Sermon Text: Romans 9:1-5 Anguish Over Apostasy

In Christ you can tell the painful truth about apostasy.

1) **Truth-telling with an approved conscience (9:1)**
   a) Four Qualifications:
      i) "speaking the truth in Christ"
      ii) "not lying"
      iii) "my conscience bears me witness"
      iv) "in the Holy Spirit"
   b) **Application**: When you speak the truth to sinners your motives will be suspect. You should suspect your motives. Seek approval not only from your own judgement and that of like-minded people, but also from God.
2) **Truth-telling with compassion (9:2)**
   a) Two Attitudes:
      i) "great sorrow"—sadness for someone's state
      ii) "unceasing anguish"—anxiety and distress over a loved one (cf. Luke 2:48, Mary's anxiety over Jesus)
   b) **Application**: Godly sorrow and godly joy are complementary, not contradictory. Inner pain can stimulate prayer and truth-telling.
3) **Truth-telling with strong desire for reconciliation to Christ (9:3)**
   a) A Profound Prayer:
      i) "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"
         (1) Paul distinguishes his Christian brothers from his Jewish brothers by qualifying "brothers" with "my kinsmen according to the flesh," indicating a genealogical, but not a religious kinship with them.
         (2) Some interpret as "almost wish"
         (3) Others interpret as sincere prayer
         (4) The word translated "wish" is usually translated "pray" and is not in any conditional mood, but in the indicative mood as a statement of fact.
      ii) Like Moses (Exod. 32:32-33), Paul prayed for God to cut him off instead of Israel. But this prayer was denied. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (8:35-39). But this prayer illustrates Paul's deep desire for Israelites to be reconciled to God.
   b) **Application**: Does your truth-telling arise from a desire to see people reconciled to God?
4) **Truth-telling with a God-centered goal (9:4-5)**
   a) Apostasy spurns God and His gifts:
      i) Israelites—God's naming
      ii) Adoption—recalls Exodus
      iii) Glory—Glory dwelling in pillar of cloud and fire
      iv) Covenants—articles to define relationship to God
      v) Giving of the Law—God's wisdom for life
      vi) Worship—Access through atonement
      vii) Promises—Eternal hope
      viii) Patriarchs—Heritage of grace and faith
      ix) Christ—perfect Man, supreme and blessed God
   b) **Application**: Does your truth telling arise from a chief desire to see God praised?

Doxology: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.—Psalm 96:11-13