



Romans

Right With God

God's Mercy

Romans 38:25-36

Lesson Thirty-Eight

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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God's Mercy

In this lesson Paul talks about God's Mercy. He insists that God's mercy is unchanging and always applies. He takes us back to the days when God announced to the Hebrew people that they were chosen to be His people and He was committed, through His mercy, to be their God. Mercy has a lot to do with kindness, patience, forgiveness. Mercy always originates with the merciful person. We aren't owed mercy, nor can we earn it. It is always a gift.*

When God, in His mercy chose the Hebrews, they were expected to love Him and be faithful to Him. Paul says in Romans 11:25 that Israel had hardened themselves against God's gift of His Son. He says that part of that hardening means that the Gentiles now have opportunity to be God's children. We have already discovered that Paul didn't agree with those who said that the Gentiles must become Jews before they could become Christians.

He said that though the Jews had hardened their hearts, that condition was not permanent. He said that they had become enemies of God. He said that there would be a time when they would come back to God and when they do, God will receive them, because they cannot escape the love and mercy of God. He quotes Isaiah 59:20,21 reminding his readers that God has promised not to let Israel go forever. Read Romans 11:26, 27

So what are we to make of this idea of Paul: Jews rejected Jesus, so now, Gentiles can come to God through Jesus. Let's look at it from God's perspective. If we try to explain it in human terms, we will miss the point. God didn't force the Jews to reject Jesus. He didn't force the Gentiles to accept Jesus. But, God knew that the Jews would reject Jesus and that the Gentiles would open their hearts to Him. God was and is in control.

God didn't intend to do evil to the Jews. The salvation of the Gentiles was not simply a rebuke of the Jews. Paul indicated earlier that maybe the salvation of the Gentiles would make the Jews jealous. Well, from God's perspective, He is simply doing what He has always done. He has always shown mercy. He has always been a God of grace. He has and will always invite all humans to come to Him.

So when will "all Israel" be saved? (verse 26) The best guess as to when this phenomenal event will take place is when Jesus comes back at the end of time. It is just too uncertain a teaching to do more than guess. What we need to learn from this is that God always keeps His promises. He promised Israel that He would be their God.

Next, in verses 33—36, Paul sings another song. Some have called this a doxology...giving

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praise to God. Read Romans 11:33-36 Paul has been deep in searching for truth and in his defense of the Gospel. Now, he comes to expression of the heart. His mind has brought him to the passion of his heart. God is not vengeful, seeking revenge, He is gracious. He loves. He provides redemption.

And, God is all wise and knows everything. God's judgments are not understood by human minds. God's mind is beyond that which we can understand and He has no one who serves as His advisor. It is not possible to do anything for God which would cause Him to feel indebted to anyone. Everything that we know anything about exists because of God. Nothing happens that God does not know about, and all happenings are possible because of Him. Because of all that, our response, our only response should be praise...the best praise we have...forever praise!

Scripture Memory: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments and His paths beyond tracing out!" Romans 11:33

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To guide students to see God's free salvation and praise Him for it.

1. It is easy to get all caught up in the discussion of whether and when all Jews, or some Jews, will be saved. That is a truth that this lesson writer is not willing to try to explain. It is best left to God and His will for the people He chose through Abraham. We have discussed that a lot during the course of these lessons. The most important truth in this passage is the amazing mercy of God. The wise teacher will concentrate on that. Speculating about "until the full number of Gentiles has come in" (verse 25) is also of little value, certainly so for this lesson.
2. Some would have us understand "Israel" here as the church. They see the church, as established by Jesus, being the "new Israel." However, it is difficult to support that idea by New Testament teaching.
3. In verse 32, Paul speaks of "binding all men over." See chapter three, verse 9b. Sin and the binding of us all is not the last word. See Galatians 3:22, "the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe."
4. Read Isaiah, chapter fifty-five. There you will find the prophet speaking for God who says that sinners and the ungodly are urged to come to Him. They are promised mercy. He says in verse 6ff, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts." (NASB)
5. Everett Harrison said of verses 33-36, "While this exalted and moving ascription of praise has in view God's plans and operations in the history of salvation affecting the great segments of mankind, Jew and Gentile, the closing verse applies also to the individual life that pleases God. For that life has its source in God, lives by His recourses, and returns to Him when its course has been run. To God be the glory!"

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Student Worksheet

God's Mercy

=Mercy has a lot to do with _____, _____, _____. Mercy always originates with the merciful person. We aren't owed mercy, nor can we earn it. It is always a _____.

=God has always shown _____. He has always been a God of _____. He has and will always _____ all humans to come to Him.

=What we need to learn from this is that God _____ keeps His _____. He promised Israel that He would be their God.

=God is not vengeful, seeking revenge, He is _____. He loves. He provides _____.

=God is all _____ and knows _____.

=Everything that we know anything about exists because of _____. Nothing happens that God does not _____ about, and all happenings are possible because of _____. Because of all that, our response, our only response should be _____...the best praise we have...forever _____!

Scripture Memory: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments and His paths beyond tracing out!" Romans 11:33

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, the payment is death.

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The penalty for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, took the penalty for the sins of all people, and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 10:9, 10 "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with everything that you are.

Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.