



## CONTEXT AND CLARIFICATION

This chapter is one of the most difficult passages to preach and wrestle with as a Christian, so I will be providing some help for questions 4-7.

**Question #4:** We need to remember that God is not surprised by our choices. He was not surprised when Adam and Eve fell. He was not caught off guard when Judas betrayed Jesus. He has set the plan in motion. Yet he did not just start a story as an author and leave us to play it out. He stepped into the story Himself! If He just “knew” what was going to happen, that’s called seeing the future, but He has done more than see the future. He has ordained it, planned it. His ways are not our ways. And He is Sovereign, fully in control. If He was anything else...He wouldn’t be God.

**Question #5:** When you tell a lost person “God loves you no matter what,” it seems like a great way to assure them of God’s love. But what else could that do? We live in a culture of people who are not pursuing holiness, who rarely go to church, who are okay with being lukewarm. Yet all they hear from Christians is that “God loves you no matter what!” As Christians we should understand that NOTHING can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, but for someone who is not saved, that is not the case. They are a child of wrath, an enemy of a righteous and holy God. We need to learn a new way of spreading the Good News other than using the cliché that “God hates the sin, not the sinner.” As a few commenters and pastors have voiced, God doesn’t throw sin to hell, He sends sinners to hell.

**Question #6:** Encourage your life group that we serve a God who is Just and Jealous. We serve a God who is Love, and because He is holy, He cannot be indifferent to sin and those who oppose Him.

**Question #7:** Election can be an encouraging doctrine for many reasons.

- **God finishes what He starts:** Last week we discovered in Romans 8 that those God foreknew He also predestined! If He predestined them, He called them, justified them and glorified them!
- **Not based on merit or good works:** If God is the One who elected us, then we know it wasn’t on the basis of our performance. Just like Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the deceiver! He was the 2<sup>nd</sup> born! He was smaller, weaker (but God demonstrated His mercy and faithfulness by choosing to love Jacob).
- **We can’t seek God or know Him, so that means He sought us** (See Romans 3:10-17) Also the more you realize that God is the one that saved you, you become more grateful and humble. You didn’t decide to follow Jesus because of the goodness in your heart, but because God is rich in mercy and compassion.

## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

*Optional Ice Breaker: Share what place you are in birth order and how that impacted you.*

- 1) Read Romans 8:28-39. What was one of your biggest takeaways from the sermon?
- 2) Because we have finite minds and we serve an infinite God, there are many things we will not be able to understand fully. Share something recent that you do not understand fully about God but have grown in your understanding.
- 3) Why do you think many pastors do not preach on Romans chapter 9? Why is that dangerous?
- 4) God is all-knowing (omniscient). This is seen in His foreknowledge. He knows what will happen. Why is it also important to believe in a God who predestines and ordains and not just reacts?
- 5) Read Psalm 5:5; 11:5, Malachi 1:1-3, Romans 9:13. In what ways do these verses contradict the cliché, “God hates the sin but loves the sinner?” What could be dangerous about telling everyone that God loves all people unconditionally? How does this make Romans 5:10 that much sweeter for you?
- 6) Many people have no issue with a God that loves. How do you feel about following a God that hates and abhors?
- 7) How can the doctrine of election be encouraging to us as believers in Christ?




**FURTHER STUDY**
**Ephesians 1:3-6 (NIV)**

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.<sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

**Numbers 23:19 (NIV)**

<sup>19</sup> God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

**1 Corinthians 16:22 (NIV)**

<sup>22</sup> If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord!

**John 12:40 (NIV)**

<sup>40</sup> “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.”

**Joshua 11:20 (NIV)**

<sup>20</sup> For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**Deuteronomy 2:30 (NIV)**

<sup>30</sup> But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through. For the LORD your God had made his spirit stubborn and his heart obstinate in order to give him into your hands, as he has now done.

**Exodus 33:19 (NIV)**

<sup>19</sup> And the LORD said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

**Malachi 1:1-3 (NIV)**

A prophecy: The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.<sup>2</sup> “I have loved you,” says the LORD. “But you ask, ‘How have you loved us?’ “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob, <sup>3</sup> but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his hill country into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals.”

**THEOLOGY SHOULD LEAD TO DOXOLOGY**

*Use these songs in your own personal quiet time as you reflect on Romans 9:1-18.*

- **He Leadeth Me** (Hymn)
- **Have Thine Own Way Lord** (Hymn)
- **Whate’er My God Ordains Is Right** (Keith Getty)
- **Sovereign Over Us** (Michael W. Smith)
- **Sovereign** (Chris Tomlin)

“We may define election as follows: *Election is an act of God before creation in which he chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign good pleasure.*”

—Wayne Grudem

