

Let God Be God

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bible, if you would, and open it to Romans chapter 9. Romans chapter 9, and I'm excited to get to talk to you about the Word of God today.

I'm glad that we have a church that loves the Bible, loves to study the Bible, and comes with their Bible open and notebooks and looks to learn something. I was talking to a friend this morning.

He made the comment that he was at a church recently that said, Back to the Bible, and since they started that theme, they had read five verses, and two of them were this week. And I hope you realize that Vision, you're not that kind of church.

You get a ton of Bible verses every week. Now, this is one of those passages of Scripture. If I was not preaching through the Bible, next verse, next chapter, we would skip it.

We would go where it is easier. We would go where it is easier for me to understand and easier for me to explain. And I have put a lot of time in studying this because you are worth it, and he is worthy.

[1 : 05] And I want to share with you some great truths. So if you have your Bible open and a place to write things out in tonight's Q&A, that's really a bad day to have it because you're probably going to end up with some Q&A; type stuff for tonight.

And Lord willing, we will discuss those things if you have a question. You might entitle this, Let God Be God. Let God Be God. And I want you to read with me, if you would, starting in Romans chapter 9, verse 6.

And we'll read through the end of the chapter. If you have your ink pen handy, we may do some underlining as we go through. And I fully realize what time you're supposed to get out. So instead of keeping you late, I'm starting early.

And we may swap out something else. So go with me, if you would, from Romans 9, 6. Not as though the word of God had taken none effect, for they are not all Israel which are of Israel.

Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. But in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are the children of God.

[2 : 07] But the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise. At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this, but when Rebekah also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac.

For the children, being yet not born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.

It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?

God forbid. For he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

[3 : 13] Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why didst he yet find fault?

For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endure with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had aforeprepared unto glory?

Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, as he saith also in Hosea, O sea, I will call them my people, which were not my people, and her beloved, which was not beloved.

And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God. Esaias, Isaiah, also cried concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

[4 : 37] For he will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias, Isaiah, said before, Except the Lord of Sabbath hath left us a seed, we had been as Sodom and been made like unto Gomorrah.

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, had not attained to the law of righteousness.

Wherefore, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled not at the stumbling stone. As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone, and a rock of offense, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Father, I pray that you would take the word of God and help it to be clear in our hearts to some degree. Help us learn something today. Most of all, help us know that you are God.

And that you unashamedly claim to be exactly who you are. You're not a God after the makings of our own mind. You're not a God that we would have actually picked or chosen.

[5 : 52] You're not like the God that philosophers might write about. You are the God of the universe. You're the creator God. You're the God who made it all, who judges it all, who is over it all.

All-powerful, all-knowing, all-present God. Now I pray, God, that you'd help your people today to reverence you and to reverence your Bible.

And I tell you today, Lord, that I know that I have not done the study I could have and should have done to make this passage as clear as it could be. But I pray that you'd help your people to see it.

Holy Spirit, I ask you to work. And I pray you'd speak. And I'll give you praise. In Jesus' name, amen. This happens to be one of those passages that I am scared to death to talk to you about.

So you can put on your seatbelt. And some of you will hate me before it's over. And some of you will like me. And some of you will dislike me. But I'm going to try to do my best to say what it says. I decided a long time ago I'd be a Bible preacher.

[6 : 51] And a Bible preacher ought to say what the Bible says. He ought to say what it says, read it, and say what it says. So we're going to read it. We're going to see what it says. We're going to try to make application. So go with me, if you would, first, before we ever really begin.

You can check it out on the screen. 2 Peter 3 and verse 16. Before we read this passage, just let me say it's hard to understand. And Peter, writing about this in 2 Peter 3 and verse 16, said this, As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable rests, as they do also the other scriptures under their own destruction.

So Peter said, Man, when I read Paul, I'm just going to be honest with you. That guy writes some stuff that I find extremely hard to understand. So I just want to say right up front, the guy who was with Jesus for three years and walked with him and heard him talk and was used of God to write some of the Bible, he said, I find some of what he has to say very hard to understand.

And people that don't study and people that don't know any better, they twist these things and they do it to their own destruction. The greatest obstacle to salvation is self-righteousness.

If you think you're already righteous and pleasing God, then you will not see the need of salvation. That's what God's been dealing with in the book of Romans as he deals with the Jewish people.

[8 : 18] He's been making it clear we are sinners. He's been making it clear we are in desperate need of God. That had happened to Jews. That's why Israel was being set aside. Israel's being placed to one side and God's going to begin to use the church.

Most Jews thought they pleased God because they were Jews. They were his people and they kept the law so they felt like they were in good shape. They didn't see why they should need grace.

They didn't see why they should need the gospel of Jesus Christ. They had the law. Now, if you take notes, I'm going to give you ten points. That's way too many. I'm going to give you ten points. You can write them all down.

We'll get there in a little bit. But I believe with all my heart it's best that I take the chapter all together. So let's go with it. Number one, what's the purpose of this passage? What's the purpose of this passage?

This passage is talking about national election, not personal. This is talking about national election, not personal. The emphasis in Romans 9 that we're going to talk about is Israel's past election.

[9 : 19] God chose them to be his people. Romans 10 will talk about their present rejection, how they turned their back on God. And Romans 11 will be how God brings them back into place.

God is speaking of Israel as a nation and his plan with his chosen people. These verses do not try to teach you the origin of wickedness or sin or evil.

They do not try to explain God's justice and God's righteousness and how they work together. How God can be holy and right and God is love and how God can have justice and God can have mercy.

It's not even an attempt to explain that. God did not make man sinful. Rather, man rebelled and rejected God and his plan. Paul has just explained that we are secure in our salvation and nothing can separate us from the love of God.

And that brings a question. If we can't be separated from the love of God, what happened to the Jews? If you remember the end of Romans chapter 8, this is what ends up happening in Romans 8. Nothing could ever separate us from the love of God.

[10 : 25] And in chapter 9, Paul stands up and he says, I really loved Israel and they are the people of God and I'm in a great heaviness and a continual sorrow and I could wish myself a curse for them, but God has placed them over to one side.

And so he's going to explain, he's going to explain something. Did God mess up? Did God mess up? Did God quit on Israel? Because if God could quit on Israel, he could quit on us.

If God quit on Israel, he could quit on us. And maybe we're not as secure. And so the apostle Paul is going to answer, you are secure in your salvation because of what God did. So look if you would at Romans chapter 9 and verse 6.

If you would, Romans chapter 9. And I want you to write this down. Number 2, the believer is secure in Jesus Christ and in his salvation. Verse 6, not as though the word of God had taken none effect, for they are not all Israel, which are Israel.

He said, let's get something straight. Before I finish this chapter, he says, let's get something straight. God didn't mess up. The word of God didn't mess up. The Bible wasn't mistaken. No mistakes in the Old Testament.

[11 : 31] No mistakes in the New Testament. God didn't mess up. That's not what's going on here. The question is asked in essence, how can we be sure of our salvation if the Jews, God's chosen people, have been set aside?

But God's word has not failed. Then how can Israel be set aside while God is building his church? Did God fail to keep his promise to Israel? If he did, then he might fail to keep it to us.

Paul will use the word of God to explain what's happening. He quotes the Old Testament nine times in nine ways, minimum, in 27 verses. I want you to look this way. Just a second. Let me show you something.

Look this way. You know, you've probably been to church all your life where the preacher barely touched the Bible. He read a verse and jumped off and started talking and there was very little Bible. That's the easiest way in the world to preach.

Come up with a good thought. Give a good thought. Give a good idea. Give a good meditation. But don't really dig into hard stuff. The apostle Paul is dealing with something hard. Israel has been set aside. God is dealing with the nation of Israel.

[12 : 29] And when Paul himself, the apostle, a guy God uses to write the Bible, gets ready to explain things nine times, nine times, he's going to go to the Old Testament and say, this is what God already said.

I'm showing you that the Word of God has not failed. He quotes him nine times in 27 verses. Even an apostle writing Scripture quotes Scripture. All of our authority comes from the Word of God.

We must be faithful to what the Word of God says, whether it says what we want it to say or not. He will explain what's happening with Israel and He will show them how they have been confused about their relationship to God.

The Word of God has not failed. God saving the Gentiles and using them in the church has been prophesied many times in the Scripture. Third thing you might write down.

No one goes to heaven because of who their parents are. No one goes to heaven because of who their parents are. Nor does God use you because of who your parents are. No one goes to heaven because of who their parents are and God doesn't use people because of who their parents are.

[13 : 38] Now look this way just a second. What's a Jew thinking? He says, I'm from Abraham and I'm from Isaac and I'm from Jacob and I'm a Jew and God's going to use me.

So look if you would at verse 6 again. Romans 9, 6 He said, Not as though the Word of God had taken none effect because they are not all Israel which are Israel.

Just because you were born an Israelite doesn't mean that you're automatically God's people. Just because your mom and dad were Christians doesn't mean that you're a Christian. And He shows them that. Look at verse 7.

Romans 9, 7 Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. But in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Abraham has eight sons.

Abraham has eight sons. You might not remember that but he has eight sons. Don't forget Ishmael is his oldest son. Don't forget that after Sarah dies he gets married to Keturah and he has six more boys.

[14 : 36] And He says, Just because you were born to Abraham doesn't mean you're the people of God. No one gets to heaven because of who their parents are. Verse 8 Look at Romans 9, 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh these are not the children of God but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

So God said, I have a way I'm going to use people and He said, I'm going to use Abraham to carry the gospel and I'm going to use Isaac to carry the gospel and I'm going to use Jacob to carry the gospel. I'm going to give the blessing to Abraham.

I'm going to give the blessing to Isaac. I'm going to give the blessing to Jacob. It wasn't based on just being a child of Abraham. It was based on who was the promise. Ishmael was what he was able to pull off on his flesh and Keturah is what he did after Sarah died but Isaac was the son of the promise.

Look at verse 9 if you would. Romans chapter 9 and verse 9 Salvation and service are both based on promise not paternity. Promise not paternity.

Verse 9 The Bible says For this is the word of promise At this time will I come and Sarah shall have a son. You might underline in your Bible the word of promise.

[15 : 47] You know what happened is that's the word of God. He's quoting the book of Genesis. He's quoting the Old Testament. He goes back and says Don't you remember God said and we go by what God said. God chooses to use us as he sees fit.

We should just be excited that he would think of us. God use me any way you want anytime you want. My life is yours. My life is not mine. God use me.

I want you to look here just a second. These verses are about how he chose Abraham to be a blessing. He blessed Abraham to be a blessing and the whole world would be blessed. Then Isaac is the one that's chosen out of Abraham to be the one that will carry the blessing.

Then Jacob's chosen out of Isaac to be the one that will carry the blessing. But I want you to realize this. Nobody gets saved and nobody gets used because of what mom and dad want. Nobody gets saved and nobody gets used because of what mom and dad want.

In John chapter 1 the apostle John said the same thing in verse 12. In John 1.12 the Bible says but as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God even to them that believe on his name which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God.

[16 : 57] Look at verse 13. To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God. It's God that gives you the power God that gives you the ability. We're not all God's children.

We're not all God's children. And not everybody born to Abraham was God's promise. And not everybody born Abraham was Israel. Not everybody born in Israel. They were born not of blood.

It's not by mom and dad. Not by the will of the flesh. Not what mom and dad want. Not by the will of a man. No priest can make you but it's God that did the work. Look if you went at Romans chapter 9 and verse 10.

Not only did Abraham have more than one child and God chose to use one but so did Rebekah. Abraham had more than one child and so did Rebekah. In verse 10 and not only this but when Rebekah had conceived by one even by our father Isaac.

You remember Rebekah's going to have two kids. Rebekah's going to have two kids. One will be Isaac one will be Esau and one will be Jacob but God's choosing to use one of them. Go with me if you would to verse 10 and you can write down number 4.

[17 : 58] No one goes to heaven because of merit. No one gets used because of merit. Not based on merit. Just write that down. Our relationship to God is not based on merit or based on what we do or what we deserve.

I'm not saved because of what I deserve. I'm not saved because of my merit. I'm not allowed to be a preacher because of my merit. There's a God who's choosing. Romans chapter 9 and verse 10.

You got your Bible? And not only this but when Rebekah also had conceived by one even by our father Isaac. Rebekah had two sons but God chose one to use. He chose Jacob before they were even born.

It had nothing to do with Jacob what he had done or what he had not done. You see when God chose who he was going to use it wasn't based on what he had done or he hadn't done because he wanted to be clear.

I'm in charge. Look at verse 11. For the children being not yet born neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God to choosing to election might stand not of works but of him that calleth.

[19 : 01] He said you know what Jacob didn't get chosen to be used to God because Jacob was somebody special. Jacob didn't get chose to be used because of what he had done. I chose before they were even out of the womb.

I chose so you understand it's my choosing. Verse 12. Both of the sons weren't good. Who would be used is not based on them but on him.

Verse 12 says it was said unto her the elder shall serve the younger. You could underline it was said unto her. That's another reference back to the Old Testament to Genesis. This is what the Bible says in Genesis.

He said God said I'll choose to use the younger not the elder. Jacob is the loved one the chosen one. That refers not to salvation but to service.

Jacob and his seed are not all going to be saved nor is Esau and all of his seed going to go to hell. Look at what it says in verse 13. Romans 9.13 says as it is written another quote of the Old Testament Jacob have I loved that's Malachi 1.2 and 3 but Esau have I hated.

[20 : 04] He says look at this. He says Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated. Boy that's a hard verse isn't it? But if you want to think about it just a second this is a corporate choosing.

This is God choosing. I know who I'm going to use on the team. Did you ever play baseball or football after school and they did those pick up games and all the kids are sitting around there and the two most popular guys are going to head the two teams up and they get to choose people and you might get the last one and I always hated being the last one chosen.

I at least wanted to be the next to last so I knew I was hated not quite as bad as that last guy and here's what God did. God said Abraham I'm going to use you. Why? Because I'm going to.

And Isaac I'm going to use you. Why? Because I'm going to. And Jacob I'm going to use you. Why? Because I'm going to. God's picking who he's going to use in the ministry. He's not said he loved Jacob and saved him.

He's saying I love Jacob and I'm going to use Jacob in the ministry. He chose Jacob to be the one that would get the blessing and become the priest of the family. That didn't mean everybody born to Jacob would go to heaven and it didn't mean everybody that was born to Esau would go to hell.

[21 : 11] He just didn't choose Esau. He could have chosen him but he didn't. He could have actually chosen Ishmael but he didn't. To regard religious privilege as spiritual reality is the very deadliest delusion.

For me to think that because of who my parents are or what I've done I earned or deserve something would be like the craziest thing I could think. Number five.

God is right no matter what he does. God is right no matter what he does. Now the title of the message is let God be God and I just wanted you to hear something. Romans chapter 9 is a hard chapter and I'm going to explain that just more and more to you because we're all thinking to ourselves well wait a minute why did he choose Jacob and not Esau and why did he choose Abraham and why did he choose Isaac and what about not choosing me and why did he hate the other guy why is God doing this choosing and so the apostle Paul is carrying an argument all the way through and in verse 14 he says so what y'all want to say about that?

Is there any unrighteousness with God? Is God wrong for what God has done? And I want you to look at the two words he uses is God wrong for what God's done? Is there any unrighteousness with God?

God forbid. Don't try to accuse God of fault or failure. God forbid. No, no, no, no. Did God do wrong? No, no, no.

[22 : 30] It should be impossible for us to doubt the character or the heart of God. We should not allow that to be thought of or stated He is God and He is good.

He is God and He is good. The passage Paul uses is one showing that he is having mercy and compassion. Chapter 9, verse 15. He said to Moses, Old Testament again, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion so that it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that shows mercy.

Now there was a story told in the Old Testament when a whole bunch of people in Israel ought to die God didn't kill them all. Only 3,000 will end up dying that day. Moses is kind of like you ought to kill them all God.

God is like, No, I am not going to do that. And Paul says, Well, it is just like he told Moses, God has mercy on whom I will have mercy and compassion on whom I will have compassion. There is no mention, however, of him condemning anyone to hell.

If you go back and study the story this quote is taken from, you will see that all deserve to die. The problem was that God would have mercy and compassion at all on a people that didn't deserve it.

[23 : 43] what God is going to do is not open for discussion. He is God not you. That's really what it's saying here.

Let God be God. There's no mention here of him not showing mercy and compassion. None of us would be saved if it were not for his mercy and his grace. Something inside of us says God's got to be fair.

He's got to look and find out I'm a good guy and I would get saved because I'm a good guy. The truth is you know yourself and if you were honest about yourself you aren't not a good guy. You're a scumbag.

You have sinned against God. You have a willful and enemy heart against God. We'll find out what the Bible says about that in a little bit later. We have done nothing to merit salvation. God is good to even think of saving such an unworthy sinner as me.

I have no misconceptions. I do not believe God lucked out when he got me. I know me and I know that God was very kind of consider me and have compassion on me. Before I give you number six and we keep walking our way through the passage can I just tell you that I don't really think that you think and I know I don't think that God God's like the day God saved me on May the 6th 1962 that God was like finally I found a good one.

[25 : 00] Finally I found a good one. I really don't think that's what happened. I think God looked down and said you know Austin you stink about as bad as Jacob and Jacob stunk just as bad as Esau. You look at old Esau he was a wicked old boy wasn't he so was old Jacob but it was God who showed mercy it was God who showed grace and I don't think God got anything special when he got me.

Go with me if you would to Romans chapter 9 and verse 17 Romans chapter 9 and verse 17 the scripture the scripture saith unto Pharaoh even for this same purpose have I raised thee up scripture says again it's a quote in the Bible that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth therefore hath he mercy on whom he'll have mercy and whom he will he hardens God worked in Pharaoh's life to bring himself honor and glory he wanted his name to be declared in all the world world the exodus was God shaming all the Egyptian gods you see what happened is when the exodus happens there's ten plagues ten gods are destroyed and humiliated and the God of heaven is shown to be the great God he is God was saying tell the world I am a great God tell the world that all the little g gods are false gods but here we have a hard time don't we it says he'll harden whom he'll harden and he'll have mercy on whom he'll have mercy that goes back to exodus chapter 8 and let me just say quickly that Pharaoh hardened his heart first of course

God knew that but the bible gives me both sides of that story in exodus 8 15 Pharaoh hardened his heart in chapter 8 verse 19 Pharaoh hardened his heart in chapter 8 verse 32 Pharaoh hardened his heart in exodus chapter 9 verse 12 God hardened his heart 10 10 20 and 10 27 God so Pharaoh started hard in his heart and God gave Pharaoh exactly what he wants we see both sides of the equation in the story Pharaoh worshipped other gods he didn't want to serve God he felt superior to God God did not need to harden his heart because it was already hardened but he does harden it Pharaoh fitted himself to be a vessel of wrath God did harden his heart he gave Pharaoh exactly what he wanted if Pharaoh wants to mock God avoid God not believe in God then God will give him that exactly our God prepares men for glory but sinners prepare themselves for judgment look at verse 23 if you would

Hebrews 9 23 and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory look at what it says here that he will make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he has prepared so God worked in Pharaoh's life Pharaoh hardened his heart and God hardened Pharaoh's heart and God raised up Pharaoh and God let Pharaoh's objections to him and rebellion against him raise up the whole nation of Egypt to fight against God but God in the end will bring great honor and great glory to him point number seven now comes our biggest objection you write down big objection look at verse 19 ha I know what you're going to say now well if he did all that why does he still find fault look at what he says in verse 19 the Holy Spirit knew exactly what we would say but we got to let God be God the Holy Spirit said thou wilt say then unto me why did he yet find fault for who hath resisted his will

God why could you say anything if you did the hard then you have no right to say anything God has no right to hold us responsible if he made us do bad things they said if God chose then he chose and we didn't we can't do what he won't allow us to do there are several great Bible truths you need to remember see Romans chapter 9 he's trying to show you something God God and he's going to talk about how he's choosing and how he's sovereign and how he's all powerful and how he makes decisions but you got a whole big Bible going together and they don't make sense together you will not understand them I do not understand them but let me give you some truths before we go further we cannot even remotely be accused God of being responsible for sinfulness of his creatures James 1 13 the Bible says let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God for God cannot be tempted with evil and neither tempts he any man but every man when he's drawn away of his own lust so

[29 : 35] I'm hearing that God hardened his heart but I must remember that you can't say God did it God doesn't tempt people it was in his heart back at chapter 1 verse 13 verse 13 thou heart of pure eyes than to behold evil and you can't look on iniquity Matthew 25 41 the hell was prepared for the devil and his angels God didn't even prepare that it didn't like God said in the beginning I'm going to put man in hell I've already decided how many I'm sitting in hell that's not what it says it says then said he unto them on the hand depart from me you cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked Ezekiel 18 32 I have no pleasure in the death of him that dith saith the Lord wherefore turn yourselves and live you in 2 Peter chapter 3 9 the Lord is not slack concerning his promises some men count slackness but it is long suffering to us perish he will not cast out anyone that comes to him

John 6 37 anyone that comes to him if you're here and you're not saved you'll come he'll save you he is a God that delights in mercy Micah chapter 7 verse 18 who is a God like you is there ever a God like you that pardons iniquity and passes by the transgression of his heritage he retains out his anger but delights in mercy he's a God that loves the world for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life John 18 25 you can trust that God will do right the Bible says be far from thee to do after this matter to slay the righteous the wicked that the righteous should be as wicked that be far from thee shall not the judge of all the earth do right you can bet he will the God of heaven always does right now I want you to look this way just a second we understand some things here we understand some things we can't put them together that's the same truth about lots of great truths your

Bible is full of truth intention that's probably something you ought to write down truth intention it's like one truth stands against another truth that almost seems to be a contradictory truth but they're not for example how can God be three persons but one well that's a hard one isn't it in fact is any of you that are smart enough to explain it I would love to have a class I've read all the books he's one he's three I can't hardly get that all together in my head except to say this I believe him he said it that does it for me how about this one we are fearfully and wonderfully made our hearts are desperately wicked and no good thing dwells in us so I'm fearfully and wonderfully made but no good thing dwells in me those seem to be in contradiction but they're both true how am I allowed to pray to a God that changes not and ask him to change because he tells me to but he still doesn't change it says he doesn't change he tells me to pray and ask him to change and they're both there I don't get that truth intention he says it so it's true we do not understand but we accept a

T Pearson said this is a fantastic quote you won't pay attention maybe but here it is he said for man to understand God would imply equality with God for man to understand God would imply equality with God as for one man to understand perfectly and absolutely the product of another's genius implies a genius equal to the other the very fact of the handiwork or product of another's brain or skill beyond me shows his superiority to me in that direction therefore even in the apparent contradictions of truth in the word of God may be the indications of a higher mind these contradictions result from the lower point of observation and the lower measure of capacity I some of you have a real hard time not being able to put everything in a box and understand it but a long time ago I have my will

I don't understand that I don't have to understand that he is God I remind you of this for you to understand God would be like you under like you know if you ever pulled out of your driveway and that little bug was on your windshield and he flew and got on your windshield I told you this before but he he landed on your windshield and he stuck right on the windshield and you are about to drive out of the neighborhood and that little bug has probably never been a mile from home but he is hanging on that windshield and he is like you don't know who I can fly and I can you don't know who I can run 70 miles an hour and I start down the road and he's hanging on at 10 miles an hour and 15 and sometimes I get up to 40 and 50 miles an hour I imagine he's thinking check me out I am flying faster than anybody you've ever seen flying all of a sudden flies off can't find his wife can't find his kids can't find his house probably thinking man I am something but the truth is that's about where you stand today can I just tell you

[35 : 45] I approach the God of the Bible and complete all I have been studying the Bible and preaching it all my life I've been preaching over 40 years I've been saved over 50 years and I can tell you you say Austin do you understand nope do you understand Romans 9 I can tell you what it says how does it fit with everything else I know it does in his mind but I don't get it and that's basically what's going on in the chapter so go to point number 8 write this down who are you to argue with God that's what Paul said in Romans chapter 9 verse 20 name that old man who art thou to reply against God shall the thing formed say to him that formed it why hast thou made me thus does the potter not have power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another to dishonor can't the guy who's using the clay make one to be a teapot and the other to be a latrine he can do anything he wants to do too often you and I are like the woodsman who makes Pinocchio and the next day

Pinocchio wakes up and can talk to his dad but let me give you a hint you are made and I am made and he is a maker and no more than a book you wrote or a composition you put together or a thing you did could stand up and talk to you and say let me explain to you how it ought to be this is what he says in Romans chapter 9 he said let God be God why don't you back off and figure out something he's God and you're not we ought to be in awe this morning we ought to be like man I serve a great God I don't understand him I don't figure out how he does stuff but I know he's God we need to remember we're his creation he made us he is God and creator we are but creation we were made by him and for him and for his pleasure we want so desperately to feel like we have a right to make judgments on God and to decide if he is right or wrong or good or bad but it is God who chooses how he will use us it is not our decision but he is for God to be independent in his actions is more than most men can accept before I read the next verse in Romans chapter 9 verse 22 just let me say this to you we really think we ought to get to have a democratic vote on how God ought to be

I mean we really think we ought to get to say wait a minute you can't do that God we've thought about it we've figured it out and you need to obey the will of the people you serve at our pleasure but the Bible would say no no no no no you're totally backwards you serve at my pleasure I made you I think most of us are pretty much like lost people say about us we have concocted God in our own image we never even read enough Bible to find out he's super big and he does what he wants he's God and so Romans chapter 9 verse 22 the apostle Paul Holy Spirit of God says what if what if God willing to show his wrath now I wish you put a circle around what if I really think this is not that he did it but what if he has every right to do whatever he wants to do what if God willing to show his wrath and to make his power known endure with much long suffering and vessels of wrath fitted to destruction that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto his glory what if who are you to tell God what he can do we've been around the charismatic movement and we've been around the prosperity gospel so long we really think

God's like a genie in a bottle who obeys our commands but it is completely and totally the opposite it's utter foolishness to think that what's happening is God is at work calling out the church to serve him you see God those Jews are like God why are you leaving us but God had a plan and his plan was to set the nation of Israel to one side and to call out Gentiles us and let us be used of God and let us be in the ministry and the Bible says in Romans chapter 9 verse 24 even us Jews and Gentiles the church you might put a circle around us and write church whom he hath called not of the Jews only but also the Gentiles you see there's Jews there's Gentiles and there's a church he called us and he put us in the ministry the church is made up of both Jews and Gentiles God has a plan for all the world not just the nation of Israel he's not finished with Israel he has a purpose to form his church from both Jews and Gentiles believers today are by God's grace vessels of mercy which he is preparing for a glory a truth that reminds us of Romans 8 29 and 30

I want to show you something now listen to me the real crux of the chapter though it does show how big God is is how could God take Israel now listen to this you're going to find this out in 9, 10, 11 he took Israel he set Israel to the side and said you guys have failed to carry out my gospel I still love you I will still save you if you'll trust Jesus we'll get to that in the last part of the chapter I'll still save you if you'll trust Jesus but I'm not going to use you anymore and he sets the Jews aside the old wine bottles and the new wine bottles he sets the law aside he sets the Jews aside and he's going to use Israel the church us he's going to use the church and Paul says and by the way that's nothing new if you guys had studied the Old Testament you'd know God had a plan to use the church and he quotes Hosea in chapter 9 and verse 25 he said also in Osea or Hosea I will call them my people which were not my people and her beloved which was not beloved verse 26 and it came to pass that in the place where it was said unto me unto them you are not my people

[41 : 26] Romans 9, 25, 26 there shall they be called the children of God then he quotes Isaiah in verse 27 Isaiah cried concerning Israel the number of the children of Israel will be like a big number but only a few will be saved and he will finish the work and cut it short verse 29 he quotes Isaiah again he said if it wasn't for God's mercy even Israel would become like Sodom and Gomorrah it has always been the grace of God the Jews wouldn't have been saved if it weren't for grace they might not like it that God was going to use someone besides them but that's not their call basically the lesson in this part of the chapter is that he is God let God be God and we are his creation we have no right to tell him what to do or how to do it Israel didn't like it that God was choosing to use the church to call out Gentiles to serve him this is not the first time that Gentiles have been saved it's not the first time that God's chosen but it is the first time that God's chosen to use anyone but Jews as his primary servants now God's going to move from his sovereignty chapter 9 verse 30 to man's responsibility chapter 9 verse 30 what shall we say then that the Gentiles which followed after righteousness have attained to righteousness or Israel that's followed after the law has not attained the law notice Paul doesn't use the word elect or non-elect but he emphasizes faith the Jews sought for righteousness but they didn't find it while the Jews who weren't searching for it did find it the reason

Israel tried to be saved by works and not by faith Israel rejected the grace of righteousness and tried to please God with the law of righteousness the Jew thought that Gentiles had to come up to Israel's level to be saved when actually the Jews had to go down to the level of the Gentiles to be saved I know there's a lot of stuff at you but see Israel thought man we are the people of God we were born right we obey the law we do good and Gentiles are scumbags they're all sinners and they thought that the Gentiles ought to obey the law and get circumcised and get up here and God would save them and what the Bible actually says is no Israel you have sinned all have sinned and all have come for the glory of God get down there and admit it with the rest of them Gentiles so I can save you because salvation is never by who your daddy was or what you've done it's by how good our God is chapter 9 and verse 32 Jesus was to be the cornerstone of the church but for them he became the stumbling stone and the rock of offense that embarrassed them what kind of righteousness are we seeking good works morality and character or Jesus and his finished work

God does not save anybody based on birth or behavior let me just stop here a second and say this to cultural Christians we're just like Jews some of you really think you're saved because your parents were and some of you would say I've been in church all my life whoop-dee-doo whoop-dee-doo I'm glad you have some of you think well I keep the Ten Commandments and I do good God never saves people based on mom and dad or based on what you do he saves people that realize I'm a dirty stinking scumbag sinner no matter who my mama was and I'm a nobody without God I need him to save me we are saved by grace through faith for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves it's a gift of God not of works the question is not are we the elect but do we believe the Bible says in Revelation 22 17 the spirit and the bride say come let him that heareth say come let him that is a thirst come and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely you'll know after you're saved you'll understand the Bible and God will make it clear to you

I'm going to give you one last point and I'm through this might have been too heavy a service for you I'm not really sure Romans 9 is real clear about some things God saved the Jews and he saved them by faith in the Old Testament nobody got saved in the Old Testament by getting circumcised nobody got saved in the Old Testament by doing good or keeping the Ten Commandments no one's ever been saved by who their daddy was no one's ever been saved by doing good everybody's always been saved because they believed God Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness and the Jews were like I don't like this why are you letting these Gentiles in we've always kept the law and we got the right mama and we got the right daddy Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are our parents you have no right to set aside and God says yes I do it wasn't that he was setting them aside to go to hell it was setting them aside not to be used to carry the gospel let God be God let God be God and you today can be saved he's calling you let the spirit says and the bride says and he that hears says come and come he loves everybody he wants you to be saved he calls you and he will in no wise cast you out but you do need to understand something today the God of the Bible is not the God of Time Magazine the God of the Bible is not the God that some Bible commentator wrote him up to be and the God of the Bible is not the God that even you believe he is because you never read

Romans 9 and whenever we read it we say I don't like that chapter I agree I read it and I'm like come on Lord let's get to 12 I've been praying about it I just thought maybe next chapter next verse chapter 8 verse 32 wasn't it to 12-1 that would be a great place to go next but God put it all in there either you believe it's the word of God or you don't it makes it hard to realize this let God be God my number 10 point that I wish you'd write down is this let me remind you salvation is all of God salvation is all of God that's why we're secure we're secure in our salvation because we didn't do it man was lost and couldn't save himself man was guilty and only God could forgive him we were by nature children of wrath and didn't deserve good or forgiveness we were God's enemy and refused to obey him we knew we were sinning and doing what God hated but we didn't care we were sinning and doing what God hated but we didn't care we even chose friends that agreed with us we never made a move towards him we never made a move towards him the Bible says we love him because he first loved us when God committed his love toward us and while we were yet sinners

[48 : 07] Christ died for us we know that God loves all and wants all to be saved and that would be to deny his word and his character it is God who works in salvation he saved me and I didn't save myself he saved me this is where security comes from he does it right and I can believe him and he never fails so this morning there are two things I would like you to know number one let God be God leave here knowing this that the God you serve you do not understand and the day you fully understand him is the day you really think you're equal to him we can't draw pictures and make up how God is we don't get to have a community vote and say God should do this we come humbly before him and say I'll open your Bible and find out what it says you are God almost every church will avoid preaching verse by verse because we don't like these passages but it's there and you go home and you read it

I've only put in about 40 hours on this message read 98,000 words in books I have studied tried my best to be able to explain it to you well but I will just say this to you I don't understand God I understand how he's a trinity and how he's won I don't understand how he is totally all God and I am totally responsible and free to choose I don't understand but I don't think I need to no more than a fly on the windshield needs to I'll just trust God if he said it it's true are you saved?

do you know today that you've placed your faith and trust in Christ? do you know that you've been forgiven? do you know that you'd go to heaven if you died? are you willing to step back and say I'll let God be God? I think a lot of our worship we don't worship anymore because to us God is our friend our buddy and our pal and God's just like one of us but he's not he is almighty God he is so big you cannot comprehend him and all through the Bible he says tons of things to say to you you are not me and you're not as big as me he said the earth was his footstool he said he he dug out the valleys with his finger he said I'm the creator and you're the creation he said one day with me is a thousand years as you he said I can live your life over in about three hours you're a nothing to me you're a drop in the bucket I'm God boy doesn't that just rock our boat doesn't it?

we're like come on God I don't understand that exactly because he's God he is God and we come humbly before him and there's only one way we could ever get to God and that is that God got to us there's only one way we could ever get to God and that is that God sent his son and God became man and put on flesh and died on a cross and was buried and rose again and that God from heaven bought salvation for us I hope you know him today Father in heaven I love you and I praise you for the opportunity to preach your word and I pray God that your people this morning might humble themselves before you and might acknowledge how great you are and I pray God that you would bring glory to your name power to your name and I'll praise you and I'll thank you and I'll magnify you and I'll glorify you for all that you do with your heads bowed and your eyes closed if you're here and you've never believed you've never believed that God is God and God sent his son to die on the cross and he died on the cross

God in human flesh paying for our sin then today I ask you to trust him would there be anybody here that say I've never really trusted God I believed in my own works I believed in my own abilities I believed in what I could do I believed in my parents but I've never really believed that it was God would you hold your hand up and let me help you today would there be anybody like that I know that went against everything in you to even admit that would there be anybody in this room who would say I need to let God be God I've had a problem with letting God be God but I want to let God be God would there be anybody like that just hold your hand up thank you sir anybody else God in heaven I love you and I praise you and I magnify you and I pray that your name would be honored and glorified I love you Lord and I thank you for all that you do this message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia for more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times location contact information and more audio and video recordings