

Daily Devotional, August 17, 2020

"Heart's Desire", (Romans 10:1, NKJV)

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved."
(Romans 10:1)

The Apostle Paul would often earnestly pray for his brethren. It pained him that they were heading for an eternal separation apart from God if they persisted in their rejection of His Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. Paul was even willing, if it were possible, to be accursed if they could be saved. In this we see the heart and compassion of Christ working through Paul, for his desire is to do the very same thing on behalf of those he loved that his Lord did. The Apostle writes, *"For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh"* (Romans 9:3). And of Jesus he writes, *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")"* (Galatians 3:13).

Paul was preaching and teaching night and day, and this is commendable. *"How shall they hear without a preacher? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:14,17). Yet sometimes his best efforts were not enough to produce decisions for Christ. So it is with us, when we share the gospel with those we love, and the word is summarily rejected. What did Paul do? He did not limit God. He did not pridefully think that it was entirely up to him to secure the conversion of a soul. It is the *"heart's desire and prayer to God"* that can effect a conversion of a soul. Paul understood that, and so he wrote it down for our instruction. Whatever your *"heart's desire"* is, let it be accompanied by *"prayer to God."* Where your abilities end, God's omnipotent abilities begin. Who knows if those loved ones you plead for may be saved? For it is written, *"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much"* (James 5:16).