

Sermon-Based Small Group Study Guide

Sunday, May 12th, 2024

“Choices, Choices”

Romans 9:1-10:4 – Bro. Tim Brigham

Message from Sunday, May 5th

Verse of the Week: Memorize and Meditate on Romans 10:1

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK: Romans 9 challenges us to grapple with the complex issue of God's sovereignty and human responsibility. It explains God's sovereign choice, mercy, wrath, justice, and inclusion of Gentiles in His salvation plan through the examples of Israel and Pharaoh. It also explores the paradox of Israel's unbelief and the role of faith in God's plan. (Microsoft Copilot AI)

Romans 9 is a challenging passage that needs to be wrestled with. In your small group this week, it may be the most honest thing to say, in answer to a difficult question, “I don't know.” If you or your group have a question that you are unable to answer to your satisfaction, please write it down and share it with our staff, and we will do our best to provide resources to help you wrestle with scripture and find truth.

Monday – Introduction – Read Romans 9:1 - 10:4

We exist to connect with God, connect with people, and to connect people to God.

Connect - bring together or into contact so that a real link is established. To join together so as to provide access and communication.

Because nothing can separate us from the love of God, we see that the church should live in a certain way. As we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of our church, we know that there is nothing that our enemy can do to separate us from God's love. We know there is nothing the government can do to separate us from God's love. However, there are things that we can allow to distract us from our purpose. So why does Shiloh exist? What is our purpose?

Take a few minutes and think about; what does it mean to connect? What does it mean to connect with people? What does it mean to connect with God? What does it

mean to connect people with God? What have we allowed to distract us that breaks our connection with people or with God?

Tuesday – Priority of the Church: Worship of God – Read Romans 9:1-5

Worship needs to be a priority in every area of our lives and every day of our lives. We should also make it a priority to gather with God's people to worship God together. There is an importance to corporate worship and personal worship.

Our staff was recently reminded that we should not call our corporate gatherings "services." A worship service implies that we are serving and being served. Instead, it is a worship "gathering." We come together as a family, as a body, to share the fruits of our personal worship with one another, prompting us to deeper worship. Then, once our gathering is over, we "go" to share the Gospel with the lost and meet needs in our communities, out of the overflow of the worship we have experienced.

If you are not worshipping privately, it hinders your corporate worship (and that of your brothers and sisters in Christ). If you are not worshipping corporately, it affects your personal worship and your ability to meet needs and share the Gospel.

How are you worshipping God daily, privately, and corporately?

Recall our recent worship gathering when we felt a spiritual battle was taking place, hindering our technology and our ability to worship together. When we stopped and prayed, recognizing the spiritual warfare that was taking place, God moved in a powerful way to bring us together and deepen our worship in song and through the sermon. How can we seek to maintain that deeper connection with God and with one another?

Wednesday – Priority of the Church: Burden for Others – Read Romans 9:1-5

Recognizing the spiritual darkness around us and working to evangelize the lost should be a priority of the church. Think about the money spent producing tracts, smart phone apps, objects like the Evangicube, books – it must be in the millions of dollars every year. Yet what return are we getting for the investment?

How does it make us feel to hear two thirds of our community may be lost? How does it make us feel that some of us sitting in the sanctuary during our worship gatherings are not part of God's family? Does that move us in any way? The way we respond to this demonstrates our heart and burden for others.

“Despite Christ’s command to evangelize, 60% of all humans have never heard the name of Christ.” (Global Commission Partners, 2008)

Why do you think there is such a disconnect between our worship and our evangelism? How are you doing at sharing your story?

Thursday – Perspective of the Church – Read Romans 9:6-29

Salvation is the work of God from beginning to end. God is Sovereign.

Sovereignty of God - There is absolutely nothing that happens in the universe that is outside of God’s influence and authority.

Understanding the Sovereignty of God is important to understanding the Doctrine of Election. To help us try to understand as best we can we need to see that we humans live in a bubble called time. God lives outside of that bubble and is not limited by time. God is currently in the past and the present and the future all at the same time. Since God is already in the future, He knows how each of us will respond to Him (in faith or reject His authority). This we understand to be the Foreknowledge of God. This doesn’t release mankind from responsibility. God is always at work in the lives of mankind and that working will do one of two things. It will draw mankind to God or drive them from God. We will be held responsible for the way we respond to God’s working in our lives. God’s ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than ours.

Our staff found this outline and wants to share it with you to promote your further study.

The **doctrine of election** is foundational to understanding God’s sovereignty and His redemptive plan. Let’s explore its key points:

1. God’s Sovereign Choice:

- Election refers to God’s deliberate choice to do everything according to His will.
- God acts independently, without external pressure or constraint.
- Just as He created the world precisely as He desired, He also elects individuals for specific purposes.

2. Examples of Election:

- In the Old Testament, God chose Israel as His nation, not because they were better, but because He decided to choose them.

- In the New Testament, believers are “chosen of God” (Colossians 3:12). Jesus Himself said, “You did not choose Me but I chose you” (John 15:16).

3. Salvation and Predestination:

- Acts 13:48 states, “As many as have been appointed to eternal life believed.”
- Ephesians 1:4–6 emphasizes that God chose believers in Christ before the foundation of the world.

4. Assurance and Encouragement:

- Corporate worship reinforces our confidence in God’s sovereign plan.
- We find assurance in being part of God’s chosen community.

5. Spiritual Warfare:

- Worship unites believers against spiritual battles.
- Satan seeks to isolate and discourage; corporate worship disrupts his schemes.

In summary, the doctrine of election underscores God’s sovereignty, His purposeful choice, and our assurance as chosen ones. It’s a reminder that our faith rests in His unchanging love and plan.

For further study, you can explore resources like [Grace to You](http://gty.org)¹. (gty.org)

Friday – Plan of the Church – Read Romans 9:30-10:4

Because God is at work to save mankind, we are to join in that work. How do we do that? What is God’s plan for redeeming fallen man? It is for God’s chosen people, who know that nothing can separate them from God’s love, to:

A) Trust and Obey

To trust the heart of God, the plan of God, and the workings of God, even when it doesn’t match my feelings. I must trust in what God says and what He’s doing, not my feelings or emotions. How do I know that I have trusted Him? I will be found obeying Him.

B) Pray for the Lost and those far from God – and meet their needs as God directs.

If I’m trusting in God and His sovereignty and His working, and I’m obeying, I join Him by praying for those in my sphere of influence. As I pray for them, He

makes me aware of needs and may frequently send me to meet those needs or to serve them in some tangible way as an expression of His love for them.

C) Share the Gospel with everyone we encounter

We pray because it is God who draws them; it is not based on my ability, talents, or resources. But that doesn't leave me without responsibility. I'm called to serve and to share, but if I share without praying, I'm depending on myself, not on God.

As we go further into Romans Chapter 10 we will see more about our responsibility to share the Gospel.

Saturday – Read Romans 9:1-10:4 and review for Small Group.

The purpose of sermon-based small group study is to encourage and equip us to apply what we learn during weekly sermons into our daily lives through discussion. Scripture teaches that we are accountable for our obedience to Biblical teaching, just as our leaders are accountable to teach. Hearing the Word of God taught through the sermon and then applying it makes us mature disciples and examples (witnesses) to others (James 1:22-25).