

Paul's Letter to the Romans:



THE PINNACLE OF
CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

Paul's Love & God's Hatred...

Romans 9:1-13

One of the charges most often leveled against **“Reformed”** or **“Calvinistic”** Christians is that they are unfeeling, or uncaring about others. Opponents of the **“Reformed”** faith, sometimes say that it is impossible to hold to election without becoming haughty or arrogant or without losing one's zeal for evangelism. They say that when a man or woman comes to embrace the doctrine of election, or predestination or even the overall concept of the sovereignty of God, something happens to that man's heart, something inherently vile. They say that when a person comes to hold these doctrines of grace to be true they will become scholastic, pedantic and prideful. They say that such people will become detached from the flesh and blood world of men and of suffering and will lose their way, lose their spiritual compass. Now, I have to tell you, I for one, do not believe that that is true.

I don't believe those kinds of accusations will stand up in the light of the historical record and I don't think they will stand up in light of the life and practice of our own, particular church. Still, I do acknowledge that there are many people who think such things are true. They think that the **“frozen chosen”** are just that; they think that those who have come to embrace the **“Reformed Faith”** have pulled back from the flesh and blood world of men and

women and have become cold, lifeless, mannequin-like, robots who go about their heady lives with plastic smiles and cold, waxy hearts. They think that Calvinists stagger through life without joy, without pity and without compassion.

Now the reason they do that is because they cannot put together, cannot reconcile in their minds these two issues. That is, they cannot reconcile the issue of the predestinating, electing work of God and a believer who passionately believes that to be true and yet presses on faithfully in evangelism and in prayer and in hope that those they love and that those they are yet to love might be saved. They think that those of us who hold to predestination and election will automatically say to ourselves, **“You know my brother or my sister or my son or daughter or even my next door neighbor is either in the elect or not. Nothing I can do will change God’s eternal decree and therefore, I will take my rest. I will lay down my burden to evangelize; I will even lay aside my compassion or my obligation to be kind. Instead, I will entrust such matters to God.”**

Now I have to tell you, I don’t know any Calvinists of that sort. I have always heard that such people exist but I have never met one and I don’t personally know anyone that actually feels that way and if I were to meet such a person, I would beg them to come to a more biblical point of view. I would plead with that person to embrace instead the view of an **“experimental”** or **“experiential”** Calvinist. You see an **“experimental”** or **“experiential”** Calvinist is not cold or unemotional. No, he is quick to feel and quick to be compassionate. He thinks like this, **“You know God saved me when I was not seeking Him. He regenerated my heart and granted to me a genuine, biblical faith and since He did that I have come to the conclusion that He can save anybody He chooses.”**¹

And since that is true, since He has a people out there who He has called to be His own and since He has determined in His divine wisdom to use 'weak human vessels' to bring His purpose in election to completion, I rejoice in the high privilege that He has granted to me to go out there and help gather His people home.

So I will preach the gospel;

I will teach the Bible;

I will catechize the ignorant;

I will visit the sick and the infirm;

I will support missionaries;

I will befriend the friendless;

I will lay hold of God by prayer and by the tears that flow from a grateful regenerated heart and I will plead god's mercy on behalf of those I know and love and even on behalf of those I am yet to know because I am persuaded that He is able to make the blind to see, the dead to live and to make the unbelieving to believe. I know that is true because He did that for me and because He did, I will never give in to despair and I will never give up my hope. Who knows what God will do?"

You see that is the way an "**experimental Calvinist**" looks at things. And it is that kind of thinking that fueled the great missionary movements of the past. I mean if you back and look at lives of the great missionaries like William Carey, Adoniram Judson, John Paton, William Borden, George Whitefield and Hudson Taylor, you will find that they were to a man, Calvinists. But they were not just any kind of Calvinists; they were "**experiential, experimental**" Calvinists. They were men whose hearts were overwhelmed with the kindness of God's electing mercy and as a result they chose not to sit on their hands but to go out there and

find and gather in the rest of God's sheep. You see, they truly believed that God's elect were out there and because they were out there these greathearted men felt compelled to go after them knowing that the gates of hell could not withstand the decreed and elective purposes of God. So they scoured the mountains and the jungles and the islands and the highways and the byways, compelling men to believe the gospel. That is why they were great.

Time to be great again, I think.

You see, it is for that reason that it is so crucial that we remind ourselves of these truths from time to time. It is important that we do so to keep our thinking straight, to keep our hearts in the trim, to make sure our lives match what we say we believe. That is true for you and it is true for me and if we don't remind ourselves of things from time to time our thinking will run aground.

I remember once when I was in seminary, I was trying to wrap up a Greek exegetical paper on 1 Corinthians 13. I had been working on the paper for a couple of months, stealing a few minutes here and there wherever I could find them to mess with the grammar, the textual issues and the commentaries and to let the text do a work in my heart and influence my own thoughts concerning the wonderful message contained there. Anyway, and you must understand that this was in an age before computers, I had already written out my entire paper by hand. I had already written it out and had been making corrections and changes all over it for weeks but I had not yet actually typed it out. Finally the week came for me to finish up and I arranged at the Christian school where I taught to take off a day and stay at home and type my paper. I felt like a mountain climber who had labored for months to get into the right position at just the right time to launch a final assault on the summit of some unscalable mountain. Anyway, the

day before I was going to take off and type up my paper, my mother called me from East Texas to tell me that her sister, my aunt, had died and to ask me on behalf of the family to come and preach her funeral.

Now I ashamed to admit this now but I was actually conflicted about what to do. I didn't know whether to tell my family I couldn't come or to just forget the paper I had worked on for three months and just go and do the work of the ministry. I told my mom I would have to try to make some arrangements and that I would have to call her back. I went home and explained my dilemma to Beverly and she said to me, and this is one of the reasons why women should never be allowed to instruct men, she said to me, **"It seems pretty simple to me. All you have to do is decide what you care about the most, a Greek paper that no one will ever read or your family."**

And you know what, the minute she said that the full weight of all the exegetical work I had done in 1 Corinthians 13 slammed down on my hardened heart like a ton of bricks. It literally smashed me to pieces. You see the text I had been working on stopped being an academic exercise and became an **"experimental"** or **"experiential"** reality. The grandeur of the love of God and the supremacy of the virtue of love over all other virtues reached out and stabbed me in the heart. You see at moment, at that very moment, I stopped being an academic Calvinist and became an experiential Calvinist. And when I did it became transparently clear to me that God had allowed me to work on 1 Corinthians 13 for three months not just to write a paper but rather to be able to preach the enduring supremacy of the love of God in Christ to a bunch of my kinfolks who needed to hear it and needed to hear it from someone that actually believed what they were saying to be true.

So I went and preached the funeral and I wound up turning in my paper in three days late and taking a “D” on one of the very best things I have ever written and you know what, I am glad it happened. Preaching that funeral with a broken and contrite heart, with a conscience blistered by the Word of God and with a passion for the love of God in Christ led to me preaching some fifteen or twenty other funerals and provided me the opportunity to preach the gospel to people who needed to hear the gospel preached not as an academic exercise but as a living, breathing, dynamic reality straight from the heart of God.

That is why I love the text before us this morning so much. You see it provides emotive balance to the doctrine of election. It provides a glimpse into the underlying passions fueled by the underlying predestinarian views of one of the nimblest and noblest minds our planet has ever known. You see what Paul teaches us by example here is that the doctrines of grace ought never to lead to haughtiness or coldness but rather that they ought to lead to tenderheartedness, to compassion, to endurance in evangelism and to endurance in prayer.

Look at what he says in Romans 9:1.

^{NIV} **Romans 9:1**...I speak the truth in Christ-- I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit--

Now don't you think that that is wonderfully strange way for the Apostle Paul to open a chapter? I mean, don't you think that that line that says, **“I speak the truth-- I am not lying”** is a strange thing for Paul to say?

I mean it never occurred to me, even for a minute, to think that Paul might be lying or that he might be overstating his case? It never occurred to me that he might be playing fast and loose with the facts? But apparently there were those

in Paul's day that actually questioned his motives...that actually questioned his truthfulness. In fact, he uses almost this exact same language three other times in the New Testament.

He does so in 2 Corinthians 11:31...

^{NIV} **2 Corinthians 11:31**...The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.

He does so in Galatians 1:20...

^{NIV} **Galatians 1:20**...I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

And he does so in 1 Timothy 2:7.

^{NIV} **1 Timothy 2:7**...And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle-- I am telling the truth, I am not lying-- and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.

Now in each case Paul asserts what he does to attest to the truthfulness or reality of what he is about to say. And whenever a man like Paul makes that kind of assertion, an assertion to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, it means that whatever follows is very important, very solemn and very important. And we are going to look at what he says in just a minute but before we do I want us to look for a minute about how he says what he says in Romans 9:1. You see he starts off by making a positive statement, (**I speak the truth**) and then follows that with a negative statement (**I am not lying**). That tells you, I think, that whatever follows is going to be both highly emotional and highly emphatic. In this particular case, however, Paul does not stop there. He even goes on to argue that the Spirit of God has borne witness to his conscience that what he is about to

say is true. Now, whenever a man like Paul goes to that much trouble to plow the ground before he speaks whatever he is going to say is going to be important. So look at verse 2 and let's see what is it that he says next.

^{NIV} **Romans 9:2...** I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.
³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel.

Now let me ask you, **“Does that sound like a man who is emotionally detached from his people? Does that sound like some emotionally withdrawn academic?”** It doesn't to me. Of course, verse two doesn't really cause near as much trouble as verse three. We can imagine how the disbelief of his fellow Jews grieved the heart of the Apostle Paul. We can imagine that because most of us have felt at one time³ or another the same kind of gut-wrenching pain regarding our own families, our own sons and daughters or our own moms and dads. We can understand Paul's sorrow; we may have even experienced Paul's sorrow. Certainly, Paul's sorrow was the same kind of thing, the same kind of emotion that characterized the Lord Jesus when he approached the city of Jerusalem in Luke 19:

^{NIV} **Luke 19:41...**As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴² and said, **“If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-- but now it is hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴ They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.”**

You see, what Paul is expressing here is a deep abiding sadness over the spiritual blindness of his own people and it is not just an intellectual sadness; it is the kind

of sadness that creates a crater in man or woman's soul. But still that is something we can understand, something we can imagine.

Verse three, however, is something altogether different. Verse three causes all kinds of problems and has lead both commentators and teachers alike to speculate about how Paul could say such a thing and whether or not he really meant what he said and even why he would say what he said in the first place. I really like commentator Doug Moo's assessment:

Why has Paul stressed so strongly the truth of his concern for Israel (v. 2)? Almost certainly because he knew that his passionate and well-known defense of the law-free Gentile mission had earned him the reputation—in Rome, as elsewhere—of being anti-Jewish. To the Jewish Christians in the church Paul therefore wants to make clear that his focus on the Gentile mission has *not* meant the abandonment of his concern for, and, indeed plans for, the salvation of their fellow Jews. But he also wants to dispel any notion that he might have joined with the Gentile Christians in Rome in their sinful disdain for the Jewish people (cf. 11:13-24).²

That makes sense to me. That is, it makes sense to me that the Jews may have already begun to think of Paul as a traitor to his people. They may have even come to think that Paul loved the Gentiles and hated the Jews, that Paul was abandoning his roots in Judaism and embracing Hellenism instead. But Paul cuts through all those kinds of accusations and charges with this one sentence. He puts all that kind of talk to rest when he says simply, **“If I could trade places with my brothers and become accursed in their place, I would.”**

Now I have to tell you that verse sends shivers down my spine and it sends the commentators scrambling. Most commentators simply don't know what to do with what Paul says there. Some of the more passionate commentators like Luther argue that we should just take Paul at his word.

...the whole order of the text indicates that he is speaking with most fervent zeal about their salvation. For he wants to bring Christ to them, which he certainly was not doing then. For that reason he swore a most sacred oath *and he did that* because it seems incredible that *any* man would desire to be damned, in order that the damned might be saved.³

Even the normally sanguine Calvin says the same thing:

Paul could not have expressed a greater *commitment* of love than by what he *says* here; for surely *it is a* perfect love *that is willing* to die for the salvation of a friend. But there is another word added, *anathema*, which proves that *Paul is not just speaking* of temporal *death* but of eternal death...It was then a proof of *his* love, that Paul *did not hesitate even* to wish for himself that condemnation which he saw *hanging* over the Jews, if *only they might be saved*.⁴

But other men, good men like Martyn Lloyd-Jones, argue that Paul could never have really meant such a thing.

Calvin's view is that Paul...in a state of ecstasy, actually wished himself to be condemned in place of his countrymen...I reject this interpretation, because, obviously, that is something that no Christian can or would ever say. A person who is ignorant might talk loosely like this, but a Christian, who knows what to be accursed from Christ means, could never possibly or conceivably say it. Indeed, it would be very wrong...to say so. And the last man in the world who would ever say *it is the* Apostle Paul...⁵

Even John Stott agrees with Lloyd-Jones.

Paul is not literally expressing this wish, since he has just stated his conviction that nothing could ever separate him from God's love in Christ His use of the imperfect tense conveys the sense that he could entertain such a wish, *if it were possible that such a wish could* be granted.⁶

So that raises the question what exactly did Paul say? Well, what he says is this, **"For I myself could wish to be anathema, that is cut off from Christ, on account of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh."**

You see Paul uses the word *anathema*, which means “eternally condemned.” John Murray says,

Any difficulty attaching to this verse cannot be relieved by toning down the force of the expression. It means abandoned to perdition.⁷

What Paul is saying...what Paul is doing is invoking the same emotion, the same spirit that Moses displayed in Exodus 32:31 when he plead God’s mercy for the blasphemous behavior of the Israelites with the golden calf. Listen to what Moses said there:

^{NIV} Exodus 32:31... So Moses went back to the LORD and said, "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. ³² But now, please forgive their sin-- but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written."

You see what Moses was saying was, **“Lord I am with this people. I love this people. I cannot help myself, nor do I want to. Oh God, forgive this people and if you cannot forgive them, then blot me out with them.”**

Of course, Paul knew more of God’s redemptive work and purpose than Moses did. Paul had an insight that came from a Spirit given comprehension of the true significance of the incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ. He saw the fulfillment of those things of which Moses only dreamed; nevertheless, when it came to the affection he possessed for his people, Paul and Moses were cut from the same bolt of cloth. Paul longed for the salvation of the Jews and his love for them caused him slip into the same frame of mind that Moses had shown in pleading for his people. He slipped into the same frame of mind a mother does when she pleads for her fevered child. He slipped into the same frame of mind that a frantic dad does when he bargains with God for his wayward children.

What I am saying is that I think Paul meant what he said. But I have to hasten to add that I think Paul was speaking straight from the heart and not from the head. He knew the certainty of his election. He knew the reality of the truth that nothing in, above or under creation can separate a believer from the love of God in Christ Jesus. He had just waxed eloquent on that very point not five verses ago. Still, he says what he says. He was speaking, I think and I know this is anachronistic, as an **“experimental or experiential”** Calvinist. He was speaking as one of the elect whose heart had been made soft by the kindness of God. I think that is why I love Luther’s comment here so much.

*Here Paul wishes alone to be accursed by Christ, which is something quite different than what he wanted before. Before his conversion he hoped that Christ and all His followers might be anathema from the whole world and not that he be alienated from Christ, but Christ *anathema* from him and from all *other* men. He wanted to be against Christ in agreement with the Jews, who made Christ anathema to themselves and cast Him out of the city and out of their communion and killed him...but now he wishes the greatest salvation also for the Jews, and in order that they might have this, he freely is willing to lose his own salvation. He does this also in another place where he says: **“I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls”** (2 Cor. 12:15).⁸*

You see he was speaking as a man who loved his own people and in verse four he presses on to ruminate on the terrible tragedy of their unbelief in light of all that God had already done through them.

^{NIV} **Romans 9:4...** Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.
⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

It’s a remarkable list of advantages, isn’t it?

Paul says that the Israelites had received the adoption of sons... Obviously, that cannot mean the same thing Paul means by **“adoption”** in Romans 8 but it does mean that they had enjoyed a relationship with God that no other nation on earth had enjoyed. God had even spoken of the nation of Israel as His own son (Exodus 4; Hosea 11:1).⁹

^{NIV} Hosea 11:1... “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.”

The Israelites had also enjoyed the divine glory... That means that they had actually physically seen and experienced the actual shekinah glory of the presence of God, first in the tabernacle and then in the temple.¹⁰

They had received the covenants of promise, first in the covenant to Abraham and then restated and reconfirmed in the covenants to Moses, David and Jeremiah.¹¹

They had received the codified law of God at Mt. Sinai spoken by His voice and written by His very finger.¹²

They had received the worship. The word is translated here in the NIV as the **“temple worship”** but the word is just the **“worship”** and implies the worship both in the Tabernacle and in the Temple and in private worship as well.¹³

They had received the countless promises of God.¹⁴

They had possessed the patriarchs who had received and believed those selfsame promises from God. That is they had possessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.¹⁵

And at last, they had had given birth to the actual Messiah Himself. And when Paul relates this last wondrous blessing he bursts out in spontaneous praise.

Now you should know that there is an enormous argument about whether the punctuation following the word **“Christ”** in verse 5 ought to be a comma or a period. I think it ought to be a comma as it is here in the NIV, so that it says, **“and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”** And if I am right, then it is a clear expression, perhaps the clearest expression in the Bible, of the deity of Christ. Still, there are those that don't want to see it translated that way. They argue that they are not disagreeing with that translation for theological reasons but rather because they think Paul is instead offering spontaneous praise to the Father for the gift of the Messiah. They translate this verse like the RSV, **“... and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen.”**

Still, I think it is a very strange way to translate the verse. To me it is a little like doing grammatical gymnastics to avoid the obvious.

Now in verse 6, Paul gets finally to the heart of the point he wants to argue in Romans 9-11.

NIV Romans 9:6...It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

You see Paul's point is very simple. Even though Israel has largely rejected the Messiah that does not mean God's word has failed. It has not failed because there has always been a true Israel within Israel. From the beginning, not every one in Israel was actually a true spiritual Israelite. For Paul then, the fact that so many Israelites did not believe in Jesus was not surprising. It was heartbreaking; I think

in light of what we have seen this morning we could say it was personally heartbreaking, especially in light of the wonderful advantages they had received, but it was not surprising. In fact, Paul had already made that same point earlier in the letter. Way back in chapter two, verse 28 Paul had said,

^{NIV} **Romans 2:28**...A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical.

What he is going to do in the next few verses is argue the point to its logical conclusion. He is going to argue that physical birth was not the determining factor in whether a man was a true Israelite. He is going to argue that to be true Israelite, a true Jew, depended not on birth but on god's elective purpose.

Now, we are going to look carefully at what Paul says about this difficult truth but before we do that, let me ask you a question? Why would Paul care so much about making this particular point? Why is it that he feels the need to argue that being a true Israelite was not dependent on birth but on election? I think the answer to that question is that he was trying to make sure that the Romans knew that God's promises could and ought to be trusted. Of course, that raises the question, **"Why would Paul need to do that?"**

The answer to that question is, I think, that Paul feared that the congregation at Rome might have come to a different conclusion. I think he feared the fact that they may have come to a conclusion that reasoned something like this, **"Paul you say that we ought to believe and receive the promise of eternal life in Christ. You have made a real point of claiming the security of the possession the believer has in Christ. You have gone on and on talking about the fact that nothing, not life or death or any created thing can separate us from the love of**

God that is in Christ Jesus. But how do we know God won't reject us like He has Israel?"

Now the way Paul answers that question is by arguing that just because someone was a physical descendant of Abraham does not mean that he was also a spiritual descendant of Abraham. Paul starts off his argument in verse 6 by arguing that Isaac was counted as Abraham's child according to God's promise, not Ishmael.

^{NIV} **Romans 9:6**...Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, **"It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."** ⁸In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. ⁹ For this was how the promise was stated: **"At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."**

You see Paul is not denying that Ishmael was a true physical descendant of Abraham. But he is most certainly denying that Ishmael was a true spiritual, descendant of Abraham.

Then, in verses 10-13, as if Paul fears that his point is not adequately made here, Paul extends the point of God's electing choice to the lives of Jacob and Esau. You see in the previous example, a person might have argued like this, **"Well, of course, Isaac was the seed. Ishmael could never have been the seed. For even though he and Isaac shared the same father, they did not possess the same mother. So your argument that Isaac received the promise simply according to God's elective purpose will not stand. Isaac received the promise simply because he was the right and true physical descendant of Abraham and Sarah."**

Now the way Paul argues against that idea is by arguing that even when children were born as the obvious **“true, undefiled, natural seed”** of Abraham, it did not mean that they were necessarily the **“true, spiritual seed of Abraham.”** The way that he does that is by arguing that when Jacob’s twin sons were born, the decision that one of them would constitute the true spiritual seed of Abraham and that one of them would not was not made according to their works or even the order of their birth but rather according to the nature of God’s elective purposes. Look at verses 10-13 with me and see if whether or not that is what Paul says.

^{NIV} **Romans 9:10...** Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. ¹¹ Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad-- in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls-- she was told, **"The older will serve the younger."** ¹³ Just as it is written: **"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."**

Now, I think we will stop there. But before I do let me say this. There are those that argue that Paul is not talking about individuals here. They argue that Paul is really talking about nations. They say that Jacob represents the elect nation of Israel and Esau the rejected nation of Edom. They do that because they cannot abide the fact that this text says that God chose one person over another. But I would ask you not to do that. You see the point would not be any different even if nations were in view. Even nations are made of individuals and if God rejected an entire nation, as **“hateful”** in his sight, wouldn’t that mean that He rejected the individuals that comprised that nation.

No, let the words have their full meaning and then come back next week and we’ll discuss whether or not God’s elective purposes are fair or not. Let’s pray.

¹ John Calvin, *Commentary on Ephesians: Ephesians 1:4* (Sage Digital Disk) “We learn also from these words, that election gives no occasion to licentiousness, or to the blasphemy of wicked men who say, **“Let us live in any manner we please; for, if we have been elected, we cannot perish.”** Paul tells them plainly, that they have no right to separate holiness of life from the grace of election; for **“whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified.”** The inference, too, which *others have drawn* from these words, that we may attain perfection in this life, is without foundation. This is the goal to which the whole course of our life must be directed, and we shall not reach it till we have finished our course. Where are the men who dread and avoid the doctrine of predestination as an inextricable labyrinth, who believe it to be useless and almost dangerous? No doctrine is more useful, provided it be handled in the proper and cautious manner, of which Paul gives us an example, when he presents it as an illustration of the infinite goodness of God, and employs it as an excitement to gratitude. This is the true fountain from which we must draw our knowledge of the divine mercy. If men should evade every other argument, election shuts their mouth, so that they dare not and cannot claim anything for themselves. But let us remember the purpose for which Paul reasons about predestination, lest, by reasoning with any other view, we fall into dangerous errors.”

² Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* in the New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 556.

³ Martin Luther, *Vol. 25: Luther's Works: Lectures on Romans* edited by J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972; 1999) See the Romans 9 scholia.

⁴ John Calvin, *Commentary on Romans* (chs. 9:1-5).

⁵ D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, *Romans: Exposition of Chapter 9, God's Sovereign Purpose* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1991), 18.

⁶ John Stott, *Romans: God's Good News For the World*, (Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 264.

⁷ John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans (NIC)* 2 vols. in one (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968; reprint 1980), vol. 2, 4.

⁸ Luther. See the Romans 9 scholia.

⁹ Moo, 562.

¹⁰ Stott, 264.

¹¹ Murray, vol. 2, 5. “It is more reasonable, however, to regard the plural as denoting the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic covenants.”

¹² Stott, 265.

¹³ C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans: Volume 2, Commentary on Romans 9-16 and Essays* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979; reprint, 1981), 463.

¹⁴ F.F. Bruce, *Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Tyndale Press, 1963), 185. "But a special place must be given to Abraham and his seed, which is basic to the receiving God's righteousness through faith."

¹⁵ Ibid.