

**Title: 1 2 3 Go - Romans 9 1-13**

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Read:

<sup>1-5</sup> At the same time, you need to know that I carry with me at all times a huge sorrow. It's an enormous pain deep within me, and I'm never free of it. I'm not exaggerating—Christ and the Holy Spirit are my witnesses. It's the Israelites...If there were any way I could be cursed by the Messiah so they could be blessed by him, I'd do it in a minute. They're my family. I grew up with them. They had everything going for them—family, glory, covenants, revelation, worship, promises, to say nothing of being the race that produced the Messiah, the Christ, who is God over everything, always. Oh, yes! <sup>6-9</sup> Don't suppose for a moment, though, that God's Word has malfunctioned in some way or other. The problem goes back a long way. From the outset, not all Israelites of the flesh were Israelites of the spirit. It wasn't Abraham's sperm that gave identity here, but God's promise. Remember how it was put: "Your family will be defined by Isaac"? That means that Israelite identity was never racially determined by sexual transmission, but it was God-determined by promise. Remember that promise, "When I come back next year at this time, Sarah will have a son"? <sup>10-13</sup> And that's not the only time. To Rebecca, also, a promise was made that took priority over genetics. When she became pregnant by our one-of-a-kind ancestor, Isaac, and her babies were still innocent in the womb—incapable of good or bad—she received a special assurance from God. What God did in this case made it perfectly plain that his purpose is not a hit-or-miss thing dependent on what we do or don't do, but a sure thing determined by his decision, flowing steadily from his initiative. God told Rebecca, "The firstborn of your twins will take second place." Later that was turned into a stark epigram: "I loved Jacob; I hated Esau."

Think:

So you hear the best Album by your favourite band ever, what do you do? You go to the best website on the net, what do you do? We know what you do. You text, email, phone your mates. The next day at college the talk is about nothing else, but this great new discovery. When we find something cool we can't wait for those we know to hear about it. But what happens when you mates say, "nah that band is rubbish." Or maybe they go to the website and say "this other site is much better." We probably get a bit peeved, and maybe upset that they don't can't see how great this new discovery is. So what about those who, don't see how cool Jesus is? So what if you mates or even your family don't understand your commitment to God? That's the same situation that the guy who wrote this passage is in. He even says, "Look if it means I have to be hurt for my family to hear about Jesus then so be it." There is good news and there is bad news. The good news is that it's not your responsibility if they don't accept Jesus. The bad news is that it's not your responsibility if they don't accept Jesus. Whether they accept the greatest gift in the world is up to them. Your part in the whole Jesus thing is three fold. 1. Pray for them to come to know Jesus as their saviour. 2. Be the very best Christian you can be, be the best example you can be. And 3. Invite them along to events that your Church puts on, now and then, to discover for themselves. Outside of that it's up to them. It doesn't mean you won't feel sad for them, but every time they come into your mind is another chance to do step one, and pray that your family and friends discover what you already know.

Pray:

Lord thank you for my friends and family. Please Lord use me in any way you can for those who do not yet know you to discover who you are. Amen,

Action:

Do you have something you can invite a mate to this month? Pick up the phone now and invite them to it. If you don't have something them go and speak to a leader and put something on. Bye