

## Rom. 9:1-5 (BCF 10) "Christ Over All"

**For the Children:** Sometimes movie stars visit poor villages in Africa. They give gifts and donations, maybe adopt some of the children. The villagers get very excited, even if they don't know who the actors and actresses are. Well, we have someone even more important living in our midst: the Lord Jesus. His body lives in heaven, but He is with us as God, who is everywhere. He IS the eternal God, who is over all. It is sad that many reject Him. But for those who love Him, He has taken our sins upon Himself and removed them. **Questions:** Why was Paul sad about the Jews? What was the worst thing the people of Israel had done, and why was it so bad? What does Paul tell us about Jesus' 2 natures?

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### Introduction:

#### First Point: Paul's Grief Over Israel

- 1) A Contrasting Sorrow: Paul has shifted from victory and joy in ch. 8, to "great sorrow" and "unceasing grief" in 9:2 – over his kinsmen, the Jews. This is not simply sadness at the bad decisions of Israel, or their fate. It is based on the position God had given them and His reaction to their hardness of heart (Lk. 19:41). The strongest parallel today would be our grief over a church member who turns from the faith.
- 2) An Impossible Wish: If it were possible, Paul would be willing to suffer the curse of losing his salvation in order to save the Jews. This shows the extent of his love for them, and his forgiveness of those who had persecuted him. However, only the Lord Jesus can act as such a Substitute for sinners.
- 3) A Need for Witnesses: The Jews might doubt this sentiment. So Paul calls 2 witnesses to verify his sincerity – his word and his conscience. These would not be reliable enough alone, so he calls Christ to witness to the truth of his words, and the Spirit to his conscience.

#### Second Point: The Privileges Granted to Israel

- 1) Nine Favours: Paul's reaction is based upon the position of favour Israel was granted by the Lord: they were chosen by God; adopted as sons and heirs of God; shown His glory in their midst; given the covenants (Abrahamic, Mosaic, Levitical, Davidic); which contained the Law; instructions about worship; promises fulfilled in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20); the Fathers/Patriarchs, who led them to follow God's Word; and the climax of it all, that the Christ was born in their midst, Himself a Jew in His human nature.
- 2) The Greatest Privilege: We have all these privileges in the new covenant, and more. For we have the completed Word, the finished work of Christ and the poured-out Spirit. This requires even more of us, since we are given more – especially the gift of having Christ dwell in the midst of our church.

#### Third Point: The Worst Abuse of Privilege by Israel

- 1) The Rejection of Christ: If the greatest privilege is to know Christ, the greatest abuse of privilege is to reject the Christ we have known in some sense. To reject Him is to be accursed. For rejecting Christ is tantamount to rejecting God. See 1 Chron. 28:9. The same penalty implies the same divinity.
- 2) Christ as Witness: The divinity of Christ is also seen in the fact that He is called as witness to the truth of Paul's words. This is parallel to calling God's Spirit as witness to conscience. Only God can verify a man's heart and be called to witness an oath in this way (Mt. 5:33-37). This phrase, "in/through/by Christ Jesus our Lord" is common in Rom. 5-9. See also 5:1,11,17. No mere man could bring the peace, life and righteousness that comes from being "in Him."
- 3) An Open Proclamation of Divinity: In v. 5, after explaining that Jesus' human nature is from Israel, Paul states openly that Christ is also the eternal God, sovereign over all. Some incorrectly try to start a new sentence, a doxology of praise to the Father. Because He is God it is a terrible thing to reject Him. This is also why Israel's privilege of having the Christ was so great. We, too, who have Him in our midst, should serve and obey the One who is over all, worship and invoke Him – which we do when we pray and sing to the Triune God, to our Father, in Christ's Name.

**Conclusion:**