*Northwest Bible Church – May. 30, 2004 – Worship Service – Alan Conner*

**Romans 9:1-3**

*Paul's Personal Lament for Israel*

**INTRO**      
**I. EARNEST DEFENSE OF HIS SORROW**  
    "I am telling the truth in Christ" – Positive.   
    "I am not lying" – Negative.   
    "My conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit" – Positive.   
      
        Why is it necessary that Paul defend his sincerity?  
  
         
**II. EXPRESSION OF HIS SORROW**  
    "I have great sorrow"  
    "and unceasing grief"  
    "in my heart"  
  
        1) Paul has no anger toward them, in light of how they were treating him.  
  
        2) What is so amazing is that Paul is going to write in a few verses some of the greatest verses on election in all the Bible.   
  
  
**III. EXTENT OF HIS SORROW**  
    A. The nature of the sacrifice. ACCURSED   
  
        Why are they anathema? Because from the divine side they were "vessels of wrath," from the human side because of their sin and unbelief (9:30-32). They had zeal for God but without knowledge (10:2), and because God’s Old Covenant made with Israel was not a covenant of salvation (v. 6).  
  
        What does Paul mean by his wish?   
  
            1) He does not mean that such a thing is possible?   
  
            2) He is speaking with an idiom. "I would wish, if possible, to be cursed from Christ, but of course such a wish is impossible." For a similar use of imperfect see Gal. 4:20.  
  
    B. The objects of his sacrifice. "MY BRETHREN, MY KINSMEN, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, WHO ARE ISRAELITES."   
  
    C. The love behind the sacrifice.  
  
        1) It is a sacrificial love. See "for the sake of" (Grk. Huper ), probably here includes the idea of "in the place of." He is willing to take their curse upon himself. Cf. Moses’ prayer in Exod. 32:32-33.   
  
        2) It is a God-centered love. Paul’s willingness to sacrifice himself for unbelieving Israel comes not only out of his love for his own people, but also for the glory of God. If God’s reputation was really at stake, if Israel’s lost condition really did seem incompatible with God’s promises to them, then he would be willing to sacrifice himself not only out of his love for his people but out of his love for the honor of God.  
    But as v. 6 will explain, God’s truthfulness and faithfulness to His promises do not fail but will be carried out exactly as they were intended.   
  
        3) It is a Christ-like love. Christ taught his disciples to love this way: Jn. 13:34; 15:12-13; 1 Jn. 3:16. But Paul’s wish exceeds this!  
  
  
        4) Is this a love that we should imitate?   
  
**CONCLUSION**  
    1) Can anyone in their right mind say that the doctrine of election leads to **NO EVANGELISM AND CONCERN FOR THE LOST.**              
    2) See God’s sovereign hand in guiding Paul in his ministry to be uniquely the apostle to the Gentiles and not to the Jews.   
  
    3) May God give us this godly sorrow for those on their way to hell. See how Paul’s deep concern for Israel did not stop there but also led to his praying for the lost (10:1), and preaching to them, and desiring to send out missionaries (10:14). He himself was a missionary to the Jews.  
  
**WHO ARE YOU PRAYING FOR THAT GOD WOULD SAVE THEM?**