



TEACHER: BETH SEIFERT

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Day 1: Ephesians 1:1-9 Overview and Introduction

Read Romans 5:6-11. When did Christ die for us, the ungodly?

How does God demonstrate His love for us? What does verse 9 tell us we need to be saved from? What is it that saves us from that? What is our relationship with God through the death of Christ? What have we received through Christ?

Read Hebrews 10:5-10. The Hebrews writer attributes these words from the Old Testament to also being appropriate for Christ to have spoken. What does he say that God has not desired? What did Christ come to do? What has Christ's sacrifice done for us? Is this necessary to be repeated? How is that different from what the Jews of the time would have assumed?

Read Romans 9:14-24. Paul asks what he considers a rhetorical question here. Do you agree with his answer to this question? What implications does that have for the world in which we live? What, according to Paul, does God's mercy and compassion depend upon? How does Paul answer the argument that says "God can't hold me responsible for my sins if He hasn't shown mercy to me."? What possibilities does Paul give for God choosing to create some men for honorable use and some for dishonorable?

What do Romans 9 and Ephesians 1 tell us about why God has chosen some to be saved? What does that tell you about your own effort to earn favor with God? Heart motive matters; if you are obeying only to gain favor, you aren't obeying with a heart that understands that Christ had to die for you.

As you spend time with God today, ask God to help you to trust Him more and to accept His hand and His will in your life, even when you don't like it or understand it. Ask him to help you to learn more about Him daily, to understand His will better, and to lean on Him for strength in every task. Thank Him that He does show mercy on us, and pray for those who have rejected the mercy He has offered, understanding the eternal consequences for their unbelief.