

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon  
Wednesday, November 22, 2023

## **Romans 9:14–18**

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.” 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

### **Is Predestination Right?**

**Main idea:** God is both righteous and merciful and compassionate to save from among sinners who all deserve to be hardened.

**Introduction:** Our need for God to be righteous.

#### **1. The wickedness of calling predestination unfair**

- a. The testimony of the wicked
- b. The testimony of God
- c. The wrath that we all deserve. (the amazing thing is that justice and mercy can kiss! cf. 3:24–26)

#### **2. The One Who makes the difference: “God Who shows mercy”**

- a. Not of him who wills—as if we could decide who gets saved.
- b. Not of him who runs—as if we could save ourselves.
- c. But, praise be to God, the only One Whose will is determinative, and Whose power is able... He is also merciful! (in our flesh, you or I would have had no mercy!)

#### **3. The One Who rightly hardens**

- a. It’s not wrong for God to show His power, His Name, even His wrath (cf. v22).
- b. It’s not wrong for God to harden: to give the wicked over to himself is justice.
- c. But mercy has the priority in the character of God and the plan of God.

**Conclusion:** Is there unrighteousness with God? No! There is mercy! Each of us must now this with respect to ourselves and marvel at the wideness of His mercy.

(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](http://hopewellarp.org))

Romans 9, verse 14, through 18. These are God's words. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with god? Certainly not. For he says to Moses, i will have mercy. On

whomever, i will have mercy. And i will have compassion. On whomever. I will have compassion. So then it is not of him who else or of him who runs.

But of god, Who shows mercy? For the scripture says to pharaoh. For this very purpose, i have raised you up. That i may show my power in you. And that my name may be declared and all the earth. Therefore, he has mercy. On him, he wills. And whom he wills.

He hardens.

And then, the sends this reading of Gods inspired. And And earned twerked.

There is a dreadful thing, children. That i have. Sometimes heard. And sadly. When i was a child many times heard, From my own lips. And that is a child. Declaring, and Really screaming. How often? It's not fair. Dad, or mom have Decided something that was in wisdom and love and Often at some cost to themselves because of how much they love to to delight their dear son or daughter and knowing that the sun or daughter would not take pleasure in the decision.

Yet, it was so important, so good for the child. That, that decision be made that the parent has made the decision. And the child says it's not fair. Oh, we know of course that The parent. In most cases. Has a much better idea of what's right and wrong and what is fair.

And in fact, not only was it fair, it was merciful. It was loving, it was good, it was done because it was right. There's no injustice at all. And yet, in the Analogy between children and parents and men and god, there is an infinite. How much more? To the comparison.

And so, when we hear about god, purposing, According to election. That he determines. That he is going to take those. Who are as hell deserving as esau. And he is going to buy his spirit, so call them from the heart that he changes their very nature. Changing a jacob who has just like, esau into an Israel.

From the heel grabber, to the one who knows that it is god, who must wrestle. And, Sinful men. Here, that God, simply because he had decided. Savingly to love and adopt. Has purposed to call. And they say, It's not fair. And how dreadful it would be if they were right.

Because if it was unfair, Or as the Text puts it if there was unrighteousness with god, Then, it wouldn't just be esos. Who in Paris? We all. With perish, we depend entirely upon the righteousness of god. If we are going to be saved at all. Isn't that the theme of the whole letter?

That paul who is hoping to help the Roman church even before he arrives To use the gospel to unite june and Gentile together in this vision of the grace of god, and salvation and responds to the grace of god in salvation, even in their local church, that they would then respond to this vision of the grace of god in salvation.

By helping paul send the gospel further. And so he's writing this letter for that reason. And what does the letter center on of course at centers on the gospel? He says, he's not ashamed of it because it's the power of god for salvation for in it. The righteousness of god.

Is revealed. The righteousness of god. That is for us, sinners through faith, first for the june. And then for the gentile, And so now, he has Opened up the righteousness of god for sinners. And what? How does the flesh respond to that? It's not fair. It's not righteous. And so, The apostle is answering that charge first, and that's The first thing that, That we will see tonight in this passage.

The wickedness of calling. Predestination and election. Unfair. And then in the second place. We'll see. The one who makes the difference. Was god? Who shows mercy? That. Yes, God is righteous but This difference that he makes between the two is one in which mercy, Makes the difference. He's righteous in both cases.

And what he does with the one and what he does with the other, he's righteous. And yet the difference is made by god who shows mercy? Because in the last place as we see in the last two verses, He does rightly harden. And yet, he emphasizes. His mercy. So first, then the wickedness of calling predestination unfair.

The apostle. Asks what shall we say? Then is there unrighteousness with god and he's dealing with a statement that is similar to other statements. We have We have heard him address. These are things that Uh, evidently the apostle had heard in response to preaching the gospel you remember in.

Chapter 3, he even said that others had said that when he preaches and when others preached the gospel breach, they are basically saying let us do evil that good may come And you remember when he referred to those who said that, he said their condemnation is just And then after he had opened up, To, to some extent, the grace of god, and that god's salvation, and god's forgiveness and man's righteousness before god?

Ever since the fall has been by grace alone, through faith alone in christ alone. And you remember in chapter 4, he had marshalled the The evidence or the examples of abraham and david, and in chapter 5, he Begins to show some of the difference that this grace makes. That god's grace makes a whole new race of people.

Not like the first Adam. Who refused to delight in god. But like the last atom, the lord jesus. Who rejoice in the hope of the glory of god. And to rejoice. Then in the tribulation that is going to get them to the glory of god. And then, in the last rejoicing there, in the first half of Romans 5, Who rejoice even in god himself.

Which of course, is what? Adam had failed to do and what christ as we've been hearing in matthew. Succeeded in doing in our behalf. And there is that to which we are being conformed. And then after hearing all of that, How does chapter 6 open it opens. By taking this idea that we're sin, has abounded now grace of super abounded and said Well, shall we sin then?

So that grace may abound? And he says, certainly not. You remember what we said there, that's the way the flesh would respond to the gospel. That's not the way the one to whom to whose mind, the holy spirit has given light to understand and to his heart, the holy spirit has given life to respond, and they hear about this grace, it don't say well, Let us sin.

So that grace may abound or the grace. May increase. And that's what he's doing here. He when he says certainly not there or Some translations say, god forbid. Literally, May it not be begotten, may it not be conceived. Let it not have it, the beginning of its existence. And that same phrase is here again, certainly not.

You see what he's saying is? If you say there's unrighteousness with god, That doesn't say anything about god. This has everything about you.

That's helpful for us. Because, Probably each of us in the imperfection of our devotion to god. And love for his glory and the imperfection of our horror at sin, We have this idea. It's not fair. There's unrighteousness with god. And we can immediately distinguish then. Can't we? Where that thought is coming from.

In our heart. This is one of the great parts of the christian life. As we've been hearing and chapter 7 and especially in chapter 8, we are no longer in sin, we are in christ, we are In christ and his spirit dwells in us, but there's something else that continues to dwell in us.

Even though we are not in our sin, we've come out of ourselves, we've come out of our sin by faith. We've come into jesus christ, in whom, there is righteousness, and peace with god. Yet the, we are not in our sin, our sin is still, in us, on a big part of the christian life.

Then is identifying, when, when thoughts come out of our hearts, is that coming out of my flesh? Or is that coming out of the new life that the spirit has formed in me from christ? Now compassion, for those Who are perishing that comes from christ. That's how the apostle started here.

But the idea that's not fair. Doesn't the apostle here. Help us to see. That comes from the flesh. That's a wicked response. To predestination. And election. Because they're true and realities about god himself. We must be careful. That we not speak. As if there's unrighteousness with god, notice that the apostle When he's countering this.

Does not. Uh, reason first from logic.

Excuse me again. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness of god certainly not for. He says, That's gonna settle the, the question, isn't it? That's going to settle the argument. He doesn't immediately go into As he's just done. Explaining, you know, holding out the point from the book of malachi that god held out to israel.

That there is bad as he's saw and yet he's still going to renew them and send the the The son of righteousness to rise upon them. And when the son of righteousness is coming, he's actually going to regenerate. He's going to turn hearts.

But he doesn't immediately go to the logic that we're going to see in verse 16 and verse 17. He first. Appeals to god. If you want to know the truth about god, You don't get there. By reasoning. According to the mind of, man. You just accept god's testimony. Um, there's Another place.

Where people reason back and forth with their evidence and with their logic, The creation. Never mind that god does something to the entire creation upon man's fall. That makes it absolutely impossible to reason backwards or to To collect samples of evidence, but you just don't have A uniform conditions in which you can make judgments.

But if you want to know about the creation, it makes sense to accept the testimony of the one who is there that the creation. Well, isn't there how much more argument? When you move from talking about the creation to talking about god himself, So, we not accept his witness and Isn't that a wonderful way of protecting us?

From all our ignorance, and all our partiality. And all our foolishness. And all our remaining sin. When trying to think about god. We should think about him in the way that he speaks. About himself. And so, he quotes gardening, he quotes god speaking to Moses. And as a perfect place in, which he was speaking to most, he was speaking to Moses in the wake of the golden calf.

Actually, giving Moses, the reason that israel is not about to be obliterated I mean, instrumentally speaking god had made Moses immediator And Moses recognizing the the role that god had given him had pleaded and God had responded to his prayers. But god is not a man. That he changes his mind.

Or that God is not a man that he said, lie or a son of man that he should change his mind. God is the one who had ordained. To put Moses there in the place of mediator so that you might respond to Moses's pleading in prayer and decide. Not to destroy israel.

After all And his explanation to Moses. Moses says. Show me your glory. This is that conversation that's being quoted here? And the lord says all, Oh, proclaim my name to you. For, i will have mercy upon whom i have mercy and i will have compassion. Upon whom i will have.

Compassion. Because he got loves to proclaim his name. Especially in mercy. That's the connection between the quote from Exodus 33 which is a name proclaiming passage. And the secondary proclaiming of his name in verse 17. Which was addressed to Pharaoh here. The testimony of god. It's not unrighteousness of.

God, but that is mercy. From God. Election is mercy, predestination. It's mercy. Against the wrath that we all deserve. Then in fact, the genius of the gospel. Is that justice and mercy kiss? In jesus christ. Has crossed. Because all had sinned and fallen short of the glory of god.

All had pushed down upon the right upon the glory of god. And it was against this unrighteousness of men, that the wrath of god had been revealed And yet, when he saves them by grace, Through faith in jesus christ. He displays his righteousness. Not only in jesus himself. But in his, His plan.

His way his method for being both, just and the justifier of the one who has faith in jesus christ. And so it is entirely wicked. To call predestination or election. Unfair. Because it is the mercy of god that is displayed in these things. This is why he's the one who makes the difference in the passage from last week.

He described himself as the one who made the difference as God, who calls? Not of works. But of him who calls. Well, here he describes himself again as the one who makes the difference and the not of works now is is exchanged for not of him who wills nor of him who runs But, Of god, who shows mercy.

And so him who calls god who calls from verse 11 is now in verse 16 god who shows mercy You see the difference in someone else, coming to faith is not of him who wanted him to come to faith and told the gospel to him and prayed for him to come to faith.

To use the example of parents with children as we had, you know, jacob and esau last week with their parents, It's not the parents. Who makes a difference in their child. Between saved and unsaved. That's a parent wills for that. Child to be saved. Oh, we long for our children to be safe.

And hoping in god, and knowing the means that he has appointed. We default ourselves to the use of god's means and to training our children to attend upon. Those means, and we cry out to god, which itself is one of the means, But it's not of him, who else?

Neither, is it of him who runs. It's not of the one who comes to faith in jesus christ. The the one who performs the action, Of choosing. Which itself is? In terms of saving faith. Really wrong way of speaking, isn't it? Because it's a yielding, it's a giving up.

Whole hope and self will hope in anything we could do. Resting entirely only an entirely upon what jesus has done. But it's not even if of him who runs to jesus, The one who has brought to faith is not the one who makes the difference. In his coming to faith.

Well, to bring it back to the parents and children and the children get converted. The child did not make the difference in himself for herself. Did she did he Or did she? No, it's not of him. Who wills? It's not of him who runs. It's of god. It's of god who shows mercy.

You know, his will is the only one that could be determinative. His power, his ability. Is the only one that could be determinative determinative and praise god. He is also Merciful. You know, in our flesh you and i would not have saved any.

Supposing and we know that god is simple and this is a hypothetical impossibility. But supposing that you or i could have had an infinite glory. Which had been despised. By dirt creatures to whom we had given breath whom we had created for the purpose. Of knowing us and praising us and giving thanks to us.

And they had responded by despising us. And hating us. We wouldn't have showed mercy to any of them. He said the one who says it's not fair or there's unrighteousness with god. One of the things they're implying, isn't it? More people would have been saved, if i was got No.

No one would have been saved. Statement that comes from your flesh like that. If it was possible. For someone fleshly. To have an infinitely offended glory. You would not have from any mercy to anyone. Don't delude yourself. But this god, He his son mercy. And that is what makes the difference.

It is not of him who runs. Sorry is not of him who wills. Nor have him, who runs. But of god, who shows, mercy You see every single one, That got Determines to save. It was an infinite miracle. Of mercy. Remember, the scripture tells us that He didn't save, he didn't give help to any of the angels, who fell.

But only those who are the children of abraham by faith. Realize every believer is infinitely times as many People. By himself. Sinful people who were redeemed. As opposed to sinful angels, And every another believer and another believer, and another believer, until there's an innumerable multitude of these infinities of mercy.

Now, the one who makes the difference is god. Who shows mercy? And we see the greatness of the difference he makes because he is right to harden. And that's what we see in the last place. You know, it's not wrong for gods to show his power and his name.

Verse 17 for the scripture says, to pharaoh for this very purpose, i have raised you up. That i may show my power in you and that my name may be declared in all the earth. Those are right things. That god's power might be shown. And that his name would be declared.

And pharaoh. Did not. To become wicked. Because god made him, wicked. Now, notice the language that's used here in verse 18. He has mercy on whom he wills, and whom he wills. He Hardens. Thickens. Solidifies. God did with pharaoh, what he righteously does in his wrath against all unrighteousness.

According to chapter 1, He gave him up. He removed restraints. Of common grace. So that Pharaoh was hardened in what he was in himself. Apart from the common mercy, that was restraining, his sin. Indeed, we often and i hope you often. I often I hope we often all together.

Pray that god would not give us over to our sin. That he would restrain it that he would expose it that he would show us when there are unclean things in our heart that he would grant unto us repentance. That because our hearts are deceitful above all things. He who knows our hearts

would show them to us and because our hearts are desperately wicked unfixable, he who is stronger than our hearts would enable us by his spirit to mortify sin.

It's the judgment of god that gives someone over to their sin. And not only gives them over to it, but In such a way that they think what they are doing is right. They not only do such things. But approve of those who do at the end of chapter 1, And then they say just touch things as It's not fair.

Or there's unrighteousness with god.

It is not wrong for god to harden them. If he wills to harden, it is right. We're going to hear. When we get to, Verse 22. Lord willing a couple weeks time. What if god wanting to show his wrath and make his power known? It's not wrong. For him to want to show his wrath.

That is. That is an expression or an application of one of his perfections. His holiness. The intensity of his devotion. To himself. Excuse me. But you know, rough is always going to have to be secondary, just like it is in verses 22 and 23. Where he endures with patients vessels prepared for rat.

So that he may show the riches of his glory. And the vessels that are prepared for mercy. And if you think about it, This has to be the way that it is. Because although wrath is a right expression or application of god's holiness wrath is not essential To who God is.

Because god is eternal. In and of himself, there is no such thing as wrath. Apart, from the creature, there is no such thing as wrath. It is inappropriate to say, god is wrath. But it is right to say. God is love. Because in the triune god father, son, and holy spirit.

In the intensity of his holiness that is his perfect commitment to himself. There is infinite adoration, and love devotion, and delight among the persons of the godhead and it is out of this. That the god who knows in himself for new those who he would bring into his love into his joy.

That they might be heirs that they might be adopted. And have the portion, which is To have god himself as their portion, their blessedness their joy forever.

And it is an expression of the same perfection, isn't it then? That he shows, mercy upon whom He says, mercy and compassion upon whom he shows compassion. Fulfilling that. Will that came out of his devotion to himself.

Is there unrighteousness with god? No. Each one of us should know ourselves. Like unto esau. And jacob apart from grace. Who deserves the hatred of god. For our sending against him and despising, His glory. Each of us should know ourselves like unto Pharaoh. That, if grace. Let us be entirely what we were.

Not grace that, if god let us be entirely what we were? We would be hardened. Apart from your grace. Oh god, i would have hated you I did hate you. It's not. Hypothetical isn't But each of us, Who have come to know his mercy. Should be amazed at the god who has shown such mercy.

And our amazement and wonder and marveling at who he is in himself. And how he has decided been pleased to express that and showing mercy even to us who deserved his hatred and to deserve his wrath. Oh, we will bless his name for that forever. And his election being part of that, we will bless his name for election forever.

And his purpose or predestination being a part of that. We will bless his name for that purpose forever. Is there unrighteousness with god? Certainly not.