired and inertward. Made a glorious end to chapter 8. In which we were made certain that. God having loved his elect having loved those whom he was going to say from before the world began. Would not stop loving them for anything that came in time or in the creation.

That we cannot set be separated from the love of god. That is in christ jesus. But we have throughout scripture. And throughout church history. And much more close to home. In most, if

not all of our own individual experiences, Those who seemed to be believers. Those who seemed to be justified through faith in christ.

They seemed to be christians. They even had the name Christian upon them. They had the sign. In the name of the father and of the son and of the holy spirit, the sign of baptism applied to them. And yet, they did not at last, turn out to be. Believers.

They rejected the faith. They turned away from god. They lived and believed opposite, their baptisms. They died in their sins. And so, this is

There is a doubt rather that Uh, may enter into our hearts as we are dwelling upon. God's word of salvation to us, has promises. Like, We know that all things work together for good, for those who love god. To those who are called according to his purpose. Like, He who did not spare his own son but delivered him up for us all.

How shall he not with him also freely? Give us all thing. Promises like in all these things, we are super conquerors. Promises like no created thing shall be able to separate us. From the love of god, which is in christ jesus. Our lord. The question then is, is it possible?

For god's word for god's promises to fail. And this is a question that is made very pointed at the time that the apostle is writing Romans chapter 9 in particular because as we heard last week, there were many, who had the name israelite, There were many. To whom pertained the adoption.

They recognize that god is the father of his people. There were many. Who gathered for worship. Which was among other things. They display of god's glory. There were many who are members of the covenant people. In various administrations of the covenant. There are many, who had the law, who had the word of god.

And the service of god, the worship. And the promises. There were many of the time that the apostle was writing who had had all of these things. His countrymen in the flesh, the jews. Who are not believing in the lord jesus christ. Many of them even by this time, of course, dying.

Apart from faith in the lord jesus christ. Without a righteousness. That would stand before, god. Without payment for their sins. Maybe having lived. What others would consider an upright decent life. Who would go? To the wrath of god. For whom the apostle himself had said that he could wish That he was a cursed from christ.

For those Jews. And so, For six, begins with the strong declaration. It is not that the word of god has failed or it is not that the word of god has taken no effect. Now, one of the things that we sometimes come across, Is when a child who grew up in the church and had believing parents and was properly called the way, the Bible calls them saint, and taught to pray, to god, as father, and saw glimpses in the church of the fact that the glory of christ, and the glory of the world to come had come in christ.

To him belong, the covenant and who had received the covenant sign of baptism who learned and heard and read the bible. And participated in the worship of god and heard the promises. And yet, they have turned away from the faith. My perished and their sin. Many, thankfully that we know probably primarily those who were Who we might have been thinking of just now, as we were rehearsing again, the list and verse 4.

Are yet not dead and there is life. So there is still hope. But can we? Can we really hope? Can we really hope for ourselves? Can we really hope for our children? It's a question that many

have. For instance, when they're coming from About statistic reading of the scripture and they don't understand, they don't read the bible through even this language here the covenant's.

Plural the various administrations of the covenant of grace. And yet, even if Even if they are wondering. Perhaps for themselves, perhaps for their children. This is the true question. This is the bigger question. Not. Can i really hope that i am going to be saved? And or can i really hope?

That my children whom God has called saint upon whom unto, whom god has applied his sign, can i really hope that they are going to be saved but the question is, Can i really trust? The word of promise. About me. Can i really trust the word of promise? About my children.

If the word can be negated by my failures, Then how can i genuinely fully hope that i am saved. And if the word about my children can be negated by my own failures, and by my children's failures. How can i really hope? That they will be saved. And so, here is A huge question being immediately answered.

It is not that the word of god. Has failed. Or as our version has it. It is not that the word of god. Has taken. No effect. And so we must immediately. We must immediately answer. Yes, i can really hope. The question is, in whom, Is my hope. Because it's precisely if i am hoping.

That i will walk with the lord. Well enough and mature enough that i am sincere. And my believing in the lord jesus that i am. Devoted to him, if that's what i'm hoping. Then my hope is misplaced. Is precisely. If i'm hoping that my children will pay good enough attention and that going to the right sort of church and having the right sort of family worship that all of these things will result in the salvation of my children.

If that is my hope, then my hope is misplaced. The one thing that doesn't fail. Is the word of god. And so, as for yourself as you as you pursue sanctification, As you read and pray and attend the public worship and keep the lord's day, and give him your heart in, in the worship assemblies, week by week, and in the family worship, and in your personal worship day by day in the home, you're doing so not because you hope that those exercises will save you, or that your membership will save you or that doing things.

The right way will save you But you're hoping in him whose word never fails. He never fails his word, never fails. We fail. Which is incidentally, you'll get there in a moment. Part of what's behind the two places that he quotes from. In verses 6 through 9. Because he quotes from verse 7 in a place where abraham's faith was falling.

Or faltering. That he quotes in verse 9 in a place where Sarah's faith. Was falling or faltering. When so right up front at the beginning of our passage, he says it is not that the word of god. Has failed. And so, take out of it. Take out of it.

The question can the children of believers be lost? Absolutely, they can. Noah was a believer and we are all his children. Adam was a believer and we are all his children. And many as we see here in Romans 9. Even weeping with the apostle grieving. With the apostle, many of the children of abraham and Isaac, and jacob were perishing at the time.

The children of believers can be lost. And members of the church. Can be lost. And circumcised people then and baptized people now can be lost. But the word of god. Cannot fail. And god cannot fail. And so this passage right at the beginning says, take all of our hope off of our membership and off of our use of the means and off of the sacraments and off of our human relationships, even within a believing household, take all of your hope off of any and all of that and put it all on, god himself.

Who does not fail to say? And you hope in yourself, you you hope for yourself and god and you hope in god for your children? And you teach them to hope in him too. Because they cannot be saved by your hoping in christ. They must be saved by their hoping in christ.

And you're not hoping that the baptism will work or the lord's day keeping will work or the reading will work, or the praying will work or the, the child rearing, and the homeschooling, and the discipling, and the discipline and instruction, and all of those things that God has told you to do your hoping that god will work.

And you're teaching them to hope in him too. You're teaching them. We don't do these things because they work, we do these things because he works. And he's the one who's appointed them. And so, we're hoping in him and you welcome them to come and hope with you. So that they will not only be children of your flesh.

Having a family resemblance so that their face looks like yours unless they're adopted, although sometimes the Lord marvelously does that too. But that they will also be Children of the same promise. Hoping in the same promise, sir. The lord god hoping in the same promised one, the lord jesus, hoping in all the same promise, says, about the lord jesus, and who he is and what he has done and how he applies himself to us, by giving his spirit, who gives us life, who gives us faith, Because that is what cannot fail.

The word of god. Has not failed. This is the only hope that we have for ourselves, the only hope that we have for our children. And it is a sure and good hope for ourselves. And it is assure and good, hope for our children. There's never been. Apparent. Who hoped in god for his children and whose children came to hope and god for themselves.

And they were lost The truth is. All parents fail and much. And all children fail and much. But god never fails. Which is why he gives us signs concerning them and he speaks to us concerning them in a way that takes our hope off of ourselves and off of them and puts our hope on him for them.

And we teach them. The same. This is incidentally. One of the reasons why. You don't sit around in the congregation and judge everyone else in the congregation. Because our hope for them isn't that their members, it isn't that they're doing well enough. As as believers it isn't that they are coming to the same theological knowledge or maturity that we have as quickly as we have Which by the way, is a sign of spiritual inventory.

If you Are measuring one. Someone else's maturity against yourself. But we hope in the one who has promised. Concerning them. And that helps us love one. Another. Because, love Believes all things, hopes all things and doors, all things. And so, we don't say, well, i don't think she's a christian.

I don't think he's a christian. Or, you know, they're going to be lost. No, we hope. And the one who promises and we hope in the promised one. And we hope in what he has promised. About christ and what he does. Well, the word of god has not failed.

So what has happened? But what has happened is something that is still true in the church today. Something that was always true. They are not all israel. Who are of? Israel, we saw last week that He's? Uh, he's using or distinguishing. Covenantal and ethnic israel. Those who are ethnic israel, descended by the flesh from jacob those who are covenantal israel.

Their members of the covenant people, not all descended from from israel according to the flesh. By the way, there are a number of gentiles not that many in the old testament that wasn't

the time in which God gathered the nations into his church. But there were Those who are covenantally israel, came to be called israel even though they weren't descended from jacob.

But ethnic is we're on covenantal israel or rather the child of a believer or the member of the church. Is not necessarily spiritual israel. Meaning. Those people upon whom god has set his love from before the foundations of the world in a way that would call them according to his purpose and bring them to love him.

So that we know that all things work together for their good, just to use the language of verse 28, not too many verses ago. That spiritual and eternal israel. Now is important. It's going to be important for us when we come To chapter 11. To recognize that, yes, god does use the word israel.

Sometimes in very near context in different ways. So that he may be speaking in one part of a statement, About ethnic or covenantal, israel. And the one hand and in the other part of the statement about elect israel, who are going to be saved in the up. On the other hand.

And those who say, well you can't do that, they are unable to make any sense of verse 6. Where it's quite obvious that these are two different identities. They are not all israel. Who are of? Israel. It's also important here to see that god himself makes this distinction between the visible church and the invisible church.

There are some who say that's an artificial distinction, it's a theological category invented by this scholastics. If i'm a baptized church member, i'm going to heaven and i know it because i'm a baptized church member. Well. They are not all israel, who are of israel. They're not all. Going to be saved.

Who were circumcised church members? Of the church and the wilderness to use Stevens. Spirit inspired. Description of israel. And his final sermon. And so there is a real distinction between the visible and invisible church. And that doesn't mean that we set in the pews of the visible church in anxiety.

Over whether or not we are in the invisible church, the true and everlasting and saved church from all the nations throughout the ages. It means that. Weed the call to repent and to believe. To rest upon jesus. To hope in the one who has promised and the one who was promised, and the things that he has promised about himself, Because we know that, that's what marks.

The invisible church, that's what marks. All those who are saved.

The hope. In him. And so, yes, we have this duty to covenant children and indeed to all church members And sometimes we have difficulty with that duty. That doesn't surprise us. We're fleshly. We have difficulty with all of our duties. And so sometimes you have difficulty calling your child, the saint But if you're a member of the church, your children are set apart to god as holy.

Like, first corinthians 7 says, And he calls them saints. And you teach your children to obey you in the lord. You don't say well i hope they come to be in the lord one day so that i could teach them to obey me in the lord. And sometimes it's difficult to call other church members things.

But can you just imagine paul? Writing to the Corinthians and all the things that he was going to put in first corinthians. And he addresses them as saints. Because we We have a duty. To covenant children in church members. To call them israel, as it were to use that covenantal language to call them saints, as we were just describing or to call them christians.

And to consider them as in possession of the various benefits and verse 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 So that we look around in amazement. These people who are unimpressive in themselves.

But we are amazed the grace of god to then and we refuse. To be hardhearted. And spiteful and cold. And despising, with those whom God has graciously said things like he says In verse 4. And to hope not only that, they will have those things but The things that a company salvation.

Hebrews chapter 6. There's a similar list now. Not with respect to the old testament church like the we have in chapter 9, verse 4 of romans. Uh, but were to the new testament church. Hebrews 6 verse 4 for it is impossible for those who are once enlightened and have tasted the heavenly gift and have been partakers of the holy spirit and have tasted the good word of god and the powers of the age to come.

So, very similar to the list. In Romans 9:4. If they fall away to renew them again to repentance. Etc. Verse 9 about beloved, we are confident a better things concerning you, yes, things that company salvation. Though we speak in this manner, And so yes, we urge one another not to rest in The benefits that we have as members of the church and we certainly eat urge one.

Another Not to turn away from christ. After having had all these benefits and we call one another to repentance and faith. We're always doing that with one another. But we do so in hope. Believing concerning them, hoping concerning them, for better things, the things that a company salvation. As we plead with them.

That through faith and patience. Expressed in the diligent labor of love. They would inherit the promises note that hoping for one another salvation. And if we're thinking again with ourselves and having hope for our own salvation, doesn't mean we don't call ourselves to the things in the following versus in Hebrews 6.

And certainly, it doesn't mean that we don't call our children to those things. How many, who have come into a good covenant theology in which they have hope and god's promises concerning their children will then abuse it. And it won't be a bible. Hope like the apostles hope. In hebrews 6 verse 9.

It'll be a presumptuous hope. They don't evangelize their children, they don't call their children to repentance and faith. They treat them as being secure and having arrived just because they are, there's And how many of us have done it with ourselves? Rather than in hope in god addressing ourselves the way, the apostle, addresses them, but this is what he says.

To those. About whom he is confident. About things that a company salvation. He says, for god is not unjust to forget your work and your labor of love which you have shown in his name. That you have ministered to the saints and do minister. And we desire Then each one of you show the same diligence.

To the full assurance of hope until the end that you do not become sluggish. But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. You see his, his confidence is not a presumptuous confidence that says You're in now. No need to repent. No need to believe. We'll just congratulate on one another on how saved we are.

Know, he says through faith and patience. Keep laboring and being diligent in your work of love. Because these are all means by which, and evidences Of the lord's work in our lives. The

word of god is not failed. They are not all israel. Who are of israel, who then inherit the promises?

The answer is. Not those who are merely. Children according to the flesh. Or children who are the seed. That's the language of verse 7. Nor are they all children because they are the seed of abraham the offspring of abraham. But in Isaac received shall be called. And then verse 8, these seed of abraham are called children of the flesh, that is those who are the children of the flesh.

These are not the children of god, but the children of the promise. Or accountant as the scene. So those who are merely children that are the seed or that are of the flesh are not necessarily inheriting the promises. And so we may turn to our own children and say you who have come from my flesh, you who are descended from a christian father, Come now not just to be the child of my flesh, but a child of faith.

Come now not to be. Child only of your earthly father, but a child of your father who is in heaven, but who are these children of god? Because that's the that's the language in verse 8. Those who are the children of the flesh. These are not the children of god.

And so it's the children of god, those who are adopted in christ, those who have been fore known in the sun, those are being conformed to his image. That's what we want to know ourselves to be. That's what we want to see our children being. That's what we hope for the rest of our Of our church, the church for the other members of our church, that they will be Well, the children of god then are the children of the promise.

That is, these are not the children of god, but the children of the promise. Are reckoned as the seed. And so being the true seed, the children of abraham not by the flesh. But by faith is something that comes by a reckoning by an accounting. And this of course comes through faith.

Abraham believed god and it was accounted for him. As righteousness. Abraham was not was not saved by being abraham. He was saved by believing. In the offspring. Who is going to come from him? That is in jesus. Isaac was not saved. Even by being the one through whom jesus came.

He was saved by hoping. In the offspring, that would come through him. Ishmael praise. God wasn't lost by not being the one. Through whom jesus came. He was saved by believing in the one. Who came? Through Isaac. Children. Of god, are those who are children of the promise that came?

Through isaac. Children of the promise of the sun. Who was born in due time. Verse 9 for this is the word of promise at this time. I will come and sarah shall have a son. God god, promised something. And he fulfilled his word and And the next year, Isaac was born, but god promised christ.

And escalations, 4 and other places. Say in the fullness of time, He sent his son into the world born of a woman born under the law. And so, isaac is a sort of type or a foreshadowing of christ. God made a promise concerning a son, and he kept the promise concerning that son.

And that was immediately fulfilled or at least within a year fulfilled. In genesis. 18. Many times we've seen this so far in the book of isaiah, haven't we? Where there was a promise made that was within the next three years or so. In the early part of the book of isaiah and it was tied to a promise that would not be fulfilled for several hundred years.



But the fulfillment of the promise. Within three years assured affirmed that the king that was being promised. Through whom israel would be redeemed, through whom judah would be redeemed through whom even sinners. From the nations would be gathered in and be redeemed that this king would come as promised, and he has come, and he has jesus, and if you hope in him, you are saved.

And you can be sure not because of how sure you are of your hoping, but how sure you are of christ and of the promise that has made concerning him. And so it's a faith that we need to have from him by grace. Genesis 21 verse 12. Sarah had said, send Ishmael away.

He was about 17. Isaac was about three. Probably They had a party for isaac and ishamil was picking on his three-year-old brother. Who had just been weaned? And sarah said, send him away. I don't want him in the same house as the son of promised. And isaac and abraham didn't want to do it.

Same attachment to what was promised to come through Isaac and what does god say? He says, listen to the voice of your wife. Which is pretty shocking. In the book of genesis because in genesis 3 that's kind of how the fall is described as happening. Adam listen to the voice of his wife.

It says there and same language with this time. He says listen to the voice of your wife for In isaac, your seed shall be called God actually affirms, you know, what Sarah is asking for is actually something that doesn't come from spite. It comes from faith. Her hope is in a savior that is going to come from the three-year-old, not from the 17 year old, and she's guarding.

That hope out of trust in christ. That's the context of the quote in verse 7 a point at which abraham after all these years, Was not living consistently by that hope in a way that his wife was and of course, that's the reverse of what had happened. In chapter 18, You remember, when?

Abraham believed and laughed, but sarah, disbelieved and left. And so this shows that Isaac was not saved because either of his parents were great believers. Because the holy spirit quotes for us to instances, one for each in which they were not great believers. And those of us, Whose faith is weak and intermittent, and sometimes we are sure about christ and sometimes we live in a way that exposes doubt.

Or at least not wholehearted resting, like we should. And we wonder what will happen with my children. Children of such a father. Whose faith is so small and weak and intermittent. And the answer is, we don't hope in the faith of the father. Any more than the hope for isaac, was in the faith of abraham or in the faith of sarah, it was in the one who was promised through Isaac And that's the same hope i have and it's the same hope you have and oh dear children.

It's the same. Hope your elders in the church plead with you to have to hope only in christ, not in your membership, not in what we do, not in your family, not in your parents. That's great to blessing as believing and godly parents are But that you hope only in the christ to his promised.

This is the hope that we must have for ourselves. And for our children, And for all of the members, Of christ's church. Amen.