

# GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

## God's Strategy in Human History

### Week 3: God's Strategy Regarding Hardening

Romans 9:17-18

Week of August 16, 2020

(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Our study of Romans 9 brought us to one of God's most unsettling strategies – "The Doctrine of Divine Hardening." We learned that sometimes God works to affect the hearts of people in ways that seem to push them away. Our study revealed how these short-term losses actually yield great wins in the long run.

**Kicking it off:** In a desperate attempt to remain optimistic in extremely difficult times, share one thing that you are you looking forward to this fall?

#### Discussion:

1. Reread *Romans 9:17* God says of Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."

How did blessing Pharaoh end in proclaiming God's power? Can you think of ways that God's blessings in our lives can result in the proclamation of His glory?

2. Reread *Romans 9:18* God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

Do you recall why God hardened Pharaoh's heart? Can you think of any ways that God still uses spiritually rebellious people to advance His cause?

3. Reread *Romans 11:25* Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

How did God use the strategy of hardening to reach the Gentiles?

4. Reread the theme that repeats in *Romans 1:24, 26 & 28*

Verse 24 - God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts.

Verse 26 - God gave them over to shameful lusts.

Verse 28 - God gave them over to a depraved mind.

How is it that letting people dive into their desired sin could have redemptive results in the long run?

5. Do you know of anyone that turned to the Lord after hitting "rock bottom?" If so, tell the group about them.
6. How hard is your heart these days? Indicate on a scale of 1 (soft & healthy) to 10 (rock hard).
7. How would you advise someone who is concerned their heart is growing increasingly hard?

**Wrapping It Up:** Pray for God to soften your heart. Ask Him to increase your love for Him, your hatred of sin and your passion for His kingdom.