

## Study of Romans – Lesson 6

### ***The Irrevocable Gifts and Calling of God***

*At a Glance:* <sup>29</sup>**for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.** Eugene Peterson translated this verse this way: *God's gifts and God's call are under full warranty—never canceled, never rescinded!*

#### **Opening Prayer:**

#### ***Together:***

**Thank you God that your plans are greater than anything we could conceive. Amen.**

#### **Prelude to reading: Mark**

***11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup>God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? <sup>29</sup>for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup>Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup>so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now\* receive mercy. <sup>32</sup>For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.***

#### **Postlude to Reading: Mark**

#### **Reflection:**

*For centuries Israel longed for the coming of the Messiah. But when Jesus came, many Jewish people did not accept him as Messiah and king. This situation has persisted to the point where Christianity is now considered a Gentile religion. Now I used the last words of chapter 11 as a prayer to conclude the sermon, but let's read them together:*

***33 O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments' and how inscrutable his ways!***

***<sup>34</sup> 'For who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?'***

***<sup>35</sup> 'Or who has given a gift to him,  
to receive a gift in return?'***

<sup>36</sup>**For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.**

**Group Discussion:**

- ❖ **What happened to God's promises and plans for Israel? Has God rejected his chosen people?**
  
- ❖ **What guidance do these last three chapters of Romans provide for appropriate Christian-Jewish relations today? How do the events of the Holocaust inform our reading of Romans and our relationship with Jews? What subtle kinds of anti-Semitism are preset around you?**
  
- ❖ **The twists and turns of life present some ironic occurrences. What was intended for good sometimes sours and sometimes a bad event has positive consequences. What are some examples of things that have turned out better than intended?**

**Reflections from my Journal – Mark Petersen**

*Bottom line, perhaps Pastor Dennis J. Meaker put it best when he wrote us, saying that what we learn here is that "God does not give up on his commitments simply because they do not seem to be working out as planned."*

**Wrap up:**

**God is working his purpose out...**

**By the mouth of many messengers goes forth the voice of God...**

**All we can do is nothing worth, unless God blesses the deed...**

**Yet, nearer and nearer draws the time,**

**The time that shall surely be,**

**When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God,**

**As the waters cover the sea.**

(Arthur Campbell Ainger)

**Closing Prayer:** What is irrevocable in your life?

Let us pray together:

**<sup>33</sup>O the depth of riches and wisdom and knowledge of you O Lord! How unsearchable are your judgments and how inscrutable your ways! <sup>34</sup>"For who has known your mind O Lord? Or who has been your counselor?" <sup>35</sup>"Or who has given a gift to you, to receive a gift in return?" <sup>36</sup>For from you and through you and to you are all things. To you, Lord be the glory forever. Amen.**

***Sending:***

P: Go forth from this place, confident of God's call on your life, and assured of God's mercy. Use your God-given gifts to the glory of God.