

## Romans 9:1-5 "Step by Step"

*Step by Step* is a verse by verse study through the Bible. With this approach we trust that God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, will emphasize specific points and passages to each person; training us in the Word and teaching us how to live with purpose and identity.

**V1-** Paul is basically saying; 'Seriously, I'm not joking', 'God as my witness'. God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, has stirred Paul to consider his family/relatives, countrymen (fellow citizens). Not just those he has had personal interaction with but the larger group as well.

1. Application: Be sensitive to what God would speak to you about your family, relatives, countrymen.

**V2-** Notice that Paul was not condemning, nor condescending toward his family enemies. Yes, family can functionally be enemies at times!

1. Paul faced more opposition from his 'fellow citizens' than any other group. YET, he remained sensitive to the Holy Spirit concerning someone's spiritual state.
2. Paul was aware that; 'others do not have and do not know what Jesus offers to them!'

**V3-** What love! Paul knew that such an 'exchange' was not possible nor beneficial. He is conveying his deep concern and compassion, willing to sacrifice whatever he has that others may know Jesus!

1. Paul understood that the Great exchange had already been made.
  - a. Jesus chose to be cut off from the Father that He may bring salvation to humanity. Jesus was 'accursed' to bring forgiveness and rebirth!

**V4,5-** Jews had so much, yet they missed the most important thing! They held on to the physical and ignored the spiritual!

They held the 'word' on tablet and paper but missed the Word in flesh and blood!

1. There is a similarity in the church; having so much and yet being distracted from the most important!
  2. "...*who is over all, the eternally blessed God!*" This is one of the most concise, clear declarations of Jesus deity. *Eternally blessed*- Always existed, always God!
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**9:6-11:36** Has God failed in His relationship with Israel? The Old Testament revealed the character of God and the condition of man.

1. God's love and grace extended even though mankind rebelled against Him.
2. God's grace to guilty creatures who were not worthy of such love yet they were the recipients of that love! (Unmerited, undeserved). We will see in the next 3 chapters how God was faithful to His word even when Israel was faithless.

**V6-** The argument is that God made a deal with Israel and that deal seems to have failed because Israel does not follow God.

"Israel" basically means "Governed by God". The name was given to Jacob after he had wrestled with God in the flesh and pleaded in desperation for God's blessing. (Genesis 32:24-28, Hosea 12:2-4). This is significant here in Romans as God is talking about a spiritual family over the physical family.

**V7-9** Remember in Genesis how Abraham had tried to help God fulfill the Promise and Ishmael was born. Ishmael was a son of Abraham, of the flesh, but not a son of the Promise (spiritual). (Genesis 16. See Galatians 4:21-31 as well)

**V10-13** Another example of God's sovereign hand is His appointment of Jacob over his twin brother Esau. Jacob, the son of Isaac, was appointed even before he could do any 'physical' works. This shows not partiality over Esau, Jacob's brother, but rather God's foreknowledge. *foreknowledge* refers to the all-knowing, omniscient nature of God whereby He knows reality before it is real, all things and events before they happen, and all people before they exist.

**V13- hated-**Speaks of 'to love less' rather than to despise. God knew Esau and loved him and yet He also detested what Esau would do.

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**V14-** Is God wrong in make these decisions such as He did with Jacob and Esau? No! Just because He knows what someone will do does not mean that He made them do it.

**V15-18** As an example we can look at Moses. Always remember God is over us, His decisions are beyond our capabilities, capacities and comprehension.

What is essential is that we understand His character as best as possible. John 3:16 is one of the simplest explanations concerning His character and commitment to Humanity. God is not irrational, arbitrary nor vindictive! God is gracious, kind, loving, forgiving, patient and faithful.

**V19** The argument here seems to be that, "Since God knew how I would be before I was born, why am I to blame?"

**V20-24** Remember He is God and you are not! You cannot reduce God to human levels of logic and reason. We can however seek Him and humbly be taught His ways, rising by His provision to a higher comprehension of His character.

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**V25-29** Even in the writings of the prophets God's love for gentiles (Non-Jews) is embedded

**V30-31** "Why did the unlikely Gentiles find righteousness, when the likely Jews did not? Because the Gentiles pursued the righteousness of faith, and the Jews pursued the law of righteousness. The Gentiles who were saved came to God through faith, receiving His righteousness. The Jews who seem to be cast off from God tried to justify themselves before God by performing works according to the law of righteousness." David Guzik

**V32-33** Chapter 5 verse 1 is a good insight here; "*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" A person is 'right in God's sight' by faith in Christ, not by faith in their works or their heritage or their lineage.

**V33** 1Corinthians 1:22-23

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