

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational: 9:1-11:36** (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

In our study of Romans, we now come to Romans 9-11 which is a most interesting part of the book. Some see it strictly as a parenthetical section dealing with the sovereignty of God and place of Israel in relation to the Church. It is that, but it is more than this – as there is a logical connection with what Paul has shared up to this point in the letter as well. In other words, it is not just a section completely out of joint with the rest of the letter, rather it fits in context where it is and has a significant purpose.

Here is the connection. Paul in Romans 8 has just at great length belabored the point that for God’s people in Christ His sovereign **PURPOSE** for them is being worked out and there is absolute SECURITY in this reality.

So, the question is then raised: But what about Israel? God also has a sovereign **PURPOSE** for them but they seem to have gone off the rails. What has happened to Israel? Has God failed in relationship to Israel? There is absolute security regarding God’s purpose for those in Christ but what about for those in Israel? In Romans 9-11 Paul deals with three interrelated issues.

Slide # 2

Romans 9-11

Paul's attitude of LOVE for Israel.
 God's sovereign plan.
 God's faithfulness.

Romans 9-11 forever settles the question – is God forever done with Israel? The answer is an emphatic “NO”! We need to understand what God is doing at the present time in relation to Israel. We need to understand why Israel is where they are at and where they are ultimately going and how this intersects with the reality of the Church Truth.

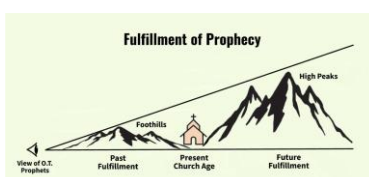
If you get Romans 9-11 right you will understand the whole Bible more properly in terms of rightly dividing the Word. And really what I mean by this is that dispensationalists are those who rightly divide the word in that they make the proper distinctions between Israel and the Church. At core this defines dispensationalism. We understand that God's program for Israel is distinct from His program for the Church. If you get that right it will greatly help you in a multitude of ways when it comes to theology.

Slide # 3

"You get your eschatology right when you get Israel right. You get Israel right when you get the Old Testament covenant and promises with Israel right. You get the Old Testament covenants and promises right when you get the interpretation of Scripture right. You get the interpretation of Scripture right when you're faithful to valid rules of interpretation." – **John MacArthur**

So many Christians don't get Romans 9-11 right, they don't get Israel right, and therefore they don't get large sections of the Bible right. If you don't rightly divide Israel from the Church, you will have all kinds of theological error. And a great majority of professing Christians are in this camp!

Slide # 4



The Church is a BRAND NEW thing not seen in the OT (cf. Eph. 2-3). Now with the advent of the Church, people are often confused. What does this mean for Israel? How does the Church Age intersect with God's plan for Israel? Does God still have a plan for Israel? Romans 9-11 answers these kinds of questions.

The short answer is that God has temporarily set Israel aside and is building a forever Church family consisting of both Jew and Gentile on an equal spiritual footing. When the Church is completed, God will rapture her out of the world and then complete His program for Israel. Right now, we are at the end of the Church Age, waiting for our Lord to come from heaven and take us out of the world. "Perhaps Today!"

Slide # 5

Rom. 9 – Israel's PAST Election
 Rom. 10 – Israel's PRESENT Rejection
 Rom. 11 – Israel's FUTURE Restoration

Rom. 9 – God's Sovereignty
 Rom. 10 – Human Responsibility
 Rom. 11 – God's Ways Past Finding Out

We should keep in mind as we work our way through this section that the major SUBJECT is the nation of Israel as a whole.

Sometimes, theologians get tunnel vision and fail to see the big picture as presented in God's whole counsel. If you get bogged down exclusively in Romans 9, you may emphasize God's sovereignty to the exclusion of human responsibility.

"Like a tiger [it -Romans 9]...consumed me and I lived in the belly of that tiger. It has captured me. And when I finished my studies, I was so bound by this chapter, I took seven years to write a book on it" -**Dr John Piper**; "I Will Be Gracious to Whom I Will Be Gracious"

John Piper is so Hyper Calvinistic that he calls himself a 7-point Calvinist – whatever all that even means. If all you do is live in the belly of the tiger called Romans 9 it may well consume you.

Slide # 6

Any man may get himself into a terrible labyrinth who thinks continually of the sovereignty of God alone, and he may equally get into deeps that are likely to drown him if he meditates only on the free will of man. – **Charles Spurgeon** – TREASURY OF THE N.T., Vol. I, pp. 340-342

Yes, by all means study deeply Romans 9 (which we hope to do) but don't read it in isolation. If you read on to Romans 10 you will see the place of human response and human responsibility. There is balance and tension here that ultimately, we cannot completely figure out (cf. Deut. 29:29; Isa. 55:8-9; Ps. 139:6; Rom 11:33).

Slide # 7

As to the scope of the passage [in Romans 9], it will become obvious that it is all about God's dealings with men and nations historically and dispensationally, and is not about individual salvation and destiny beyond the grave. – **J. Sidlow Baxter**, Explore the Book, Vol. VI. pp. 88-89

My view is that Romans 9-11 does at certain points intersect with personal salvation, but the BIG IDEA is Israel and God's sovereign dealings with Israel. This section both begins and ends with this emphasis.

Slide # 8

Romans "S" Outline

Salutation – ch. 1a

Sin – chs. 1b – 3a

Saved by Faith Alone – chs 3b-4

Solidarity (Adam/Christ) – ch. 5

Sanctification – ch. 6

Struggle with indwelling sin – ch. 7

Spirit/Security – ch. 8

[Sovereign Plan of God] chs. 9-11

Service – chs. 12-15

Sign Out – ch. 16

You may have had an experience where you were enjoying a nice sunny day and then suddenly the sky turned black and dark clouds moved in. The switch from Romans 8 to Romans 9 is like that. The end of Romans 8 presents the heights of joy – it’s all sunshine; but then suddenly comes the dark gloom of Romans 9 comes upon you. And that is where we go now.

Romans 9:1–5 (NKJV)

1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

How many ways can you emphasize that you are telling the truth? How strong can you make it? Well, Paul here in a five-fold manner belabors the point that he is telling the truth. He states it emphatically!

First, he begins by affirming that what he has to say about his love for Israel is ***the truth***. Secondly, he first qualifies his truth telling as being “***the truth in Christ***”. “In Christ” would seem to have the idea “***in the presence of Christ***” with the sense being that he is vitally aware that if he is not telling the truth, it would be just like knowingly telling a bold face lie right in the very presence of Christ.

Thirdly Paul says, “I am not lying”. Paul not only states it positively, but also negatively. When a strong emphasis is being made Paul will often state the assertion both ways – both positively as well as negatively (cf. 2 Cor. 11:31; Gal. 1:20; 1 Tim. 2:7).

Fourthly, Paul says, “my conscience also bearing me witness”. Paul refers to the conscience as an inward moral monitor.

Now a conscience can be skewed but Paul buttresses what he says about the conscience by saying, “***in the Holy Spirit***”. This qualifier is the fifth point of emphasis – all given in the space of one short verse.

In Romans 8:16 Paul spoke of the witness of the Spirit with our spirit. Paul here in Romans 9:1 in effect says the moral awareness of his conscience is in tune with the Spirit on this.

The conscience is a reliable moral guide only when we are walking in the Spirit – when we are controlled by the Spirit – which Paul says is the case for him as he affirms in a 5-fold manner that he is telling the truth.

Paul is speaking but note that Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the conscience of Paul are all involved.

And what Paul so strongly affirms is this:

2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

Paul has great sorrow and continual grief in his heart. The heart in Scripture often stands for the inner core of a person – his whole inner life.

Slide # 9

We need to look beyond Paul's grief and see the Lord Himself weeping and grieving and sorrowing over His chosen people Israel (just as Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, is a picture to us of the grieved heart of YHWH Himself). – **George Zeller**

3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

Here is one of the more shocking statements in Scripture. Are you willing to give up your salvation for anything or anyone? Seriously?

For many years I've had on my prayer list that God would give me a deeper burden for the lost. I pray often for lost people to come to salvation. I try to preach the gospel faithfully. But I don't understand how anyone could say what Paul says here. You hear about people giving up a kidney for someone who needs a donor, which is a noble sacrifice. *But giving up your eternal salvation!* To be honest, I'm just not there! So I've got a lot of room to grow! Maybe you do, too.

- **Pastor Steven Cole**

If I am honest, I am with pastor Cole on this.

Note that everyone agrees that Paul's language is hypothetical. He says, "***I could wish***" realizing that he can't really do this. Paul has just stated in Romans 8 in the strongest of terms that nothing can separate the true believer from the love of Christ. He is not contradicting that reality here. But he is stating in the strongest of terms that if he could, he would be willing to be accursed from Christ for his fellow Israelites who are his physical brethren (cf. Acts 2:29; 3:17; 22:1; 28:17).

"***Accursed***" is the Greek word "anathema". It means "to be cut off" – "to be devoted to destruction" "to be damned" (cf. 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9).

What Paul is really saying is that he was willing to be damned if thereby Israel might be saved.

This is actually descriptive of a LOVE far beyond any natural human kind of love. Moses also had this kind of love for the people as seen in the book of Exodus.

Slide # 10

Exodus 32:30 (NKJV)

30 Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; **perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.**”

Exodus 32:32 (NKJV)

32 Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, **blot me out of Your book which You have written.**”

However, neither Moses nor Paul could actually experience divine judgment on behalf of others since they themselves were also sinners. Only Jesus the sinless/spotless Lamb of God was qualified to represent others as their substitute and pay for their sin (cf. 1 Pet. 1:19).

What Paul wished he could do, is what Christ actually did do!

Christ left the glory of heaven and came to earth as man – as the God-Man. He came to give His life for us and that involved taking the hell we deserve. He was made a curse for us.

Slide # 11

Galatians 3:13 (NKJV)

13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, **having become a curse for us** (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),

Christ experienced “hell” for us on the cross as He was separated from the Father in a way we will never fathom.

Slide # 12

Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**

Christ in His sacrifice on the cross was made to be an offering for sin.

Slide # 13

Isaiah 53:10 (NKJV)

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When **You make His soul an offering for sin**, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

So, Christ was actually cut off and experienced being accursed from God for us so that we might be forgiven. He actually gave His life in our place – taking the curse that we deserve (cf. Dan. 9:26).

It is convicting to read of the DEEP Christ-like love Paul had for his people. How much do I care about the lost? There is an old saying that says, ***“Lost people won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”*** This is a haunting question: How much do I care? The following is a real letter that an Atheist once sent to Ray Comfort.

If you’re right, as you say you are, and believe that, then how can you sleep at night? When you speak with me you are speaking with someone who you believe is walking directly into eternal damnation into an endless onslaught of horrendous pain which your ‘loving’ god created, yet you stand by and do nothing.

If you believe one bit that thousands every day were falling into an eternal and unreachable fate, you should be running the streets mad with rage at their blindness. That’s equivalent to standing on a street corner and watching every person that passes you walk blindly directly into the path of a bus and die, yet you stand idly by and do nothing.

Think about it. Imagine the horrors Hell must have in store if the bible is true. You’re just going to allow that to happen and not care about saving anyone but yourself? If you’re right then you’re an uncaring, unemotional and purely selfish [expletive] that has no right to talk about subjects such as love and caring.

Paul in the strongest way said he cared enough to go to hell to save fellow Jews if that were possible. Do we care about the lost?

Paul now lists eight special blessings or privileges that were bestowed upon Israel. Remember that Paul is in effect defending the honor of God and showing that God is not responsible for Israel’s lost condition. And the fact that they as a people have been uniquely blessed beyond measure is all the more reason why Paul feels this sorrow and grief for them so keenly.

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;

Paul here identifies his brethren according to the flesh as being Israelites. Israelites were those who descended from Jacob who was renamed Israel by God.

Slide # 14

Genesis 32:28 (NKJV)

28 And He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, **but Israel**; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

Jacob’s name was now to be called “Israel”. Genesis 32:18 is the first occurrence of ISRAEL in the Bible. The meaning of this name is not altogether clear. The most probable meanings are either “God’s fighter” or “He struggles with God”.

This does not mean that somehow Jacob defeated God. Rather, what is in view is that Jacob struggled with God to have it his way; but upon being humbled, he was still clinging to God for the blessing. This was all-important to him. God honors this capitulation that yet hangs onto Him for His blessing. And in this, he prevailed – by grace.

Earlier in the book Paul had touched on the fact that the Jews had special spiritual advantages.

Slide # 15

Romans 3:1–2 (NKJV)

1 What **advantage** then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?

2 Much in every way! Chiefly because **to them were committed the oracles of God.**

What a special privilege to have had the Word of God entrusted to them. Thus, the Jews became the God appointed “custodians” of God’s Holy Word.

Slide # 16

Psalm 147:19–20 (NKJV)

19 He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel.

20 He has not dealt thus with any nation; And as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise the LORD!

And the Jews took this responsibility of being entrusted with God's Word very seriously. They were remarkably good custodians of accurately copying and transmitting the Word of God.

Let me illustrate this to you to give you just a little appreciation for the Bible you hold in your hands and how accurately it has been preserved.

The Jewish scribes in charge of the Old Testament manuscript copying used a very meticulous system of transcription and had a deep reverence for the text. They had specific rules on the type of ink and the quality and size of parchment sheets. No individual letter could be written down without having looked back at the copy in front of them. The scribe could not write God's name with a newly dipped pen (lest it blotch) and even if the king should address him, while writing God's name, he should take no notice of him. They were so meticulous that they counted all the paragraphs, words and even letters, so they could know by counting, if they had done it perfectly. They knew the middle letter of each book so they could count back and see if they had missed anything.

How did they do?

Prior to 1947 the oldest Bible manuscripts we had were dated about 1000 A.D. But then in 1947 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in caves by an Arabian shepherd boy. These well-preserved Hebrew text fragments date back to 100 B.C.

They include many Bible portions, including some complete books. Their value to the credibility of our Bible is amazing in that there is virtual agreement between these Hebrew texts and the ones dated 1,100 years later! This proves how accurately the scribes copied for all those years. For example, the book Isaiah was discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in all those interim 1100 years of copying, the text of Isaiah remained virtually identical. Incredible!

No other piece of literature of antiquity is even close to having this kind of integrity.

Today Christ has deposited His truth into the care of His Church. In effect, the Church has been handed the baton of God's truth.

Slide # 17

1 Timothy 3:15 (NKJV)

15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar [support] and ground [foundation] of the truth.**

The NT was channeled to us through the apostles who were all Jewish. Yes, Luke may have been Gentile, but he was the close associate of Paul and so all the Word of God was really relayed to us through the Jews in one fashion or another (cf. Jn. 16:13; 17:20). The Bible is essentially a "Jewish" book in terms of the human instruments that God used to give it to the world. We owe them a great debt of gratitude in this regard.

In addition to God giving Israel His Word, Paul now mentions 8 other special blessings or benefits bestowed upon them.

First of all, he says, "to whom pertain the adoption". Adoption denotes a special relationship with the privilege of "sonship". It is the idea of belonging, of being in a unique privileged relationship with God. In God's show down with Pharaoh God warned him that Israel was His "son" (cf. Hos. 11:1; Mal. 1:6).

Slide # 18

Exodus 4:22–23 (NKJV)

22 Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "**Israel is My son,** My firstborn.

23 So I say to you, let **My son** go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn." ' "

Note that in view is "national adoption" which is not to be confused with individual adoption (cf. Rom. 8:15, 23). All the way through here the issue is largely on national Israel and the privileges they generally had as a nation (cf. Deut. 7:6; Amos 3:2; Isa. 66:22).

Next Paul mentions "***the glory***". Israel literally saw the glory of the LORD up close and personal – firsthand. The glory refers to the visible manifestation of God's presence.

This is often referred to by the Jews as the “**Shekinah Glory**”. Shekinah means “**to dwell**”. It denoted the special glorious dwelling of God in the sight of His people.

Slide # 19

Exodus 16:10 (NKJV)

10 Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, **the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.**

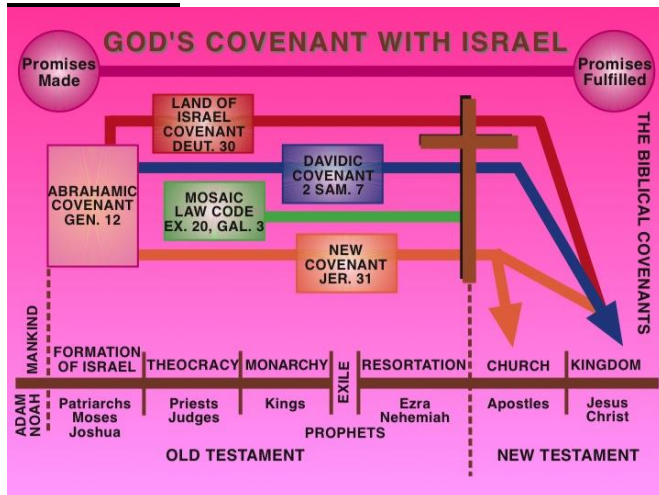
Exodus 40:38 (NKJV)

38 For the **cloud of the LORD** was above the tabernacle by day, and **fire was over it by night,** in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

Thus, the Jews uniquely experienced the glory presence of the LORD as no other people ever did.

And God gave them the covenants. Prior to the time of Israel there was the Noahic Covenant in which God made a commitment to the whole world of people generally (cf. Gen. 9:8-17). But after Genesis 12 when God’s nation building program with Israel began – after that all the covenants were made in relation to Israel. We as the Church today tap into the New Covenant, but fundamentally that too relates to Israel as so stated in Jer. 31.

Slide # 20



We could spend a lifetime studying the covenants and what is all involved there, but for now just note that the covenants were all made in relation to Israel.

God relates to people in the form of covenant relationship and Israel was privileged to be the conduit of covenant reality (cf. Eph. 2:12).

Today we as the Church are in a New Covenant relationship with God but this reality was brought about through the Jews. Jesus was a Jew.

“Salvation is of the Jews” (Jn. 4:22).

“The giving of the law” was given ONLY to Israel. The core of the Mosaic Law was the 10 commandments. This reflects the moral law of God. Thus, Israel was privileged to know of God’s awesome holiness as revealed in His holy law.

Slide # 21

Deuteronomy 4:8 (NKJV)

8 And what great nation is there that has such statutes [rules] and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?

Israel was given “***the service of God,***”. The word “**service**” (Gk. *latreia*) literally means “sacred service” and is sometimes translated as “temple service” or simply as “worship”. The idea is that Israel was shown how to acceptably serve God in worship through the priesthood, the sacrificial system, the tabernacle, and the temple. The rest of the world was completely ignorant of the one true God, but Israel was given the true way to approach and worship God.

And to Israel were given ***the promises*** which evidently refers especially to the Messianic and kingdom promises. This includes the multitude of “I will” promises from God in terms of what He will do for them as a people (cf. Isa. 2:1-4; 7:14; 9:6-7; 11:111; 28:16, etc.). He has promised Israel “a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11).

Slide # 22

Exodus 6:7–8 (NKJV)

7 **I will** take you as My people, and **I will** be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

8 And **I will** bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and **I will** give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.’ ”

Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV)

10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. **I will** strengthen you, Yes, **I will** help you, **I will** uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

These MANY promises were made to Israel as a people – not to other nations.

5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

To Israel belonged the fathers – and in particular Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who were the patriarchal fathers of the nation. God entered into what I call “The Mother of all covenants” with Abraham in Genesis 12 (cf. Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-19; 18:18; 22:15-18). The whole of redemptive history flows out of this covenant. This covenant was then reiterated to Isaac (Gen. 26:3-5) and then to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15; 35:9-12; 48:3-4).

God has so identified Himself with these men as to often be called “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” reflecting the reality that He is a God of covenant relationship as made in reference to these three patriarchs (Ex. 3:6, 15).

Slide # 23

Exodus 3:15 (NKJV)

15 Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God of your fathers, **the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.’”

And finally, Paul says of Israel that through the fathers, “according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen”.

Paul saves the BEST for last. Everything builds to this climactic blessing which is centered in Christ. The culmination of the promises given to the patriarchs find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ. In fact, all of the special privileges bestowed upon Israel ultimately have Christ as the catalyst.

The word “Christ” is a Greek word that corresponds to the OT Hebrew word “Messiah”. It literally means “Anointed One”. It is an OT word coming out of the OT. In the OT people called to special service as a priest or a king would be anointed with oil indicating that they were chosen by God to fulfill a special role.

The OT prophecies looked forward to a promised coming One who would be the Messiah – the special chosen One. He would come as a delivering Savior and He would come as a ruling King.

And this coming Messiah/Christ would be a totally unique person in that He would be both Man and God in one person. He would be the GOD-MAN. And this is reflected here in Romans 9:5.

“According to the flesh, Christ came”. This speaks to the reality of His humanity. He was born as a Jew. He was the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1). He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:10; Rev. 5:5).

“According to the flesh” accounts for His humanity, but “over all, the eternally blessed God” accounts for His deity.

In Romans 9:5b we have one of the strongest statements in the Word of God on the deity of Christ. Yet, in recent times this has been challenged and some Bible translations weaken the force of this verse. They do this by saying the end of the verse should simply be taken as a benediction to God the Father instead of being a further description of Christ.

The challenge is that in the Greek there is no punctuation involved.

Slide # 24

Very literal translation of Romans 9:5b

“from whom the Christ – according to the flesh; the [one] being over all God blessed unto the ages, amen.”

Historically, (until recently) it was essentially almost universally understood that the full train of thought here was in reference to Christ noting that He is God, but again some have argued for the end of the verse to be understood as a benediction to God the Father instead of a statement in reference to Christ’s deity (cf. 2 Cor. 11:31 – nuance of “who is”).

Slide # 25

Romans 9:5 (LSB)

5 whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Contrast....

“...Christ who is over all. God be blessed forever!”

There is debate over how to translate and punctuate that verse, because the original Greek did not have punctuation. Some argue that because it is uncharacteristic of Paul directly to call Christ “God,” the last phrase must be a separate benediction referring to God the Father.

But there are solid grammatical, logical, and biblical reasons to accept this as a direct statement of Christ’s deity. It balances the affirmation of His humanity in the preceding phrase. The Greek word order favors it. A joyful doxology seems out of place here and would be an abrupt change of subject. The early Fathers, whose native language was Greek, understood it this way. And, there are other texts where Paul clearly refers to Jesus as God ([Phil. 2:9-11](#); [Eph. 1:20-22](#); [Col. 2:9](#); [2 Thess. 1:12](#); [Titus 1:3-4](#); [2:13](#); **Leon Morris**, *The Epistle to the Romans* [Eerdmans/Apollos], p. 350).

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These lines are not a doxology to God, for that does not fit the train of thought. Rather, the lines show how exalted Christ is, which fits the train of thought perfectly. – ***The Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

Christ “over all” affirms His sovereignty. He is God to whom is be ascribed everlasting praise (cf. Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1; 20:28; Phil. 2:8-11; Titus 2:13). And with that Paul adds his hearty “Amen” meaning “it is true” or “so be it”.

Slide # 27

Eight special Blessings/Privileges

- Adoption
- The glory
- The covenants
- Giving of the law
- Service of God
- The promises
- The fathers
- The Christ

With all their special blessings and advantages what did Israel do? They did not properly appreciate all that God had done for them displayed ultimately in the rejection of Jesus their Messiah!

Now let me ask you – whose fault is this? Can God in any way be blamed? Has He in any way been unfaithful to Israel? Where does the fault lie?

Well, the blame lies with Israel and their lack of faith. The onus is not on God but on Israel. And here is the problem as shown in every chapter – that is chapter 9, chapter 10, and chapter 11.

Slide # 28

Romans 9:31–32 (NKJV)

31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Why? Because **they did not seek it by faith**, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Slide # 29

Romans 10:3–4 (NKJV)

3 For they being **ignorant** of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to **everyone who believes**.

Slide # 30

Romans 11:19–20 (NKJV)

19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

20 Well said. **Because of unbelief** they were broken off, and **you stand by faith**. Do not be haughty, but fear.

The Jewish problem is not God's problem. God has blessed them as a people uniquely above all other people. It's not that God hasn't worked in and for them enough. It's not that God's faithfulness has in any way been jeopardized, rather the entire fault lies with Israel. They themselves are accountable. They have not responded to God's constant overtures – to God's constant reaching out. In Romans 9, 10, and 11 Israel's problem of UNBELIEF is repeatedly shown to be the issue!

Yes, God is sovereign but that doesn't discount human responsibility and accountability. People are responsible to believe the revelation that God has given of Himself which is seen most fully in the Person of His Son.

Slide # 31

John 3:18 (NKJV)

18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, **because he has not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Hebrews 3:7–8 (NKJV)

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "**Today, if you will hear His voice,**

8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

The very last invitation in the Bible puts the onus on human response and human responsibility to respond to the invitation.

Slide # 32

Revelation 22:17 (NKJV)

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "**Come!**" And let him who hears say, "**Come!**" And let him who thirsts **come**. Whoever desires, let him **take** the water of life freely.

In Revelation 3:20 Christ is addressing the apostate church of Laodicea and He says this:

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Robert Thomas says the opening of the door represents "*the climactic decision of a lost person in turning to Christ for salvation. ... This is an opportunity for those who have not yet experienced conversion to Christ to do so and thereby make ready for His return.*"

My dad before he passed away made large puzzles for each one of his grandchildren. I asked him to make this one for me which depicts Revelation 3:20. Do you know what is unique about what is portrayed in this picture? **A. The handle is on the inside!**

The one thing we must do (and even this is by the grace of God) is we must believe. No one can do it for you. Everyone must do their own believing, their own dying, and their own accounting.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!