

## What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

### PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville Church of Christ  
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road  
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

[www.nrcoc.net](http://www.nrcoc.net)

### *Times for Meeting*

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)  
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

#### *Elders*

Bruce Dean  
Mark Ullman

#### *Evangelist*

Steven Wallace

## THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,  
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

January 15, 2023

### “Observations from Romans 9:1-5”

Steven J. Wallace

“I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the *service of God*, and the promises; of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.” (Rom. 9:1-5).<sup>1</sup>

The book of Romans is a book with meaty teaching and deep doctrinal thought and theological argumentation. At the same time, we can gather some simple exhortations.

#### **The Truth**

We find a relationship between the truth and the conscience. The truth is to be spoken in love (Eph. 4:15). The truth is in Jesus (Eph. 4:21). Lying is to be *put away* (Eph. 4:25; Rev. 21:8).

#### **My Conscience**

Paul's conscience bore witness to him. A conscience is a great tool when it is taught right. It can become broken when not trained in the truth. Paul taught us to have *faith* and a *good conscience* (1 Tim. 1:19).

He said in Acts 24:16, "This *being* so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men." However, when steeped in bad information, his conscience failed him when he persecuted the church (Acts 23:1). The apostle uses the "conscience" in Romans as a *witness* standing up in court *accusing* or *excusing us* (Rom. 2:15). In our text, it was a witness of Paul's concern for his countrymen.

### Great Sorrow

Paul had great sorrow and ongoing grief over the spiritual status of his people. Most were lost. Only a remnant obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:5). The gospel is the power of God to salvation (Rom. 1:16), but it is often ignored, passed over, or altogether opposed. This brought great grief to Paul. What grief do we have over those who are lost? Who can we reach out to this year to try to bring to Christ?

### Accursed from Christ

We find a shocking and perhaps difficult expression to understand: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren..." The word "accursed" is a word that means to stand as one condemned to destruction without hope of being redeemed. Anyone who speaks by the Holy Spirit cannot call Jesus "accursed" (1 Cor. 12:3). Also, anyone who does not love Jesus will be accursed (1 Cor. 16:22). Did Paul wish to become doomed to destruction to save his countrymen? Did Paul wish to be forever separated from Jesus? Would Paul be willing to receive the same status given to false teachers (cf. Gal. 1:8, 9)?

Perhaps reading this text carefully helps us understand the apostle's point. Paul does not say, "I wished myself accursed," nor does he say "I wish I would become accursed." Rather he says, "I could wish," which is in the imperfect tense to suggest a movement that never completed itself. The idea is "I could have wished," yet it infers a withdrawal because it is impossible. To be accursed from Christ is to be separated from the love of God (Rom. 8:39), become *defeated* rather than a *conqueror* (Rom. 8:37), void the precious intercession of the Lord (Rom. 8:34), and forfeit the glory which shall be revealed (Rom. 8:18). Losing one's soul is of paramount importance (Matt. 16:26).

What seems to be at work in Romans 9 is a "contrast-emphasis" literary technique that stresses the opposite of what is stated. The apparent

meaning is that Paul is wishing for his brethren to not be cursed. For example, Paul told the Galatians, "I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you" (Gal. 4:20). Yet, Paul could not be present, and he couldn't change his tone...leaving the impression: *they better change their course*. Likewise, Paul could wish to be accursed for his countrymen but in reality, *he cannot* so they need to take advantage of the blessing that God has given and believe the Christ. Regardless of the difficulty of this text, we should see from the expression that Paul had sincere love to save his brethren, and we should also have that kind of love to save others. We should see that if we are separated from Christ, then we are *doomed to destruction*.

### To Whom

Paul lists eight blessings that came upon the Israelite nation, and yet, for the most part, they rejected their savior. Let's also not be blind to our blessings in Christ. Their blessings were as follows, and they relate to us as well:

1. *The Adoption*. God had chosen them to be His children. Hosea 11:1, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son." We are adopted (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5).
2. *The Glory*. God's glory was demonstrated to them more than any other nation when He led them out of Egypt and rested on the tabernacle and temple (Ex. 13:21, 22; 29:43; 40:35; 1 Kin. 8:9-11; 2 Chron. 7:1-3).
3. *The Covenants*. The covenants were made through Abraham, Moses, and David.
4. *The Giving of the Law*. God directly and gloriously gave Israel their law through Moses (Exo. 19:16-20).
5. *The Service of God*. God had granted them access through the temple service. See an extraordinary scene in 2 Chron. 5:11-18.
6. *The Promises*. There were promises of God that were given to the Israelites. The most significant are the promises of the coming Messiah and His kingdom.
7. *The Fathers*. The rich history of Israel had a rich ancestry.
8. *The Christ*. Jesus, the Messiah, came through the history of their fathers (Matt. 1:1). The Messiah was the most anticipated and significant blessing given to Israel, and they took Him and murdered Him!

<sup>1</sup> Unless noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.