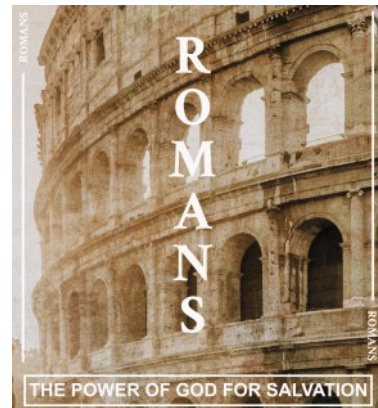


What Children Stop Saying

Romans 9:10-16

¹⁰ And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, ¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— ¹² she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” ¹³ As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” ¹⁴ What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” ¹⁶ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.



What Children Say

The *Hard* Statement that Exposes *Hidden* Assumptions

“Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” - Vs.13

Three Assumptions Exposed

#1- We have a claim on His _____

#2 - We have a claim on His _____

#3 - We have a claim on His _____

Small Group Discussion Guide

Romans 9:10-16

Icebreaker: "Things We Said as Kids"

When children don't understand a decision made by their parents, they can say some pretty intense things—often things they don't truly mean. As they grow and mature, they (hopefully) stop saying those things—unless something goes wrong. Share a few funny, dramatic, or familiar examples of things kids say when they feel something is "unfair."

The Big Idea - Romans 9 confronts us with one of the hardest statements in Scripture—a statement that even Christians find difficult to understand. Like everyone else, believers sometimes wrestle with thoughts and feelings that question God's righteousness. But one mark of spiritual maturity—and evidence that we are truly children of God—is that, over time, we stop saying those things. Why? Because the hidden assumptions behind our objections are exposed as false. This passage brings at least three of those assumptions to the surface.

Wrestling with the Hard Saying (Read Romans 9:10–16 and discuss):

- In light of the verses before and after, what is this passage saying?
- How do you respond—emotionally or intellectually—to what it says?
- Paul seems to anticipate our reaction. How would you paraphrase the objections raised in verses 14 and 18?
- In Scripture, difficult or provocative statements often expose hidden assumptions we didn't realize we held. Can you think of anything Jesus said that functioned this way?

Hidden Assumptions Exposed (Work through each assumption together. Use the points below to guide discussion.)

Assumption #1: We Have a Claim on God's Love

- The objection of unfairness in Romans 9:13–15 assumes we have a *right* to God's love. But in this passage, His love is expressed as **mercy**—which by definition is not owed to anyone.
- If God owed love to people based on something good in them, He would become the debtor, and humans the creditor—reversing the Creator-creature relationship.
- Children of the *flesh* (like Esau) continue to operate out of entitlement. Children of the *promise* (like Jacob) grow in the realization that God's love is undeserved.

Assumption #2: We Have a Claim on His Blessings

- We will either see the blessings of life as **gifts of mercy** or as **wages owed** to us.
- A mercy mindset sees every good thing—health, friends, talents, even each day—as undeserved kindness from God. By contrast, entitlement is our default posture. From the moment we learn the word “mine,” we believe the world owes us.
- That entitlement, if not addressed, leads to bitterness, envy, dissatisfaction, and strained relationships.
- Children of God grow increasingly uncomfortable with that mindset and instead learn to live with deep, humble gratitude.

Assumption #3: We Have a Claim on His Salvation

- Many people—especially the religious—carry a subtle belief that salvation is something they’ve earned or deserve. This is often expressed as *exoneration* (“I’ve always been good deep down”) rather than *justification* (“I am guilty, but I’ve been declared righteous through mercy”).
- Romans 9:14–16 teaches that salvation comes solely by mercy—not by anything good deep down.
- Paul points to Exodus 33&34 to illustrate this truth. How does it?
- How does this story of Exodus point to Jesus as real place to put all of our trust for salvation?

Closing Prayer - Invite the group to respond by praying that God would help them:

- Grow out of spiritual entitlement and into deeper gratitude.
- See His love and blessings as mercies, not wages.
- Hide themselves fully in Christ, the true Rock of Ages.

Resources

Romans: Righteousness from Heaven | R. Kent Hughes

www.blueletterbible.org

www.biblehub.com

www.preceptaustin.org