

Monday, October 23, 2023 • Read Romans 9:6–9

Questions from the Scripture text: What might some say, if there are Israelites who do not end up saved (v6a)? How does the apostle summarize the case for why this isn't true (v6b)? What does not define a child of Abraham (v7a, cf. 4:11–12, Jn 8:39)? From what Scripture does the apostle prove this (v7b, cf. Gen 21:12)? Who are not the children of God (v8a)? Who are the seed/offspring of God (v8b)? What child was promised to Abraham (v9, cf. Gen 18:10–14)? What child had not come by promise? Of what was this a parable?

Why do some covenant children perish in their sins? Romans 9:6–9 looks forward to the midweek sermon. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **covenant children perish through parents who don't believe the promises and children who fail to believe in the promised One.**

Has the Word of God failed? One of the most sensitive and difficult spiritual issues for believers is that covenant children sometimes perish. How can this be, when we have called them "saint," and they have enjoyed the privileges and benefits of being members of the visible church? This was precisely the case with the Jews, as the apostle has made clear by his description of them in v4. So, how could it be that so many Jews were rejecting Christ? Did the Word of God about them as a visible church fail? Or did the Word of God that was preached to them fail?

We distinguish. It is odd to the author that many will come to Romans 9–11 and insist that "Israel" must refer to the same group of people when used multiple times in nearby context to one another. "Israel" quite obviously refers to two different groups just a couple words apart in v6! They are not all elect/saved Israel who are of covenantal/ethnic Israel. v4 had referred to Israel as a covenant people, as a visible church. v5 had referred to Israel as an ethnic people, related in their flesh. Now v6 explains that being a member of Israel in the v4/v5 way did not ultimately make someone elect or guarantee that they would be saved.

Parents and children who fail. The apostle's selections of Scripture in v7 (cf. Gen 21:12) and v9 (cf. Gen 18:10, 14) are very impressive. In the former one, the Lord was promising the one through whom the Christ would come, and Sarah was disbelieving. In the latter quote, it is Sarah who is defending the integrity of the covenant line through whom Christ would come, and Abraham has to be rebuked/instructed by God to heed her good counsel. In both places, there is a parent who has the promises of Christ for us and for our children, but who is failing to make proper application of it. This is what fails when covenant children perish, as so many Jews were doing in Paul's day: not the promise, but our believing and responding to the promise.

The God Who remains true. Despite Abraham's weakness and Sarah's weakness, God's promise remained true. He brought them to repentance. He brought their sons to faith—not just Isaac but also Ishmael. When we are failing as parents (as we often/constantly do), our cry to God must be that He would give us repentance and faithfulness, and that He Who is perfectly faithful would yet bring our children to faith. Isaac was not saved by being the one through whom the Seed (and seed) were called. He was saved by believing in the Seed that would come through him. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Ishmael were all saved only by believing in the promised one. For children of the flesh (v8a) to become children of God (v8c) by being children of the promise (v8b), they must believe in the promised one.

So covenant parents must not do as so many Jews did (assume that they were being saved by being Jews and being presumptuous about themselves and their children). Believing the promises doesn't mean presumptuously ignoring the means appointed by the faithful Word, but rather diligently using them. Believing the promises doesn't mean neglecting to call covenant children to believe in the promised One, but constantly employing the Word of promise to plead with them to believe in Him. Never has the Word been thus employed and failed.

When we find ourselves failing, we must turn to Him Whose Word does not fail, asking Him to grant repentance to us, and faith to our children—that the God Who overcame Abraham's and Sarah's failings would overcome ours as well. Dear covenant child, who might be reading this devotional, or hearing it taught to you by your own Christian parent. God has made promises concerning you that you are identified with in "the adoption," see in "the glory," have signified to you in "the covenants," have taught you in "the law," lay claim to in "the worship of God," and hear promised to you in "the promises" (v4). Believe in the promised One! Believe in Jesus Christ! Don't presume upon yourself or your status. Children of the flesh are not saved by being children of the flesh, or by their covenant status, but only by believing in Jesus Christ.

What is your hope for yourself? What things has God given you, in His church, to encourage you in that hope? What is your hope for your children? What things has God given you, in His church, to encourage you in that hope? Why must you not hope merely in their being from your flesh or in their being part of His church?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your many good and precious promises about the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank You for announcing Him to us, and showing Him to us, in so many ways as members of Your church. And thank You for giving us promises, also, concerning our children. Grant that by Your Spirit, we would be faithful to urge them to hope in Christ as He is offered to them in the gospel. And grant that by Your Spirit, they would do so, we ask in Christ's Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP126 "What Blessedness" or TPH405 "I Love They Kingdom, Lord"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans chapter 9 verses 6 through 9. These are god's words. But it is not the the word of god has taken no effect. For, they are not all israel, who are of It's real. Nor they all children because they're the seed of abraham but In isaac, your seed shall be called That is those who are the children of the flesh.

These are not the children of god. But the children of the promise are counted as the seed. For this is the word of promise. At this time, i will come. And sarah. Shall have a son. Amen. The sense this reading of gods inspired and Inherent word. Well, one of the things that is most difficult for believers.

Is that often? And the history of. The world. The history of the church. There have been. Covenant, children children from families. That were part of the visible church. And even. Children of converted parents. Who did not? Come to saving faith in the lord jesus christ. And who ended up perishing in their sins.

And, This is the great problem. That paul has opened this chapter dealing with that, the apostles opened this chapter dealing with Because, Is not just that. The jews were his family, according to the flesh. That was that the Jews were the israelites that have been described in verse 4 with all of these covenant, privileges and advantages.

To whom pertain the adoption, god calling them. His firstborn son corporately. As we thought about from, Exodus formed is a 11 and jeremiah 31, other places. Uh, to them pertain the glory that display of the glory of god, as was seen at the mountain and the tabernacle and the temple.

And other times ways. To them pertain the covenants. Several of these. Progressively, fuller administrations of the covenant of grace belonged very specifically to the Israelites Not just, There weren't just the those administrations that were from Adam to Noah and from noah to abraham and in the time of Abraham and Isaac but starting with jacob you have administrations of the covenant of grace especially under jacob and then under Moses and Under david.

To them belong to the giving of the law. Law that both revealed the character of god and looked forward to the plan of gods to save those forward looking parts. Of

course being eliminated when that to which they looked forward, the lord jesus himself came. To them belong to the worship of god to them, belong the promises.

And so, These are as it were covenant children. The juice at the time of paul. Who are perishing and that has continued to happen. Even in this administration of the covenant of grace, Where there are covenant children who have all of these privileges have all of these advantages. And yet they perish.

And so the question then is, Is the word of god that we heard in the last part of Romans 8. Is it solid? Is it true? Is it reliable is? It faithful? When covenant children. Don't come to saving faith. Has the word of god. Failed. Or to put it even more sharply for those of us who have or are covenant children.

When god calls my child, a saint. When he makes them a member of his church. And they don't believe. Does that mean that the promise wasn't good? And, Right now. The, you know, if god, if i have children who have not yet Professed faith and they haven't given evidence in their conduct and the response to the lord himself of saving faith.

Our has promises about my children. Real And are they good? The answer, of course, we have to say is yes. But how do we sort through that? That's the question that is being dealt with in this very important passage. And the very first thing he says, then, In verse 6 is it is not that the word of god has failed.

And, Then immediately he says, we distinguish. To use an old phrase from. Um, Scholastic reform, Puritan reformed. Theology. Where you ask a question? And, It's not a yes or no answer. There are other variables. And so you start the answer by saying we distinguish and you have to explain your terms and you have to explain the conditions and under the terms.

And so, The word of god has not failed because you have to distinguish Between, who is israel, and who is israel? Was very important here in verse 6, because there are people who are going to force an interpretation. On. On the idea or The identity of who is israel, especially when we get to the latter part of chapter 11, And if you try to tell them, no, you have to pay attention to the context.

You have to pay attention to grammar. And when he says israel here, he's talking about ethnic israel. All Although he is going to change. From israel and gentile to Jew and greek. Uh, in part in his language. But here israel is referring to ethnic Israel and here israel is referring to elect israel.

They'll say no no no no. And in the same local context, the same word should be understood to be used the same way.

The in the same local context, the same word should be understood to refer to the same. Uh, people to identify the same people. Every time you can't switch back between ethnic and a lot. Well, That's the whole point of the second half of verse 6, isn't it? For, they are not all israel, who are of israel.

And so he's saying immediately, we have to distinguish between About whom we are talking. Uh, when we refer to israel, And quite obviously, in verse 6, then Oh, i forgot to ask that somebody put the dog on the line. Please. Just let you go out if we just enter out she will.

But then she Pause that windows. And Yells to come in windshield board.

In verse 6. It's quite obvious that when he says for they are not all israel. He means the israel that is being saved. The israel for whom, he Uh, praise That they would be saved as the second part, the ones who are of israel and that's ethnic slash covenantal.

Israel. Whose administration of the covenant of grace? Is coming to a close. Because their administrations of the covenant of grace. Were under a profit in the priest. During the mosaic. Administration. And the really of the fathers, Um, Yeah. Jacob had a prophetic and priestly function as well and then under a king under the Davidic administration.

But now the great prophet that Moses told us would obsolete him, has come the lord jesus, and the great high priest. Who has obsoleted the entire levitical priesthood has come and that is jesus and the great and forever king has taken his seat on the throne of heaven, over all the the heavens and all the earth and all the nations.

And that is jesus. And so the covenantal Israel, i identification with with ethnic Israel has ceased, but ethnic Israel is still precious for all of the reasons that we heard. In chapter 9, verses 1 through 5, they are even though jesus is the tree in jesus is the root.

They are still the natural branches. That we're going to be hearing about the necessity of our praying and desiring that they be grafted in. As those who receive life from death, Uh, by the time we get to the end of verse 11, And so, it's important to distinguish what we mean?

When we say israel, Because he's using it in two different ways and you have to know which way. He is using it and we too should be careful with which way. We? Are using it. And so, when we say, Children of god. About our own children. We need to be careful.

We need to distinguish. That we do mean. Um, the children that are ethnically precious because of their Um they're being genetically descended from believers and so there's a greater ethnic pressure this to them for that reason and they are Uh, covenantally precious and holy god calls them saints. He calls to them as saints and he calls them holy in places.

Like first Corinthians 7 has made them a part of his church. He's given them all of the privileges and advantages. Uh, That we saw in verse 4, the promise continues to us that he is god to us and to our children. But we must not presume. That they are.

Elect. That they are saved. We hope in god. That they are. But we don't act presumptuously. Maybe the word presume isn't the the best word there because some people use the word presume to talk about hope. We engaged them. We live with our children, we lead them before. God, we apply.

The means of grace to them. As those who have confidence that god's word is true, God's word is, reliable the god who spoke those things, as the one who gave those children to us, and that it is his intention to use. Those means to save them. But it's his intention to use those means.

To save them. So we don't treat the means as unnecessary. Or irrelevant. And we don't treat salvation. As something that doesn't need to actually happen. In your lives. We address you. About your sin, we address you about your danger. We hold christ before you in the gospel day by day in the family worship.

And Once week by week in, in the church assembly. Because these are the things that god uses these are the means that god gives us To save you because god must save you. You must give you Hatred for your sin. You must give you a new heart. That hates that sin and that sees, Who jesus is?

Not just agrees intellectually, but sees him. As your creator who came to be your redeemer and who is righteous in your place and his, his sacrifice on the cross has paid for your sin. And as his spirit, uses those things. To give you that life and that faith and you're a united to jesus christ, you become not just A child according to

the flash.

Not just a seed that is descended. But you become a child according to faith. You become a child who believes in the same promise. To use the language of our passage here. You become a child of god. I mean, listen to the different children of statements or seed of seed.

Here means offspring up And he says, Nor are they all children? And here he means. Children of god, as we're going to see in verse 8, nor are they all children because they are the seed of abraham Which sounds like nonsense. Until you distinguish until you understand the way he's using the word children there.

As children of god, children who believe the same promise. Children affair. And so you say, you know, there are those who are fathered by abraham who are not Hammer's father. Well, what does he mean by that? Well, But not. His his father in the faith. Okay. So he says, in verse 7, nor they all children because they are the seed of abraham but in isaac, your seed shall be called Now, he's not saying.

Isaac is Therefore, A child of abraham by faith. You know, when he quotes here from Um, Genesis. 21. Verse 12. He's not saying, That because god said this about isaac. Isaac was saved. No, he's saying. Even isaac was not a child of faith. Except by. Belief in the promise.

Of the seed that was to come. So when he says in isaac your seed, your seed shall be called, he's talking about christ, So, if if isaac is to be a child of abraham, that is saved, He has to believe in the seed that comes through him. Just like abraham had to be saved by faith in the in the seed that was coming through him.

Abraham wasn't saved by being abraham. Abraham was saved by believing in jesus. And Isaac as the the child of promise, Wasn't saved by being the child of promise. He was the one through whom christ came. By being the child of promise, but he was saved by believing in the christ, who was promised.

To come through him. So also Ishmael Is not saved by having abraham's father and he is not Damned. He's not condemned to hell by not being the child of promise. Through whom christ came. Ismael is saved by believing in the one. Who came through isaac? And so you are not saved by being my children.

And you are not saved. By being in the church. And having all of these advantages and hearing the promise, You are saved by believing in the one whom you heard promised. This is why it's going to be very important. God, sparing, you and bringing you to be parents and making you to rejoice, that he is god to you and to your children that he calls your children, holy that they are members of the church that they have.

All of these advantages that are in, in verse 4 is going to be very important that you not act presumptuously but you see the need for the use of the means. Because your children and you need the god of the means to save through them. And so that you not be lazy and using the means and you not be presumptuous but you actually plead with your children.

To hate their sin and plead with god to give them the new hearts. That hate said that, that apprehend christ, the trust in Christ. So that we may all be children of god together in the same way. By believing in the christ. Who came through this son of problems.

By believing in the christ. Who came? Through the son of promise. So he says, verse 8 that is Those who are the children of the flesh. These are not the children of god. But the children of the promise. Are counted as the seed or? As the offspring for this is the word of promise.

That this time, i will come. And sarah. Shall have a son. So, the promise was not that Isaac would be saved in Ishmael wouldn't We're going to come to the purpose of god in. In election, and it's going to be Dreadful for esau when we come there next week, But the point of verse 9 was that, Abraham and sarah.

And Isaac, and Ishmael And any covenant child. Who was a Jew at the time. Of. The writing of the book of Romans, and any covenant child. Who is a jewish or gentile from a family that is our jewish or gentile believers in jesus members of his visible church now.

In our time, the only way, Any of us? Is ever saved. Is. By believing in the promised son, but believing the one whom god promised would come. Through the baby, that was born. About nine months. Um, Or perhaps a year after. Genesis 18. Verse 10 and 14, which are quoted here.

In verse 9. And so, The word of god is true, and it is faithful. And that is why we employ it. To plead with you to be reconciled to god through faith in jesus christ. That you would know that he is the only way to be saved. And we believe that god who has given us those promises, And who has called you, holy As part of his church.

There's the one who will give you. Faith in him. Man, let's pray. Our gracious garden our heavenly father, we pray that you would help us. Not to be like those jews. Who thought that they would be saved. Just by being jews. And not to think that we are saved.

Just by being. Christians as a part of your church. But we pray that you would. Continue to give our hearts and minds. By your holy spirit to lay hold of the lord jesus. I know that. True election, true salvation.

Ultimately, and eternally. In him alone. And so we pray. Lord that You would make us to be those who. Obey your instruction and Employ. Those means that you have given Through faith. In you. Independence upon you. And that you would come and save. As you have promised to do.

Forgive us of god for taking A long history of our unfaithfulness and our Presumptuousness, and our failure. And thereby treating you as if your word. Could possibly fail.

And we pray that you would show us this mercy. Of saving in jesus name. Amen.