

Not By Our Effort

Description

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Romans 9:1-21

In Romans 9:1-21, the apostle Paul talks about Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Christ. The Jews not only rejected Jesus, but they also thought they must earn God's favor through works, thus rejecting God's mercy through Jesus. When we consider our inclusion in God's family, it is only by His mercy that this is possible: "It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy" (v. 16).

In fact, most religions are "works"-based. One of my missionary friends has befriended some Mormon missionaries. In their conversations, my friend kept saying to the Mormons that God's grace is a free gift. There is nothing we can do to earn salvation. Their reply was consistent; they said, "Nothing in life is free. Whatever we get in life, we have to earn." So, my friend took his friends to a restaurant and paid for their food. This act of Christlike love illustrated effectively that there truly are things in life that we can't earn, but are just simply a free gift.

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