

God's Mercy on Full Display

God displays His glory in many ways. Psalm 19:1 says that “the heavens are declaring the glory of the Lord.” Creation reveals the glory of God - that He is powerful and radiant and beautiful and creative. In the passage we are looking at today, Paul also says that God is committed to making known His glory through “vessels of mercy.” In other words, people see how glorious God really is when they see how merciful He has been. Today's passage specifically points out that people should see God's mercy, and thus His glory, on full display in our lives.

Opening Discussion: When you think about the glory of God, what is the first thing that pops into your mind?

Read Romans 9:23-29

1. What do we learn about God from this passage?
2. What does this passage say about how God's mercy is displayed through His saving activity among the Gentiles (vv. 25-26)? How does Paul use the two passages from Hosea that he cites (Hosea 2:23 & 1:10) to make this point?
3. Read 1 Peter 2:9-10. Peter also cites Hosea. What does Peter say that God's mercy has accomplished in our lives? How would we live our lives (i.e. put God's mercy on full display) if we fully accepted that this is our calling and our identity?
4. In Romans 9:27-29, Paul is speaking of God's activity among the Jews. What does Paul say about how God has revealed his mercy among the Jews?

Steve said:

I'd like to challenge all of us who believe in Jesus to accept this simple truth: ***People should see how glorious God is when they see His mercy on full display in our lives.*** Do you accept that God's reputation in this world is bound up with our experience of His mercy? Do you accept that God says, "If you want to know how glorious I really am, look at My people. Notice how I have lavished mercy upon them in Christ Jesus"?

5. What do you think about this idea that "God's reputation in this world is bound up with our experience of mercy"?

Steve said:

In light of everything we've discussed this morning, I'd like to encourage you to ***think through ways that you are an "object of God's mercy."*** If this is our calling, it seems to me that we should accept it and understand it. Think about ***past mercy you've received.*** If you're a follower of Christ, think of the mercy God showed you in drawing you to Himself.

6. What are some of the ways that you have received mercy in the past?

Steve said:

Think about ***the mercy you need this week.*** If you and I didn't have any weaknesses or temptations, we wouldn't need mercy and grace, would we? We would be self-sufficient and wouldn't need God's help. But since we have so many weaknesses and since we face so many temptations, we desperately need mercy and grace. And so (as we're urged in Hebrews 4:16), we "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

7. What are ways that you know that you will need God's mercy this week?