

Romans

Romans Chapter Ten

Romans 10:5-13

April 3, 2011

This is lesson number **84** in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

The Theme of the Letter

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

Title: Whoever Calls...

Romans 10:1-21

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." ⁶ But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above)⁷ or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.¹³ For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

That's as much as I intend to cover today but let's read the rest of the chapter.

¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

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18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

"Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world." 19 But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation." 20 But Isaiah is very bold and says: "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me." 21 But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people."

In the lesson on Romans 10:1-4 we recalled how in Chapters 1-8 that Paul teaches that God saves **individuals**. God called and **justified** Abraham and promised to make him the father of many nations. But God never promised anyone that He would **justify** an entire nation of people or justify anyone because they were a descendent of any ethnic group.

Remember that justification is the opposite of condemnation. To be justified is to be declared not guilty by a sovereign act of God. Justification is by grace through faith alone in the righteousness of Jesus of Nazareth who is the Christ.

Furthermore, God does not justify any individual sinner on the basis of who that sinner personally is or what that sinner might become; neither Jewish sinner nor Gentile sinner. Paul says that God's holy, just, and good law condemns everyone, both Jew and Gentile alike.

The controversy, when Paul wrote this letter, and it continues even in our day, is the idea that God will justify someone because they are born a Jew.

That is the issue with the interpretation of Romans 11:26:

"And so all Israel will be saved..."

The question is the interpretation of who is "Israel?"

And the only way to arrive at a correct understanding of 11:26 is to take Chapters 9, 10, and 11 together.

Paul was dealing with the Jewish rabbis' notion that because a man was a Jew according to the flesh that he was safe from condemnation. Romans 9:8 should forever silence the claim that a Jew will be saved because he is a Jew.

"... those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God;"

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It is only in the sovereign mercy of God by which anyone is chosen, called, and justified by the Father, born again by the Holy Spirit, and kept secure in preservation and perseverance by the intercession of the ascended Son of God until glorified to live forever with God.

Romans Chapter 9 makes **three vital points** that we must grasp before we can correctly interpret Romans Chapter 10.

Understand Chapter 9 before moving into Chapter 10 and then take 9 and 10 together before tackling Chapter 11.

The **first vital point** in Chapter 9 is that of God's sovereign choice of whomever He bestows mercy and compassion on is unaffected by anything in the person that God chooses. God is free to choose Isaac over Ishmael and God is free to love Jacob and to hate Esau and there is no unrighteousness with God.

What does this business with Isaac and Jacob mean? It means that God never intended to save anyone because they were Jews.

For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,

The **second vital point** in Chapter 9 is that Gentiles have always been included in God's sovereign choice.

To prove that from the OT Scripture, Paul quotes a prophecy from Hosea, which had its first application to the Jews who became separated from Jerusalem when the kingdom was divided into northern and southern kingdoms.

But in 9:24 Paul says that what Hosea prophesied now applies to Gentiles.

You must see how the NT interprets the OT. Quite often the NT will make a spiritual application of a literal prophecy. Paul's point in quoting Hosea is that if God can call those renegade Jews up in Samaria who was separated from the Commonwealth of Israel He can just as easily call Gentiles.

There is only one Gospel and whomever God has chosen, Jew or Gentile, is brought to faith in Christ through the Gospel. If that is not the truth then Paul and Peter and James, et al, all got it wrong.

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The **third vital point** in Chapter 9 is that only a remnant of the Jews will be saved. This revelation was a shock to Isaiah as he **cries out** concerning Israel: “The remnant will be saved!”

Then we saw in 10:1-4 that this same Apostle who had just written the classic Bible passage in Romans 9 on the sovereignty of God prays for Israel that they may be saved.

There is the sovereignty of God and human responsibility.

The correct understanding of the sovereignty of God does not lead to fatalism. Everything is ultimately according to God’s purpose and God ordains the means that will accomplish His purpose. God ordains prayer.

The person who does not pray to God through the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, has no Scriptural basis to think he is a child of God. God is sovereign and we must pray.

Trust God and use the means that He gives us.

In WWII there was a slogan: “Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!”

My last vegetable garden was a failure. Can I blame God by saying that if God intended for me to have tomatoes and squash and okra that I could just wait for them to appear? My garden failed because I did not tend to it. There was grass and weeds and bugs and very little else in my garden. Why?

My garden failed because I did not use the means at my disposal to have a bountiful crop. Am I going to sit back and say my crop failure is God’s fault? I could but I would be a fool to accuse God of being unfair.

What has a vegetable garden to do with the Gospel?

Can we neglect to tell others about Jesus Christ, and that He is the only way to God the Father, and the only way to be saved, by saying that God is sovereign in salvation and if He intends to save someone He will do it without the means of the Gospel?

That is exactly what the Hard-shells’ [anti-means] preach but it is a very wrong and damning view of the sovereignty of God. Read Romans 9 and bow in submission to the sovereignty of God. Then read Romans 10 and get busy telling others how God saves sinners!

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God has ordained the means of preaching to get the Gospel to those whom He has chosen to save and God uses the preaching of the Gospel to accomplish His purpose. That is what Chapter 10 teaches us. The sovereign God ordains the preaching of the Gospel of save sinners.

Paul said that his Jewish brothers did have zeal for God but not according to knowledge. It was not the case that they didn't know anything at all about God but they were ignorant of the most important thing that anyone can know about God. They were ignorant of the **righteousness of God**.

They were so busy trying to establish their own righteousness by supposing that they were actually keeping God's law that they were ignorant of the one thing that really mattered: The righteousness of God in Jesus Christ.

Surely now after 2000 years no one thinks that God is really going to consider what they can do as a reason for God to save them. No matter how sincere you are and no matter how religious and beneficial your good works may be they cannot be the reason that God saves you.

If you try to put your efforts in the place of the righteousness of God, you are ignorant of God's righteousness and you are trying to establish a righteousness of your own.

When a Baptist believes that it is their 'decision' that causes God to save them they are trying to establish a righteousness of their own. They can boast of their "decision."

A man may believe that it was a good thing that Jesus shed His precious blood on the cross and he may believe that Jesus died for his sins and that Jesus arose from the grave and still be lost. How can that be? If a man believes the facts of the Gospel but then adds anything that he must do in order to be saved he is trying to establish a righteousness of his own.

It is faith alone in Christ alone!

Will you blaspheme God by thinking that your efforts can add anything to what Jesus has already done for sinners?

This is deliberately facetious but I am making a point.

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“God I know you did a lot when you gave Your Only Begotten Son and He came into the world to save sinners and He went to the cross and made propitiation for sin. I am glad you did that God. And it was really great that He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures and is now ascended to the throne of power and authority.

“But God I want You to notice that I have preached thousands of sermons and I have given a lot of money to the church and to charity to help others and I really try to behave myself so I know that even though You made a good effort what I am counting on is that You will notice what I have done.”

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

What a dreadful day that will be when Jesus says to the deceived religious but lost, “Depart from Me...!”

The experts who rejected Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone, which was to them a stumbling stone, had taken the law and tried to establish their own righteousness by law keeping.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Christ did not do away with the law.

Christ is the aim and the goal of the law.

Paul said in

Romans 3:31

Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not!

On the contrary, we establish the law.

The law still works its purpose. The law cannot save, it only condemns.

But the law convicts us of sin and shows us our need for Christ. We establish the purpose of the law through the Gospel. Christ is the aim and the goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

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Then Paul continues to show how impossible it is for a man to be justified by the law. Chapter 10 takes us back to justification by faith.

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law,
"The man who does those things shall live by them."

Jesus told the Pharisees that Moses wrote about Him and that if they believed Moses they would believe Him.

Again, Paul brings in the OT Scripture to prove his claim.

Paul refers to Moses in Leviticus 18:5

You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.

Do you see how simple it is to establish a righteousness of your own?

All that is necessary to establish a righteousness of your own is for you to keep the law perfectly and never even once break a single law of God.

Keeping the law does not mean sometimes, it does not mean most of the time; it means all of the time!

Do you want to face God the Son in judgment and claim your own righteousness?

James 2:10

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Galatians 3:10-14

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 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"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

This is at the heart of the issue about trying to establish a righteousness of our own. Any vain attempt to be justified by something we can control is to rob God of the glory for being saved.

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6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above)

Paul once more uses the OT to make his point.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14

"For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

This is from Moses' farewell address on Mount Pisgah where he warned the people of a spirit of unbelief, because God has drawn near in the covenant of grace, and everything that pertains to their temporal and eternal good has been given to them by revelation from God.

Paul applies this OT sermon from Moses to the Gospel message.

Who will ascend into heaven? Will you deny the incarnation of the Son of God? The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Messiah has come!

Consider this. If the light given in the OT makes unbelief inexcusable, what can be said about the light that has been fully manifested in Jesus Christ?

You will try to ascend to heaven and travel across the sea to find a way to God but he is already very near to you.

You must believe that Jesus is sufficient.

7 or, "Who will descend into the abyss?"
(that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

It is just as impossible to get the truth from the grave. King Saul tried to commune with the dead by having the witch of En Dor call up Samuel.

First Samuel 28 tells the story. King Saul had rightly rid the country of mediums and spiritists but now he is afraid and disguises himself and asks the witch to call up Samuel.

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Well, God accommodated Saul, but Saul did not get the answer he wanted from God. Samuel said to Saul: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy?"

People are still trying to commune with the dead and God has forbidden that.

Ouija Boards were popular fifty or so years ago and people believed that the movement of the pallet over the board was under the control of spirits.

Séances are held in a vain attempt to commune with the dead.

Don't think for a minute that this is harmless entertainment.

Horoscopes or God's Word?

Deuteronomy 18:9-14

"When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.¹⁰ There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.¹² For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you.¹³ You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.¹⁴ For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you.

Isaiah 8:19-20

19 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?
20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

There is One who has come back from the dead in all His splendor of His Resurrection Life as the first-fruits of them that slept.

Death holds no terrors for the Christian for the sting of death is sin and Jesus has died for the sin of His people.

"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above)⁷ or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

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Christ has come down from heaven and Christ has risen from the dead and lives forever more.

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

Paul again refers to Deuteronomy, which we have quoted already,

30:14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

The 'word of faith' is the word to which faith is directed, not the word which faith utters [John Murray]. If the modern 'Word – Faith' preachers knew that they would be out of business.

It is the word preached and therefore the message of Christ that brings the gospel into our mouth and heart.

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Paul puts confession before belief in order to follow Deuteronomy 30:18 {vs. 8}, and then inverts them in the next verse to show the order of experience.

that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus

The first century church had not become so sophisticated that it needed lengthy formulas to define the faith.

"Jesus is Lord," was pregnant with meaning.

There were gods everywhere. Go with Paul to Athens and see the city given over to idols. There is even a statue to the 'unknown god.' Caesar was a god to the Romans. But what cost Christians their life was to believe in their heart and say out loud, "Jesus is Lord!"

The Romans under Caesar did not care if you called Jesus a god but they would kill you if you said, "Jesus is Lord!" to the exclusion of all other gods.

1 Corinthians 12:3

Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

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If you deny Jesus you are not saved!

Luke 12:8-9

"Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. 9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead,

“The part is put for the whole, for to believe that ‘God has raised Christ from the dead, involves the belief that Christ is all that He claimed to be, and that He has accomplished all that He came to perform.” [Charles Hodge]

You don't need to be reminded that the ‘heart’ is your very being.
The heart is not mere emotion; the heart is all that you are.

you will be saved.

Do you believe the message of the cross? Do you believe that you must have the righteousness of God or you will be forever condemned? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ and all that means in the Word of God?

Can you confess with your mouth what is in your heart?

you will be saved.

Don't make your own salvation impossible by adding what you can do to what Jesus has done. Confess Him as Lord before men.

You see with Romans 9 as my background I am not worried that I will sound like those preachers who place the power and ability to be saved in man himself.

I am not saying, “Let God save you,” as though you could do that. I am saying “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

You who were dead in trespasses and sins, but now live, confess that Jesus is Lord!
Trust your soul to the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

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Calvin aptly points out that confession is not the cause of salvation but is the necessary consequence of a living faith. God accomplishes salvation by creating faith, which He has put into our hearts, shows itself by confession.

“It is quite nonsensical to insist that there is fire, when there is neither flame nor heat. Where saving faith lives in the heart there will be confession that Jesus is Lord.” [John Calvin]

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Paul quotes Isaiah 28:16 again. He has already quoted Isaiah 28:16 in 9:33 so it must have a great bearing on what he is teaching. I want you to hear this in several translations in order to get the strength of what Paul is saying.

NKJV and the ESV are very nearly the same.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation,

A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;

Whoever believes will not act [be put to shame] hastily. [run away in shame]

NIV

So this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,

a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;

the one who trusts will never be dismayed.

NLT

Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem. It is firm, a tested and precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never run away again.

You may be mocked and scourged, you may be sawn asunder, you may be fed to the lions, or burned alive but you will not be ashamed of Jesus, you will not want to run away from Jesus.

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

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How many times does Paul in Romans say that God makes no distinction between men, Jew or Gentile? There is one Gospel, there is one God, there is one Savior, there is one baptism, and there is one common faith. How then could God make a distinction between men on the basis of race or heritage?

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

WHOEVER! WHOEVER! WHOEVER!

Come ye sinners, poor and needy, Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you, Full of pity, love and pow'r.

Come ye thirsty, come and welcome, God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance, Every grace that brings you nigh.

Come ye weary, heavy laden, Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better, You will never come at all.

Let not conscience make you linger, Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth Is to feel your need of Him.

I will arise and go to Jesus, He will embrace me in His arms;
In the arms of my dear Savior, Oh, there are ten thousand charms.

Joseph Hart {1712-1768}

The 'name of the Lord' is who He is in all of His divine attributes.

To call on the name of the Lord does not mean that you parrot some formula, which has no depth of meaning in your very heart and soul and spirit. To call on the name of the Lord is to come to Him in repentance and faith and you will be saved.

Paul quotes the OT prophet Joel:

Joel 2:32

And it shall come to pass

That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.

For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance,

As the LORD has said,

Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

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Notice how Paul applies Joel's prophecy to Jew and Gentile because there is no distinction when it comes to God's children. Peter quotes Joel on the Day of Pentecost saying that Joel's prophecy is being fulfilled in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and the institution of the NT church.

Keep in mind that the true church is made up of all believers of all time from Adam until the Lord returns at the end of this present age. The visible church includes all those who profess to believe in Jesus but there are tares growing among the wheat, hypocrites among the faithful.

Also take note that this is just one of the many passages from the OT in which Jehovah is the subject, and which in the NT are applied to Christ – an irrefutable proof of the deity of Jesus of Nazareth. [David Brown]

We can believe the promises of God because He is sovereign and works all things according to the counsel of His own will.

Christians will pray and obey the Lord Jesus Christ in spreading the Gospel and being careful not to deny the blood of Jesus, which is the righteousness of God.

Has God opened your heart to receive the Gospel?

Can you call on the name of the Lord and be saved?