

This concludes our study on "Operation Outreach!" Here are the notes from the message. I pray that you will read them and be challenged to win souls for Christ!

Romans 9:1-5, 10:1 OPERATION OUTREACH! Study # 4

Text: Rom 9:2, 10:1

THE PASSION FOR OUTREACH!

It is significant that these verses immediately follow Rom 8, for only a person who knows the Spirit-filled life which is taught in Rom 8 can fully appreciate the evangelistic heartthrob of Rom 9.

From a Doctrinal Standpoint, this section reveals how God, in sovereign righteousness, relates His purposes of grace to His ancient people, the Jews.

From a Practical Standpoint, this section of the letter sets forth the nature of a true PASSION for souls particularly as it relates to those we are trying to win sinners to Jesus.

Notice Paul's words as we study: The Passion For Outreach!

I. THE REALITY OF A TRUE PASSION FOR SOULS! Roman 9:1

In these words Paul traces the beginning of a real PASSION FOR SOULS. He says that there must be:

A. A TRUE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST!

Vs 1a I say the truth in Christ, I lie not.

Paul is literally saying "I am telling you the truth as a Christian."

I believe that the thought behind the apostle's words is that an experience of Christ is inseparably associated with a PASSION FOR SOULS. In other words, no one can be a Christian without sharing at least some of the Savior's burden for the lost.

We need to ask if our salvation is simply head knowledge, or if it generates a concern that others might know Jesus Christ.

B. A TRUE EXERCISE OF CONSCIENCE! Vs 1b

Intimacy with God is always followed by an EXERCISE OF CONSCIENCE. The Holy Ghost sees to it that the heartthrob of Christ for the lost are echoed in our CONSCIENCE.

We are so exercised in CONSCIENCE regarding jealousy, pride, stealing, lying, swearing, and other sins, yet fail to have any concern about relatives, neighbors and friends who are going to Hell? The obvious answer is that our fellowship with Christ is not close enough to hear the Holy Spirit's witness to our CONSCIENCE.

II. THE REGULARITY OF A TRUE PASSION FOR SOULS! Romans 9:2

Paul's concern for souls was nothing sporadic; it was a continual heaviness and anguish of heart, on behalf of the lost.

A. IT WAS CONTINUAL HEAVINESS! Vs 2 "I have great heaviness"

Paul suggest that the weight of concern grew heavier each day. It lasted as long as he lived.

Often our experience is just the opposite. In the joy of our first love we were eager to win the lost. We prayed, watched, and sought opportunities to win the lost; but as the days passed so did the burden until, but now we are careless and unmoved about soul winning.

Paul said, "...I have great heaviness..."

B. IT WAS CONTINUAL HEARTBREAK! Vs 2 I have continual sorrow

Sheer heaviness led the apostle to shed tears; not crocodile tears, but Holy Ghost tears. In Acts 20:31 he reminded his brethren that for three years he "...ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Paul was not the only man who wept for souls. Jesus "...offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears..." – Hebrews 5:7. No wonder He was called "...a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief..." – Isaiah 53:3.

1. Jesus Wept Over The Individual!

At the grave of Lazarus, in John 11:33, we read “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping...he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” And then Scripture adds in Vs 35, “Jesus wept”.

2. Jesus Wept Over The Crowd!

Mark 6:34 Jesus...saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd...

3. Jesus Wept Over The City!

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

We must remember that Heaven will be occupied by people who know how to weep over souls down here. In that day, those “who have sown in tears shall reap in joy”. God observes us when we weep and stores our tears in a bottle. The Psalmist said in Psalm 56:8, “Thou...put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?”

II) One of the greatest soul winners R. A. Torrey ever knew was Colonel Clark of Chicago. He would work six days a week and spend every evening with 500-600 men in a mission hall. It was a motley crowd: drunkards, thieves, pickpockets, gamblers; the hopeless. When Torrey visited the mission and heard Clark speak he thought he was one of the most boring men he had ever heard. Yet, these hundreds of men sat spellbound while Clark addressed them in his mellow way.

Other great preachers would come to help Clark, but they did not get the same attentive hearing that the men gave to Colonel Clark. When he would speak they would lean over and listen and be converted by the score.

Torrey soon discovered the secret. The men loved Clark because he loved them; and nothing conquers like love. Tears were very near the surface with Colonel Clark. Once in the early days of the mission, he had been weeping a great deal over these men, he got ashamed of his tears. He asked God to harden his heart and stop crying but lost his power. He realized that his power was gone so he prayed “Oh, God, give me back my tears.” God did so and gave him wonderful power with these men.

III. THE REDEMPTIVENESS OF A TRUE PASSION FOR SOULS! Romans 9:3

This is where we begin to struggle. In our attempt to understand Paul's statement we must realize that the key is to be found in the words REDEMPTIVE PASSION.

A. Redemptive Passion ADOPTS THE SHAME OF WINNING SINNERS!

Paul was prepared to identify himself with those he was trying to win. He calls them his "brethren" and "kinsmen" – Vs 3. While the Jews had been favored with unique privileges in the past, they were now blind – Roman 11:25. How sad that people who were the recipients of divine glory, the Covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God, were now blind!

Boastful in their own zeal, they tried "to establish their own righteousness" rather than God's – Roman 10:2-3. So, Paul had to share the shame of their pride, arrogance, hardness of heart, and their bitterness. Prophets of old had been killed and altars destroyed – Romans 11:3.

Even Paul had been beaten, stoned, and nearly slain. Yet, in spite of their treatment of him he was willing to be counted as a Jew in order that he might win the Jews.

B. Redemptive Passion ACCEPTS THE SACRIFICE OF WINNING SINNERS!

As you study the Bible it reveals that the redemption of LOST SINNERS does not come without some sacrifice on the part of LIVING SAINTS!

In Vs 3 Paul said, "I could wish...myself accursed from Christ". He was prepared to go to Hell, if it meant his kinsmen might be saved.

While that could never happen, because it would involve self-robbery from the Lord who bought him, Paul wanted to convey the extraordinary lengths he was prepared to go, in terms of his REDEMPTIVE PASSION! For the Savior, such REDEMPTIVE PASSION meant Calvary's cross, where he tasted death for all men – Hebrews 2:9. Therefore, that death never has to be repeated! Praise the Lord!

Yet, make no mistake; there is an aspect of REDEMPTIVE suffering that is the believer's part to share, if he is prepared to go all the way with God in His desire to save sinners.

Dr. John H. Jowett once said that "the gospel of a broken heart begins with the ministry of a bleeding heart. As soon as we cease to bleed for others, (suffer or labor) we cease to bless others."

II) When Charles Peace, a notorious English murderer, experienced the power of the cross of Christ, he said he would be willing to walk barefoot on broken glass throughout all of Britain in order to tell the story of Christ's power to save.

C. Redemptive Passion ANTICIPATES THE SATISFACTION OF WINNING SINNERS!

In Romans 10:1 Paul tells us that his "...heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

The SATISFACTION of a sinner being saved is the resurrection from the depths of shame and sacrifice into which a soul winner plunges in his search for sinners who are lost in sin. This is the true joy of the "crown of rejoicing" for every soul winner – I Thessalonians 2:19.

In the ministry of His REDEMPTIVE PASSION, our Lord despised the shame and endured the cross. Jesus not only had the joy of doing the will of God, but of bringing many sons to glory.

Con: What a ministry THIS REDEMPTIVE PASSION is! Do you know anything about it in your life? Am I speaking to people who understand this language, or is this matter of suffering with Christ something foreign to you?

My friend, this concern for the lost is not a matter of mere emotional stirrings. Through the work of the Holy Ghost we must deliberately accept this fellowship of REDEMPTIVE suffering.

Through an ever-increasing intimacy with Christ we learn something of the meaning of His cross, the value He sets on the human soul, the eternal doom of the lost sinner, the nearness of His return which He has foretold, and the immeasurable loss or gain at His Judgment Seat which He has declared awaits the believer.

Do you possess?: The Passion For Outreach! Maybe we need to get on the altar and ask God to Break Us; to break our hearts, and to Burden Us about the sinners who will spend eternity in Hell if we do not sacrifice to try to win them.