HOLD ON TO YOUR LOVED ONES

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

 “My heart’s desire is for Israel to be saved.” This certainly sounds strange coming from the man who is the primary missionary to the Gentiles. He has been persecuted by the Jews. Jewish leaders have constantly sought to silence him by killing him. Paul has been beaten and left for dead. False accusations have been leveled at him and he has spent much time in prison because of their made up stories. According to the historical accounts he would ultimately be beheaded for the cause of Christ.

 The great Apostle Paul was himself a Jew. He was born of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee and raised up in the school of Gamaliel. He had at one time persecuted Christians and had been a staunch supporter of the Jewish traditions but after receiving Jesus and following the call of Christ he preached the gospel everywhere he went. God’s call for Paul was to take the gospel to the Gentiles.

 In spite of God’s call, Paul still held to the hope that his beloved Israel would be saved. Many Christians have come from homes of unbelievers but that is not a reason for them to give up on the ones they love. Though Paul would preach to the Gentiles and his Jewish brothers would try to destroy the work Paul had established, he would continue to pray that Israel would be saved. In fact, if he traveled to a place that had a synagogue he would go and preach in that Jewish gathering place. We too should pray that our loved ones will be saved. Some may seem to be living a hopeless life but nothing is impossible with God. Many hopeless lives have been saved. This is the Lord’s business. This is what he does. He saves lost sinners. Whether they are Jewish or Gentile, sinners qualify for salvation. He saves those who are young and those who are old and at any age in between. Some have not known that they needed a savior very long before they were saved but others have known many years that they were a poor lost sinner and because of their stubborn pride have waited before finally surrendering to Christ.

 Oh how we should hold on to our loved ones in prayer for their salvation. Satan has thrown so much at us in this modern day. Temptations seem so great. For many it seems impossible for them to overcome. If we surrender to God and resist the devil he will still flee from us. If ever we need a clear line of communication with God, it is today. We need to pray for our loved ones. We are not strong enough within ourselves to keep them from harm but we have a savior who is well able to save them from anything and everything Satan can approach them with. So, in the power of Christ, hold on to your loved ones!

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram