

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Romans 9:19–23

19 You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?”
20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

The Riches of His Glory in Vessels of Mercy

Main idea: Predestination is used by God to show the riches of His glory, because the vessels that display that glory are vessels that deserved wrath, but received mercy.

Introduction: A classic “self-own.”

1. The Wicked Questions of Sinners

- a. Finding fault with God for finding fault, v19a
- b. Blaming God for our sin, v19b

2. The Righteous, Revealing Questions of God

- a. The question isn't why He finds fault but why He saves
 - i. The one who was ordained to be wicked is, genuinely and from himself, wicked just as he was ordained to be, v20a. He doesn't get to fault God for that. It's perfectly legitimate for God to want to show His wrath and make His power known (v22a).
 - ii. The real wonder, as far as the Potter's purposes are concerned, is that from a lump of wrath-deservers, He makes not just the one kind of vessel but TWO!
- b. The second question, then, is why He is being patient with the ones who are under wrath.
 - i. “much longsuffering” toward vessels of wrath!
 - ii. A 2:4–5 opportunity—which vindicates God's righteous judgment!
 - iii. But even His mercy toward others is good enough reason to bear the reprobate with much longsuffering, v23

3. The Primacy of Mercy

- a. The “riches” of His glory
- b. Vessels of mercy. Not just earthen, but as hatred-deserving as Esau (cf. v13, Mal 1–4), and as hardening-deserving as Pharaoh (cf. v17–18).
- c. “Prepared beforehand” includes their original sin—by their own fall in Adam, and their own personal corruption and action.

- i. The Jews all deserved wrath
- ii. The Gentiles all deserved wrath
- iii. But in the gospel, the power of God saves first from the one and also from the other (cf. 1:16).
- d. This preparation corresponds to the election from which it flows: an election in the Son. For, love is from all eternity, but wrath cannot be.

Conclusion: The doctrines of election and predestination should make your heart to well up with awe-struck gratitude, and this gratitude should issue forth in the praise of the riches of His glory that are displayed in His mercy!

(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 nine, verse 19, through 24. These are God's words. Quiet. You will say to me, then Why does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will? But indeed. Oh man. Who are you? To reply against god. Well, the thing formed say to him, who formed it. Why have you made me like this?

Does not the potter have power over the clay. From the same lump. To make one vessel for honor. And another for dishonor. What if god wanting to show his wrath? And to make his power known. Endured. With much long suffering. The vessels of wrath prepared for destruction. And that he might make known the riches of his glory.

On the vessels of mercy. Which he had prepared beforehand. For glory. Even oz. Whom he called not of the jews, only. But also of the gentiles.

Amen, lessons. This reading of god's inspired, and And earned worked. Paul has preached the gospel a lot. By the time he's Written this letter to the Romans. He's heard it all. He's He's heard. Uh, let us do evil that good may come. Says they're condemnation is just He's heard.

After he preaches that, we're Center bounds grace super abounds. He's heard people say. Oh, well then. Let sins so that grace can abound. He says. May it never be. He's heard them say as we heard last week in verse 14, This is unrighteous of god. The answers that. Certainly not man, never be again.

And he has heard them say. Why does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will? In fact, he puts it in the second person says, you will say to me, then You see the sinful nature? Uh, cannot help but express itself. And it always thinks that. It is getting away with it and it is.

Justified says why when God gives us Over or gives us up as we heard the Three times in Romans chapter 1, you end up not only with people who do Those things listed at the end of the chapter, But who even approve of those who do? But the person who comes up with the clever argument, Or so, he thinks in verse 19, Is engaging in what?

Many would call a classic south-own. He thinks he has come up with the great argument against god. Who has resisted his will? And he very confidently says, why then does he still find fault? Indeed, he is showing that He is. Evil. And he is showing that he is evil.

Even to the face of god. And about god himself. Can you imagine a man? Questioning. Whether or not god is right to find fault. Even though. Asking of the question. Shows that he deserves wrath. And the fact that he's alive to ask it, Shows that god is as Verse 22 says.

Showing him much long suffering. God is being very patient with him. The very one who due to god's being patient with him. Still draws breath. Breath that he uses. To accuse god. Of being wrong to find fault.

Verse 19, then. This self-condemning. We all want to answer the man immediately. Who says why does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will? With. Because you are at fault. Look at the way. That you think and talk about god? Now, that is sobering for many of us, because We have had that thought in verse 19?

We have thought about, The truth. Of election and the truth of predestination. And we have wondered. How can it be right then? And we thought it was. Well, it was sincere. Sadly. But we thought it was a good question. There's a difference between a good question. And a sincere question.

Anova teacher. Who liked to say, There are no bad questions. Just bad students. On this case. It may be a sincere question, but it's because We are sincerely bad. Or at least we are in our flesh. That's helpful to us in the same way that the Is there any is there unrighteousness with god?

Question last week? And we noticed that. That's a question that doesn't come from the spirit. That question comes from our flesh. And so the same thing here, When a question arises in our heart or mind as we think about these things that god says in his word, We can recognize that questioning of god.

Comes from our flesh. The question that the spirit actually answers. In the rest of the passage is. Why is god not yet? Punished. Those who are a fault. And so we have the wicked question of sinners. And the first place. The righteous and revealing. Questions of god. And the second place.

And then when we get the answer, For the questions of god. We see the primacy or the priority. Of mercy.

First, then the wicked. Questions of sinners. And we've already noticed the wickedness of the question. Why does he still find fault? Ironically finding fault with god. For finding fault. It is like the self-owning. Um, Relative. Uh, moral relativist or truth relativists? Who says, There is no such thing as absolute truth.

It's just what i ask him. Is that absolutely true? And you can't hear, can you? When you say, why does god still find fault? He's the creator. I'm the creature. He's holy and i'm sinful. In him is all wisdom and i'm a fool. And i am literally finding fault with him.

As i ask why he finds fault. It is a wicked question. But the second part of the question is even worse. For who? Has resisted. His will. You see there are two wheels operating. We've Often. It does a very helpful place to remember. Uh the way that this works in scripture we've often referred to Joseph's statement to his brothers in genesis 50 and verse 20 You intended it for evil.

But god intended it for good. And it's important to remember. Whenever you have a wicked. Spirit a demon or a wicked man. They are evil and they intend evil and they do evil. But there

are two intentions operating at the same time. And praise god. He super intends He is good and he intends good and he does.

Good. And so, Least says. Who has resisted his will? The questions implying a that god's will was bad. Which would make god bad. And God's actions bad. This is the height of critical theory, right? This is This is whoever's in authority is automatically bad for being in control. That's of course i satanic idea.

Authority exists, because god, made creatures and he's an authority. Of course, over his creatures. There's no authority within god because there's no division of mind or will. Within God. Critical theory is. Satanic. And here's the critical theorist. He is the one in control. So all the bad must be his No.

God, who is good? In. His willed. In his goodness. So goodwill. That there would be creatures. Who would have a? Free independent will that is superintended by his called doesn't. Yield has sovereignty to them. But they do freely choose under them. Well, that is until They come into bondage to sin.

By the exercise of their own freedom. Like, we all did in our first father, adam. Who began? What we okay? Say, plus a non-Pakari. Able to not send. But when he sinned, and we sinned in him, He fell and we fell with him. That's where bondage comes from. It's not a bondage that turns us into robots, It's a bondage that turns us into badly willing Creatures.

The. It's not taken away. And so god, who is good, willed this in his goodness so that he could do the goodness. Of saving from the same lump. As the hateful esos. And the rightfully hardened pharaohs. And all the ungodly and unrighteous men against whom the wrath of god is revealed from heaven.

That from that lump.

He would show the riches of his glory. By making vessels from that lump, but the vessels of mercy. So much so that they would go from being what they were. By the mercy and power of god. And to not only being vessels of mercy, that show his glory But even coming into their own.

Glory. In union with christ. With whom one day, they would be glorified. And so, the good god. Willed in his goodness. And is carrying out that goodness. And this passage announces that goodness to us. How wicked then? For the one. Who freely? In his own wickedness. Wills. Evil and does evil.

And to say, Who can resist his will? No. We cannot blame god for our sin. And if we do, Isn't it just? Some of the Clearest proof. Of how sinful we are. That we would do that. That we would take a wonderful truth about how good god is to save sinners.

And use it to blame God for our own sin.

Well, that is the wicked question of sinners. Gives us something to mortify in ourselves. Gives us something if we have. A friend or a relation. Who thinks this way and speaks this way. Something to away of trying to help them. Think about why would you ask at that way?

Do you see? How the question itself is vindicating. God and condemning. You It's self-owning. Then you have the righteous revealing. Questions of god. It says, but indeed. Oh man. Who are you? To reply against God. Will the thing formed? Say to him, who formed it? Why? Have you made me like this?

Now, if we have seen that god and his sovereign superintending, Ordained. That there would be. Wicked ones. Who will? Wickedly and who do? Wickedly. And he, Is now, the wicked man is actually formed and he is wicked in himself. And he with real freedom is intending evil things and doing evil things like asking the question in verse 19.

And verse 20, basically puts to him, the The point that we have been making so far, That the one who's asking these questions? Who is ordained to be wicked. And now he has been formed in that way. And yet, the wickedness is his own. It is not gods. In fact.

Not only does he not get to fault god for his wickedness, as we've been thinking in verse 19? But it is perfectly legitimate for god verse 22. To want to show his wrath. And make his power known. What if god? Wanting to show his wrath. And to make his power known.

Isn't an amazing, how easily we are intimidated. By other people and what they will think to us and how they will feel. About the rightness and the justness of god. To display his wrath and to make his power known sometimes. We even want to pacify that resistance that comes from our own flash.

That we would be embarrassed. To say verse 22. God wants to show his wrath. It's right of him. It's an expression of one of his perfections. If he is. Infinitely and eternally and unchangeably. Committed to himself committed to truth committed to goodness committed to justness, justice committed to holiness if he is all of these things in himself.

And there are evil creatures. Then it is right for him to have wrath against those evil creatures. It is right for him to display his power against them. It would be wrong if God did not want to do that. He must. This is one of the reasons why at the end of chapter 3 there was this Wonder, and amazement.

The that god justifies sinners. By his grace in jesus christ. So that he could be both just and the justifier. Of the one who has faith in jesus, why? Because he remembered the language of exhibiting, the the courtroom language, he had exhibited christ, As a propitiation as one who had suffered under the fullness of the wrath of god for our sin.

And yet, when the wrath of god, had been fully expressed against all of the sin of everyone, who'd ever believe in jesus, the wrath was gone and jesus stood, Or hung. Later ascendant. Rose again from the dead and descendant. And it was right of god. To want to display his wrath at the cross.

And to want to display his power at the cross. And it is right of god to will To display his wrath and hell. And his power in hell. And we must not be ashamed. Of those things. The question then isn't why he finds fault? But why he saves? And why his patient even with those who aren't being saved?

The real wonder as far as the potter's purposes. Is not. That he makes vessels of wrath. From the lump of wrath deservers. That's what you expect. From a clay lump of raft deservers. Vessel of breath, vessel of breath, vessel of breath, vessel breath, all vessels of breath. That's what you expect.

But he doesn't just make that one kind of vessel. He makes two. He has power over the clay from the same lump. Not only to make the vessels for dishonored. But to make vessels for honor. And he does. And so the question is, why? And that's what verses 22 and through.

23 are answering. Because he wanted to display his mercy. He displays his glory. And his wrath. He displays his glory. In the display of his power. But here's enduring with much long suffering. Vessels of wrath prepared. For destruction, so that he may display so that he may make known The riches.

Of his glory. On vessels prepared for mercy. Now, this is amazing, then He's being patient. With ones who are under wrath. Now, this is that can be for two different reasons. That's much long suffering here. In this verse, Is specifically for vessels that are prepared for destruction. What we would call the reprobate.

Those who will not be saved. Those who Hate god. Sin against him. They do not care to repent. They will not repent. The parish in their sin. And yet. There are some who are currently under wrath, aren't there. Who are going to believe. There are those who is ephesians 2 says are by nature children of wrath.

Can the lord is going to give life and bring to faith. And one of the things that he is going to do, Is to show them. That the fact that they are not yet in hell does not mean That they don't deserve it, it means that god is being patient and kind.

And when the spirit gives them to see their own wickedness and their own hatefulnes towards god and god's patience and kindness and mercy towards them. That patience is going to be used by the holy spirit to lead them to repentance, which is the right response. Isn't it? To seeing how patient God is.

You who are believers sometimes, Your trouble, don't you? By. How wicked the world is. Maybe wickedness in the culture. Maybe as you become more aware of, How profoundly the first table of the law is broken in many of the churches. You become troubled. Over wickedness in the churches. And you think?

How can god put up with all of this? And of course, the answer from the scripture and the answer, the obvious answer. Is because he's patient. Because he's a merciful. And it ought to draw the response from us, shouldn't it then? Oh, How worthy he is of my repentance.

How worthy he is of my hating my sin. Turning to him. This is what god's patience. Demands that we do calls pleads urges. Us to do. Chapter 2. You remember? Do you despise the riches? Of his goodness forbearance and long suffering. Not knowing that, the goodness of god leads you to repentance.

But in accordance with your hardness, And your impenitent heart. You are treasuring up for yourself, wrath in the day of wrath. And revelation of the righteous judgment of god. And so, you take chapter 2 with chapter 9. And there are those who God is being patient with Who are never going to turn.

And yet he's showing them much long suffering. They are. Spurning. This opportunity that he gives them this chapter 2 verses 4 through 5 opportunity that he gives them. And his judgment will be vindicated by their rejection of his patients. But even his mercy towards others. The vessels prepared for mercy is good enough.

Reason with him. To bear with much long suffering. Vessels prepared for destruction. You see the point here. It's not just further vindicating, the justice and righteousness. Of his wrath. When it is finally displayed. The great point, the primary point, the priority, Is his mercy. And his glory in his mercy.

And so, the Apostle, by the spirit communicates that this is primary by that word riches. In verse 23. That he might make known the Riches. Of his glory. The riches of his glory and the vessels of mercy. Now we see this point even using the similar illustration similar language and second Corinthians chapter 4, don't we?

You remember, when? Uh, Paul was explaining why he doesn't make his preaching delivery glorious. But rather, plain He makes his preaching delivery. Because the point of the preaching is that the holy spirit would come And he would remove the veil from the heart of the one who's hearings that they could see by faith who Jesus is and the light and of the knowledge of the glory of God would shine in their hearts and the face of Jesus Christ.

And that glory is given in earthen vessels intentionally. So now in that case, where the vessel is The preacher. He knows that the humility. The blindness, the unimpressiveness of his delivery is actually. Part of the plan. So that no one mistakes, the glory of the guy who got up and talked, No one mistakes.

The glory that those who hear perceive with. Any glorian that guy who got up and talked? Well, here, it's not just Earthen vessels. But hatred, deserving vessels. Like we heard about Esau. Point was not that, Jacob was better than Esau. But that. Jacob, having the same nature as Esau.

When he began saying and doing things, they would be the same sorts of things. Same womb, same parents, same time, same nature. You remember Pharaoh? Pharaoh wasn't made evil. He was hardened in his evil. He was thickened, he became more of what he was. Who's given up to be?

Consistently what he was.

And we, Or such vessels. So, when the Lord fills, The vessel. With mercy. It may be seen that all the mercy is from Him. Of Him. And not the vessel. But so great is His mercy that in this case, The vessel itself is made glorious. You see become a long way.

Don't we? In this passage from the lump to the final vessel. Because look at how verse 23 ends. The riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had prepared beforehand for glory. So that we Whom he four knew would be predestined to be conformed, to the image of the sun.

Enemy. And so this, this love that was set upon us in Jesus. And then this determination to make us like Jesus. It starts in in the actual work and the Christians life with calling and a calling that brings us to faith and the unites us to Jesus, and we become righteous before the the bar of God righteous in the court of God.

And even adopted as children. But then, He starts to make us holier and holier. He leads us by His spirit because we are His children to put to death, the deeds of the body. And then in the last day, He will raise us even redeem our body and complete the adoption.

And it's so sure to be done. You remember that? He said, those whom He justified, He also glorified

From the same lump. As He saw. And Pharaoh. And me. And you. You're the same in the lump, aren't you? Before He comes by saving grace. Before He calls. Before He gives faith. Before He justifies and adopt and sanctifies. And yet vessels that He makes from that lump end up glorious with the glory of Jesus.

And this is the richness of the display of the glory of god in vessels. That he prepares for mercy. This is how you and i should respond to the doctrine of election, the truth, the reality of election, the truth, the reality of free destination. That god was determined to show the riches of his glory by mercy.

There are holy angels, who never fell. But the riches of his glory. Our son by his mercy to sinful men. There are no wicked angels. There are no wicked spirits, who will be redeemed. And god will be glorified. In the wrath and the power that has made known upon them forever.

But the riches of his glory. The riches of his glory are going to be displayed forever. When these vessels who deserved the same as the demons. Are not only filled with his mercy. But made glorious like jesus.

Oh, how far? We come. If the holy spirit helps us. Get away from that, wicked questioning in verse 19. To give us to see. The richest of the glory of the mercy that were the point. Of the very thing, the verse 19 was complaining against

This helps, doesn't it with the question with, which chapter 9 began

For around the issue with which chapter 9 began How is it that there are Jews who are perishing? Are they all deserved wrath? Just like all the gentiles. Deserved breath. But god has chosen. From among jews first. And gentiles second. To show the riches of his glory. And vessels prepared for mercy.

This is why Paul isn't embarrassed. To preach this gospel. That everywhere he's gone has been spoken against in that way. Because it is the power of god. For salvation. First for the jew. And then for the gentile,

You see the priority is on god's mercy, it's on God's goodness. It's on god's love because The. Reprobet or not ordained to perish in jesus christ. They're not in jesus christ. But the elect Or ordained to be saved. In jesus christ. We mentioned this briefly last week, didn't we?

That The reason. That mercy has priority. Is because love Is eternal. While wrath. Has a beginning. God is love in himself. Father, son and holy spirit. Mutual adoration and fellowship and delight from everlasting to everlasting. And then displaying the riches of his glory. In his mercy, he brings us Into that fellowship.

Brings us into that joy. Has wrath only exists with respect to the creature. So, it is Incorrect and inappropriate to say, god is rough. But it is right to say what the scripture. God is love. And so, his mercy has. Priority. The doctrines, the realities of election and predestination.

Should make your heart to well up with all struck. Gratitude thankfulness. And this thankfulness should issue forth. Overflowing from our hearts out of our mouths. In the praise of the riches of his glory. Which are displayed. Especially And has mercy. Amen.