

Study Guide for January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Is God Unfair? Romans 9:14-18.

Introduction: When have you thought of God as being unfair? What is your thought now?

I. The Charge against God – Injustice: (Rom. 9:14)

- A. How might Paul's readers accuse God of being unfair? (Look back to vs. 10-13)
- B. When and how does God call people? (Look again at the illustration in vs. 10-13)
- C. Compare Paul's style and content here with that in (Rom. 3:5-6).
- D. What is Paul's resounding answer to his own question?

II. God's freedom in extending Mercy: (Rom. 9:15-16)

- A. Review the dialogue between God and Moses in Ex. 33:12-23 and then answer. . .
  - 1) What is the setting for this interchange?
  - 2) What does Moses eventually ask God to do?
  - 3) In what sense does ... God not grant Moses' request? . . . God grant the request?
  - 4) What is revealed about God's character through the quotation Paul cites?
- B. What conclusion does Paul draw (vs. 16)? What does God's mercy not depend on?
- C. How have you experienced God's mercy freely extended to you?

III. God's freedom in causing Hardening: (Rom. 9:17-18)

- A. Compare the speaking agent here (vs. 17) with that in (vs. 15)? What do we learn?
- B. What is the stated purpose behind God's raising up of Pharaoh?
- C. How is Pharaoh's hard heart explained? (See Ex. 4:21, 7:3, 9:12, 14:4,7)
- D. Was God unjust to do use Pharaoh for the display of His power? Why not?

Conclusion: Comment on the following quote by John Stott, "The wonder is not that some are saved and others not, but that anybody is saved at all. For we deserve nothing at God's hand but judgment. If we receive what we deserve (which is judgment), or if we receive what we do not deserve (which is mercy), in neither case is God unjust. If anybody is lost, the blame is theirs, but if anybody is saved, the credit is God's."