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Sermon Notes

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## **God's New People, Chosen and Called**

### **Romans 9:24-29**

#### Introduction

Many calls and many invitations in the world... some can be refused and some cannot

- Dinner-time telemarketer calls... call screening was designed to eliminate these annoying calls.... The call most likely to be ignored
- Cell calls in the middle of a piano recital or church service are best to be refused
- At a higher level, we get calls we cannot or should not ignore... if a volunteer fireman hears the fire alarm in his small town, he must answer it
- A wedding invitation from your best friend carries a certain powerful obligation... especially if you're the Best Man or Maid of Honor
- Anyone who receives a personal invitation to the White House would be foolish not to accept
- A subpoena from a Federal Court can only be ignored if you're willing to break the law... you must respond, you must accept, you must go!
- In the Middle Ages, if you were summoned by the King, he usually sent a military escort both to protect you on your journey and to ensure that you would come... His summons could not be ignored

None of those calls are as significant as the call of Romans 9:24... the sovereign call of God that creates eternal life where there was death. That is the topic in front of us today!

Context in Romans: 1) Problem: the Jews are perishing without Christ; 2) Deeper problem: Has God's word failed? 3) Paul's answer: Unconditional election... "Not all Israel are Israel" 4) Paul's Defense of God's Freedoms (a big parenthesis) 5) Paul resumes His argument here with two shocking surprises

- 1) Shock #1: Gentiles are included in God's people... support with two passages from Hosea

- 2) Shock #2: Most Jews are not included among God's people... support with two passages from Isaiah

#### Six insights

- 1) **The New People of God:** There is a NEW people of God... the "us" of verse 24, who are the "vessels of mercy"
- 2) **The Sovereign Call of God:** That new people of God is created by the sovereign CALL of God, which accomplishes His ends in unconditional election
- 3) **The Human Call of the Gospel:** That sovereign call is accomplished by and within a HUMAN call of the gospel
- 4) **Some Jews AND Gentiles Both Included:** The new people of God is COMPRISED of both Jews and Gentiles
- 5) **Called OUT FROM and Brought Into:** The new people of God is CALLED OUT of their ethnic groups (Jew and Gentile) to a higher loyalty and identification
- 6) **Universally Humbled By What We Were:** The new people of God is TOTALLY HUMBLLED by the process, all coming from a status of "not people" to "people," and "not loved" to "children of the living God"

#### I. The New People of God: "Even Us"

There is a NEW people of God... the "us" of verse 24, who are the "vessels of mercy"

It is to them the promises are made; it is on them the power of God is directed; it is for them that God is controlling history

God's word has not failed if many Jews are rejecting Christ, because there is a NEW PEOPLE of God... the "us" of Romans 9:23-24

***Romans 9:23-24 What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory-- <sup>24</sup> even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?***

##### A. The New People of God

1. God has a people... they are His treasured possession
2. The ultimate end of salvation in terms of relationship with God:

***Jeremiah 31:33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.***

3. This was the language God dangled in front of Israel at Sinai BUT IT WAS CONDITIONAL, and they could not achieve it

***Exodus 19:5-6 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'***

NOTE: “If you obey me fully!!!” If your righteousness is perfect, if you are absolutely holy in my sight! Then you can be my people! God will have no filthy people. No wicked people, no sinful people... for His holiness will break out against them and they will be consumed

The promise of God in the Old Covenant was contingent upon personal obedience to the Law of Sinai!! And ethnic Israel broke that covenant and were rejected as God’s people

#### B. Israel Broke the Covenant, Were Rejected as the People of God

1. Jeremiah put it very plainly when he gave the prophecy of the New Covenant

***Hebrews 8:7-9 they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.***

This is the very issue the Apostle Paul was dealing with here: “Not all Israel are Israel”

2. Hosea the Prophet was called by God to demonstrate this broken relationship graphically
  - a. God commanded Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer
  - b. Hosea had to deal with the indignities of her promiscuity, her wandering lust, her lovers, and her illegitimate children
  - c. Hosea had to hunt her down and actually BUY her, naked, off the auction block
  - d. She conceived babies by who know what father, and Hosea named them accurately: “Not loved” and another he named “Not mine”
3. Thus Christ-rejecting Israel stands in this present relationship with God: NOT LOVED and NOT MY PEOPLE

#### C. God Has Created a New People: “Even Us”; “Vessels of Mercy, Prepared for Glory”

1. God Has a New People
2. Described in Romans 9:23

***Romans 9:23-24 What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory-- <sup>24</sup> even us***

“Even us”... Paul is included... He is also including the Roman Christians in the delightful words “even us”

3. They are a new people because they include BOTH Jew and Gentile

***Romans 9:24 even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?***

4. Ephesians 2 calls it the “one new man” made out of the two old races, Jew and Gentile

***Ephesians 2:14-15 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,***

5. This “one new man” is the NEW PEOPLE of God
  - a. New because God is doing a new thing among BOTH Jew and Gentile
  - b. New because both Jew and Gentile get saved by a NEW Covenant in the blood of Christ
  - c. New because both Jew and Gentile get saved by being transformed themselves into new creations
  - d. This is the New people of God... to them God makes His promises, to them God pours out His love, in them God works His power, for them God orchestrates history, with them God will dwell eternally in heaven
  - e. “Even us”... the vessels of mercy, prepared in advance for glory

## II. The Sovereign, Effectual Call of God

### A. Key Question: How is the New People of God Created?

1. The Law of Moses could not make a people for God... the people couldn't obey it perfectly... HUMAN MORAL EFFORT cannot do it
2. The Wisdom of the Greeks could not make a people for God... HUMAN WISDOM

### B. The Sovereign, Effectual Call of God

1. Mentioned before, now mentioned again

***Romans 9:11-13 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad-- in order that God's purpose in election might stand: <sup>12</sup> not by works but by him who calls-- she was told, "The older will serve the younger." <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."***

- a. "God's purpose in election"... His purpose is to be glorified and exalted as the Sovereign King and only Savior
- b. Thus human pride must be humbled
- c. God's purpose in election comes NOT BY WORKS BUT BY HIM
- d. Focus is totally on God in verse 12
- e. BUT NOTICE: It could have said "Not by works but by God, she was told 'The older will serve the younger'"
- f. But Paul highlights a specific aspect of God's activity in the human race:  
CALLING

**not by works but by him who calls**

- g. What is this calling?
2. Seen earlier in Romans 4
- C. A Calling that Creates What it Calls
  1. God calls Isaac to life

***Romans 4:17-21 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed-- the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.***

- a. Abraham's body was as good as dead
- b. Sarah's womb was also dead
- c. God called Isaac to life in the midst of death
- d. So also God calls to sinners and makes them alive in Christ
2. Christ calls Lazarus to life

***John 11:43-44 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."***

3. God calls light and there is light

***Genesis 1:3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.***

So He also does spiritually in our dead hearts

***2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.***

4. God calls sinners to new life and they are created

#### D. Irresistible Because Effectual

1. Some have called this "irresistible grace"
2. I don't quibble with the concept... basically when the King of the Universe calls with this sovereign voice of command, refusal is impossible!!
3. However, the image is the sinners are dragged kicking and screaming into the Kingdom... "No, No... leave me alone... I don't want Christ! I hate all you Bible-thumping holy rollers!"
4. Better is the idea of EFFECTUAL CALLING... the calling of God produces the effect for which He sent it... He speaks, and it is done, He commands, and it is!
5. The sinner that WAS screaming "NO NO leave me alone... I don't want Christ!" is healed from his strange rebellion and the light of Christ's glory shines in His heart, and HE WILL MOST CERTAINLY love Christ, believe on Him, follow Him forever!
6. Effectual calling produces the new people of God

### III. The Human Call of the Gospel

#### A. Not Mentioned Here, But It Will Be Soon

***Romans 10:13-15 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." <sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"***

#### B. The Two Calls of the Gospel: One External, One Internal

1. The External Call of the Gospel is simply this: a human being preaches, proclaims, shares, witnesses the good news of Christ to another human being

Illus. It is SOUND moving through the air, it is WORDS printed on a page... it is physical... it is truth, information, it is LANGUAGE... and it comes by human instruments

- a. It may be Billy Graham at a huge rally at Yankee Stadium
- b. It may be a coworker on a coffee break
- c. It may be a missionary in the steamy jungles of Irian Jaya
- d. It may be a street preacher in Philadelphia
- e. It may be a mother and father explaining the gospel day after day to their growing children
- f. It may be a pastor preaching an expositional message in Romans, or a Sunday school teacher on Easter Sunday explaining the empty tomb
- g. It may be a persecuted Christian saying through bleeding lips to the very one who is trying to kill him that Christ died for sinners
- h. It may happen at VBS, or through a gospel tract or Trans World Radio

What is the message? That God the Creator sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to His death as an atoning sacrifice for sin, and that everyone who believes in Him will be saved

History is full of the stories of great preachers who had a gift of making the external call powerful and effective

**George Whitefield** used a dramatic presentation; sometimes calling with tears upon God to send forth the Spirit... he used vivid language and drama, speaking to the angel that was ascending to heaven to report that the time has come for the end of the world

**Jonathan Edwards** used a quieter, more rational, approach... preaching carefully worded sermons without any theatrics at all

**Charles Spurgeon** was one of the most Spirit-anointed preachers of the gospel in history... stories abound of the way God used his preaching to stir thousands to faith in Christ. One day he went to a brand new auditorium where he was planning to give a series of evangelistic messages. In order to test the acoustics of the place, he stood on the platform and cried out, "**Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.**" And way up in the balcony a workman who was painting, putting the finishing touches, stood bolt upright and accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior on the spot. There the external call of the gospel met at the same moment with the sovereign, effective, internal call of God and the man was saved

2. The Internal Call is embedded in the External Call... Romans 10 implies that the external preaching of the gospel is absolutely essential to salvation

### C. The Relationship Between the Two Mysterious

1. God's eternal election and actual human salvation meet in the CALL
2. The External call goes forth by some faithful messenger of the gospel
3. The Internal call goes forth by God the Holy Spirit, quickening the hearer to faith and to life
4. And salvation occurs!!!
5. But the actual relationship between the external call and the internal is mysterious
6. Though God is sovereign over the process, He gifts human evangelists and preachers is some amazingly effective ways, so the "secret of their effectiveness" is sometimes analyzed
7. But God is unpredictable... He can use a man as gifted as Spurgeon to reach literally ten million hearers with the external call... but Spurgeon himself was reached for Christ by a humble layman, a man so untalented and plain in his address that Spurgeon himself marveled that God would use him

"The minister did not come that morning; he was snowed up, I suppose. At last a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, or tailor or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. Now it is well that preachers be instructed, but this man was really stupid. He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say.... He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimmer of hope for me in the text: LOOK UNTO ME AND BE YE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH."

Remarkable!! God used this thoroughly untrained and untalented preacher to convert the most powerful preacher of the nineteenth century!! The external call was simple, the internal call was converting!!

### IV. Some Jews and Gentiles Both Included

#### A. Shock #1 for Jews: Gentiles Actually Included

1. Amazing: Paul uses Hosea quote to refer to GENTILES

***Romans 9:25-26 As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one," <sup>26</sup> and, "It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"***

2. In Context: It seemed to predict the restoration of Jews to covenant favor with God!!



3. Basic idea: Why would God hesitate to choose out a people from the Gentiles?  
The Jews are no better! Everyone is eliminated from being God's people by sin

#### B. How the Mosaic Law Viewed Gentiles

1. Outsiders, excluded from the assembly
2. Uncircumcised, excluded, rejected
3. This is not just a prejudice, it was actually the case

***Ephesians 2:11-15*** *Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--<sup>12</sup> remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,<sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.*

#### C. The Lord's Eternal Plan for the Nations

1. Despite the restrictions of the Law, yet the Lord never stopped having a saving plan for Gentiles
2. His intention was ultimately to call Gentiles to salvation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ

***Genesis 12:3*** *I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

***Isaiah 49:6*** *"It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."*

#### D. Incredible Riches of God's Grace: Adoption by the Living God!!

**vs. 26** *"It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"*

1. Father's Day: a day to celebrate Fathers
2. God is willing to be an adoptive father to any person who trusts in Christ
3. They will be called "sons of the Living God"

4. This may be the most astonishing gift of God's grace... that sinners like us excluded Gentiles are actually adopted by the God of Abraham

## V. Called OUT FROM and Brought INTO

### A. Paul's Language: "Called from"

1. Not obvious in the English translations, but strong in the Greek

***Romans 9:24 even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?***

2. Election is a CHOOSING OUT from
3. So also the CALLING is a CALLING OUT from as well as a CALLING INTO

***2 Corinthians 6:17 "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."***

***Psalms 45:10-11 Listen, O daughter, consider and give ear: Forget your people and your father's house. <sup>11</sup> The king is enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord.***

### B. Brought Into

1. Brought out from whatever your ethnic identity and national allegiance
2. Brought into a new relationship with God and with His people
3. A Member of the Body of Christ, a Child of the Living God, a whole new identity

### C. New Loyalty: Not to National Distinctions But to Christ and His Body

1. National distinctions shall not hold out top loyalty... so we celebrate the Fourth of July, but not as idolaters worshipping the US of A
2. We are aliens and strangers here... citizens of a distant land, a heavenly country, to which we are traveling
3. We are citizens together with a countless multitude from every nation and ethnic group

## VI. Universally Humbled by What We Were

***Romans 9:27-29 Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. <sup>28</sup> For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality." <sup>29</sup> It is just***

***as Isaiah said previously: "Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah."***

A. Shock #2: Not All Israelites Are Included... many are not!!

1. Both quotes from Isaiah designed to humble Israel
2. The first quote goes to the heart of Israel's pride: God had promised Abraham that his descendents would be as numerous as the sands

***Genesis 22:17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.***

3. This promise was fulfilled during the four hundred years that the Jews were in Egypt... in a mere four generations their population exploded from the seventy who went down with Jacob in Genesis 46 to the over two million estimated that left with Moses
4. But this clear evidence of God's blessing did not mean that all the Israelites, the physical descendents of Abraham, were pleasing to Him or were His chosen people, to be saved eternally... actually most of them died in the Wilderness
5. Much later, Isaiah spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem and Judea by the Gentiles as a punishment for their breaking of the Mosaic Covenant... he went to the heart of their pride and humbled them:

***Isaiah 10:22 Though your people, O Israel, be like the sand by the sea, only a remnant will return. Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous.***

6. This remnant represented the small number of chosen Israelites, as it was in Paul's day... the elect Israel within the physical nation of Israel
7. Even more shocking was the second quote from Isaiah... right at the beginning of his prophecy, he likens the nation of Israel to Sodom and Gomorrah... no comparison could be more shocking, more horrifying, more humbling to Israel:

***Isaiah 1:9-11 Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah. <sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!***

8. Sodom and Gomorrah were the epitome of filthy, pagan, immoral Gentile cities... greatly wicked and devastated by the wrath of God
9. Isaiah said they WERE Sodom, they were Gomorrah!! But the Lord decided to be gracious and merciful to them as a nation and leave them a remnant

10. These two passages were designed to humble Israel... remove forever their boasting over the uncircumcised Gentiles
11. In effect... **“There but for the grace of God go I”**... If God had not been gracious to us, we would have been as wicked as Sodom and as thoroughly destroyed by God’s wrath as Gomorrah
12. And that is devastating to our pride!! We like to say, “Well, I may be a sinner, but I’m not as bad as \_\_\_\_\_” If not, it’s only by the grace of God!

## B. Everyone Begins on the Outside Looking In

1. Gentiles Were Not God’s People... Excluded by the Barrier of the Law

***Ephesians 2:11-12 separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.***

2. Jews Were Not God’s People... Excluded by Breaking the Law

***Hosea 1:9 Then the LORD said, "Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God."***

If this causes you to stumble, consider Christ’s clear statements concerning all who sought to honor God without honoring Christ:

***John 5:23 He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.***

***John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.***

Thus Christ-rejecting Israel is on the outside... they are NOT God’s people and He is not their God!!

3. Universal humbling

***Romans 3:9-11 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. <sup>10</sup> As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.***

***Romans 11:30-32 Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. <sup>32</sup> For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.***

Phenomenally important! God has so worked in history that there is no race, no nation, no group that has not disobeyed, has not

### C. God's Grace and Mercy

1. The end result of this: "to the praise of His glorious grace!!!"
2. That God may be exalted as a gracious, merciful, forgiving God
3. And that no flesh may boast in front of Him
4. Christ is our righteousness, Christ is our holiness, Christ is our doorway into the presence of God, Christ is our access, Christ is our welcome, Christ is our introduction into the Holy of Holies... Christ's blood alone atones for our sin, Christ's righteousness alone is sufficient for God's perfect standard
5. All of us begin on the outside, looking in... thus Jesus speaks again and again of the Kingdom of God as something that each man, woman, and child must ENTER in order to experience it and to live in it

***John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.***

6. Christ stands and invites us all IN... to ENTER... to COME CLOSE

***Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.***

7. We were NOT GOD'S PEOPLE, now we have become SONS of the LIVING GOD... rejoice in the astounding mercy and grace of God!!!

## VII. Applications

- A. Marvel at God's unpredictable ways
- B. Understand the wideness of God's mercy
- C. Believers: Rejoice in your position as children of the living God!!
- D. Be humbled at the fact that because of sin, you were once aliens and strangers
- E. Fourth of July comes: Let your first loyalty be to Christ and His people, not to your nation or racial distinctiveness
- F. Destruction of racism & sexism & feminism

1. Don't see yourself first and foremost as Caucasian or African-American or Chinese or Hispanic
  2. Don't see yourself first and foremost as male or female
  3. See yourself first and foremost as a Christian
- G. Destruction of pride
- H. Call somebody to Christ... issue the external call... let God mysteriously and powerfully do the internal call if it is His will
- I. Unbelievers: Come to Christ!!! Full forgiveness and adoption as children of God await you