

Paul: A Case Study in Love for the Lost

Romans 8:37—9:5

Introduction: At the end of Romans 8, Paul declares that nothing can separate us from Jesus' loyal love, but that raises a question: "What about Israel? Hasn't God rejected them?" In Romans 9-11 Paul argues that there is a future for historic Israel. But in the process of making his case, Paul models astounding love for his fellow countrymen. This is a very mature form of love...a very adult form of love. Today we examine what it means to love for those far from Christ and then act on that love.

1. *ADULT PERSPECTIVE #1 – I fully enjoy the blessings of who I am in Christ. Romans 8:37-39 (Romans 1:18—5:21)*

- A. In the first part of Romans, Paul sets forth the concept of eternal salvation. 1:18 – 5:21
 - 1. He describes the lostness of the world in chapters 1-3
 - 2. He describes justification by faith in chapters 4-5
 - 3. The resulting blessing is that we stand in an eternal position before God. 5:1-2
- B. In the second part of Romans, Paul sets forth the principles of spiritual growth. 6:1 – 8:39
 - 1. In chapter 6, he describes freedom from the power of sin.
 - 2. In chapter 7, he describes freedom from the power of the law.
 - 3. In chapter 8, he shows that our freedom comes through the Spirit.
- C. At the end of ch. 8, Paul has one thought to drive home: we overwhelmingly conquer. 8:28; 38-39

2. *ADULT PERSPECTIVE #2 – I will allow myself to be broken by the lostness those far from Christ. Romans 9:1-5*

- A. Paul is about to say something totally radical. 9:1
 - 1. He makes two affirmations (positive and negative), and they're very strong. 9:1
 - 2. He provides the requisite "two witnesses". Deut. 17:6
- B. Paul is broken by the lostness of his friends. 9:2-3, 5
 - 1. The extent of Paul's brokenness: Great sorrow and unceasing grief. 9:2
 - 2. The surprising nature of Paul's brokenness. The Jews were interfering with his ministry.
 - 3. The reason for Paul's brokenness: God's glory is at stake. 9:3-5
- C. Paul wishes he could be eternally separated from Christ for the salvation of his friends. 9:3; 9:4-5
 - 1. Paul had an Old Testament context for this. Exodus 32:32
 - 2. But Paul's New Testament perspective makes this shocking. Matthew 10:28
- D. What about you? Is there anyone you care about so much that you would sacrifice everything?

3. *ADULT PERSPECTIVE #3 – I bow my knees before the father in prayer that friends would come to Christ, and I act. Romans 10:1; 11:14*

- A. How Paul prays: He makes constant requests for their salvation. 10:1
 - 1. He certainly would have prayed for some by name.
 - 2. He clearly prayed for whole groups of Jews.
 - 3. We should be keeping a top ten list.
- B. What Paul does: He remains active in ministry. 11:13-14
 - 1. He shares his story.
 - 2. His story is tailored to the needs of the situation.
 - 3. He maintains a good attitude. Note that he doesn't criticize the Jews in 9-11.
- C. What we should do: Pray, serve, story.