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“God’s Elect and God’s Grace”

I Prayer

II Overview and Objectives

After our review of Romans 7 & 8 and discussion of **“predestination”** and **“grace,”** we transitioned last week to a major theological part of Paul’s letter to the Romans, chapters 9 & 10. In doing so, we noted that chapters 9, 10, and 11 are really grouped together. They underscore’s Paul’s core theological beliefs on the redemption of Israel, even when Israel rejects God. Consequently, in exploring the concept of “free will,” we also talked about the differences between **“predestination”** and **“predeterminism,”** as they relate to salvation. Now, in again recognizing that chapters 9 through 11 are collectively grouped together, we will briefly review select portions of chapter 10 as we connect it to chapter 11, while also looking at the underlying tone of chapter 12.

At the beginning of chapter 10, Paul writes about salvation for all, if Jew and Gentile alike, simply believe in Jesus (10:1-4). Indeed, in Romans 10:9-10, Paul expressly states that if one believes in their heart and confesses with their mouth, that Jesus is Lord, that individual will be saved. Before this expression, however, Paul testifies from a very personal perspective about the good intentions of the Israelites who reject Jesus, but also notes that they are not yet enlightened (10:2-3). In spite of this, however, the Israelites were *still* God’s “elect.” Someone mentioned, last week, the time-honored expression, “God takes care of babies and fools!” **That’s G.R.A.C.E. (explanation).** This begs the question: “What happens to those who are ignorant?”

This evening, in moving through Romans 11 and 12, our topic for consideration is **“God’s Elect and God’s Grace!”** As we will see, Paul expressly addresses his theology of G.R.A.C.E. by noting that salvation for those who both accept and reject, is NOT a measure of “works.” It’s a measure of G.R.A.C.E. (11:5-6).

Insofar as chapter 11 outlines a theology of redemption, for both Jew and Gentile alike—all because of G.R.A.C.E.—chapter 12 focuses on the gift of a new life that is extended to believers in Christ. Chapter 12 brief and summarily asks the rhetorical question, “How should believers live, once the realize they have the gift of a new life in Jesus?” Paul uses references like “be not conformed to this world” (12:2) along with a formula for living a Christian life (12:9-21).

This evening, as we discuss how not to conform ourselves to this world, recognizing that we all are the beneficiaries of G.R.A.C.E., I ask that we consider a few questions, as they relate to our everyday lives:

III Reflective Matters for Consideration

- Do you believe salvation can be “earned?” In association with your thinking, do you believe you are (already) saved?
- Is there a responsibility that goes along with salvation? Assuming so, how does this responsibility manifest your daily faith walk and actions?
- If you have received “G.R.A.C.E” from God, should you give “grace” to others?

IV Textual Examination (portions of Rom. 11 and 12)

- Chapter 11 begins with Paul continuing his rhetorical defense of the Israelites, wherein he offers a personal testimony in connection with his own Jewish heritage (11:1-2). In following Paul’s example, how would you compare yourself in thinking about your salvation and the things you “used to do?”

“I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

- Rom 11:4-5

- In classic fashion, Paul uses well-known examples from the Hebrew scriptures to support his argument that God will save all and there is always a remnant worthy of G.R.A.C.E. (11:3-6). Are we a part of a modern day remnant? Why or why not?

- Paul expressly addresses differences between the Israelites who accept Jesus and

Israelites who hadn’t (11:7-10) before indicating that, because of the Jew’s rejection, God also extended salvation to the Gentiles—those who obviously were not part of Israel’s original elect (11:11). What does this reveal about God’s love for humanity and desire to be loved by humanity? How does this influence your concept of salvation?

- With Paul again writing about Israel, in light of the gospel and G.R.A.C.E., what do you infer from 11:28-32, as Paul references all people, Jew *and* Gentile, being saved?
- In transitioning, Chapter 12 moves on with a presupposition that *all* people, Jew and Gentile alike, have the capacity to be saved. What do you take Paul to mean then by not “conforming to this world,” but transforming your minds (12:1-2)?

for GOD'S GIFTS and HIS CALL are
IRREVOCABLE
Romans 11:29

- In looking at 12:3-8, how does this influence your perception of God’s people working together in unity, for the glorification of God (one body with many members, e.g., 1 Cor. 12:12-26)? What is it to be in community with others as members of the church (*ekklesia*)?



- Paul closes chapter 12 with some hallmarks—in a formula-like fashion—of being a good Christian (12:9-21). Are these things easy? But what about giving “grace” to others?

V Follow-up Questions?

VI Closing Prayer