

Last week in considering vv5-8—I suggested that they contrast the "righteousness of the law" with "the righteousness of faith"—that is—a PERSONAL and an IMPUTED righteousness—in other words—the law demands righteousness—and we can either look to ourselves for that righteousness or another—that is—we can seek justification by our own merit—or we can be justified by the righteousness and merit of Christ—received by faith...

Now—that brings us to our text this morning (vv9-10) and to a very important subject—the nature of true and saving faith—from the beginning of the letter—the apostle has underscored the centrality and importance of faith...

For example, 1:17—"for in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith" 3:21-22—"but now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed...even the righteousness of god through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe" 4:13—"for the promise that he [Abraham] would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" 5:1—"therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" 9:30—"what shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith..."

This brings us to 10:6—"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) or, Who will descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 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)..."

The word of FAITH—that is, the gospel message—that simply tells us to believe—You don't need to go and do anything—it's all done—it's all finished—just believe—thus—with this emphasis upon faith—the apostle now provides a definition of what faith is...

Verses 9-10 serve as an expansion or explanation of the last part of v10—"the word of faith which we preach"—the "word of faith" is the message—that righteousness and salvation are obtained—not by works but by faith—the "word of faith" is the gospel message—that everything necessary is freely and fully found—in Christ—the "word of faith" is the good news—you don't have to do anything—but believe on Christ who's done it all...

The "word of faith"—not only tells us to believe—but it tells us WHAT to believe—and—it tells us HOW to believe—in other words—we find within this passage—both the CONTENT and CHARACTER of faith—thus I want to consider it under two main headings—[1] The CONTENT of Faith, and [2] The CHARACTER of Faith...

I. The CONTENT of Faith—v9

II. The CHARACTER of Faith—v10

I. The CONTENT of Faith—v9

A. Jesus is God

1. The Greek word translated "Lord" is a generic word—that literally means—"master, lord, sovereign, or ruler..."
2. It can admittedly applied to various people throughout the OT—I suggest here—it refers to Christ's divinity...
3. That is—the NT often uses this word as the NT equivalent to the OT word "Jehovah"—translated—LORD...
4. John MacArthur—"To say that Jesus is Lord is first of all to acknowledge that he is Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things..."
5. Thus—of first importance—when Paul speaks of the "Lord" Jesus—he's equating Him with "Jehovah Jesus"...

6. That is—if any person is ever to be saved—they must believe that Christ is LORD—that He the eternal God...
7. Now—it for this reason—that the apostles—throughout their ministries—preached Jesus Christ as LORD...
8. Acts 10:36—"the word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all..."
9. These are Peter's words Cornelius and his household—Cornelius was a Gentile who had recently been saved...
10. He begins by asserting—the gospel was first preached to the Jews—"the word which God sent to the children of Israel..."
11. This "word" is then identified—"preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—that word which you know..."
12. The Gentiles had come to know this "word"—this was the "word" preached both to the Jews and Gentiles...
13. Notice what they preached—or the content of the message—"preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord..."
14. 2Cor.4:5—"for we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake..."
15. This is a summary of what Paul preached—the content of his message—"we preach...Christ Jesus [as] Lord..."
16. We preach Christ as Lord—that is—as Sovereign over heaven and earth—the eternally begotten Son of God...
17. Acts 9:20—"immediately he [newly converted Paul] preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God..."
18. Oh my friends—let us be clear on this point—no man goes to heaven—who does not believe Jesus is God...
19. Jn.8:23-24—"and He said to them, You are from beneath; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins..."
20. Throughout the context—our Lord has been asserted His divine pedigree—the fact that He was from heaven...
21. V23—"you are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world"—I am God...
22. V24—"therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins..."
23. That is—if they failed to believe that He was the great I AM—the very God who revealed Himself to Moses...
24. Ex.3:14—"I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you..."
25. 1Jn.4:15—"whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God [equal with God, God abides in him, and he in God..."

B. Jesus is Man

1. V10—"if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus"—that is—Jesus Jehovah—or, Christ as the God-Man...
2. The name "Jesus" means—"Jehovah saves"—and is given to Him at His incarnation—when He became flesh...
3. Thus unlike the term "Lord"—the name "Jesus" is a personal name—that has primary reference to His humanity...
4. Thus—my point—that nobody was ever saved—who denied the historical incarnation of the Son of God...
5. 1Jn.4:2-3—"by this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world..."

6. Some of you may remember—when we surveyed this letter—we learned of an early heresy called—Gnosticism...
7. This viewed all flesh—along with all physical existence—as evil—thus denying the real humanity of Christ...
8. Thus—the earliest heresies that concerned the person of Christ—didn't deny His divinity—but His humanity...
9. Yet—notice how essential this true is—"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus—the God-Man...
10. In other words—the doctrine of the incarnation and the real and literal humanity of Christ is not a secondly truth...
11. It is absolutely ESSENTIAL to our Salvation—not only in securing it—but also—in obtaining or receiving it...

C. Jesus is alive

1. Historically—we make the distinction between the person and work of Christ—who Christ is and what He did...
2. Thus having examined the content of faith with regards to the person of Christ—we come now to His work...
3. Now—it's important to notice that—from all that Christ did—Paul specifically mentioned His resurrection...
4. The reason being—Christ's glorious resurrection was the visible capstone—to the whole of His redemptive work...
5. Robert Haldane—"Why is so much stress laid on the resurrection? Was not the work of Christ in this world finished by His death? Most certainly it was. But His resurrection was the evidence that it was finished; and therefore the belief of His resurrection is put for the whole of His work..."
6. John Calvin—"The resurrection is often alone set before us as the assurance of our salvation, not to draw away our attention from his death, but because it bears witness to the efficacy and fruit of his death: in short, his resurrection includes his death..."
7. Thus to believe—"that God raised Him from the dead"—necessarily implies that we believe two related truths...
8. [1] He died vicariously—that is—if He was raised from the dead—then of necessity—He was previously dead...
9. Thus—faith doesn't merely believe that Christ died—most people believe this—but that He died—vicariously...
10. That is—that He died in our place or stead—that He died as our substitute—that He died because of our sins...
11. Thus—when we use the word "vicarious" in a theological sense—we use it to mean—in the place or stead of...
12. Now—I am suggesting that a person cannot be saved unless they understand what the word vicarious means...
13. But I am asserting—that no person can be saved—who does not understand the concept of vicarious substitution...
14. You must "believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead"—and why was He died—why did He die...
15. Well—my friend you have to believe that He died FOR YOU—because you YOURSELF deserved to die...
16. [2] He rose victoriously—in other words—the Father raised Him from the dead—because He defeated our enemies...
17. Rev.1:18—"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death..."
18. Thus faith doesn't look to Christ as dead—we are never told to believe upon a dead Savior—but a living Sovereign...
19. Charles Hodge—"To believe, therefore, 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..."

20. Rom.4:23-25—"now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification..."
21. Notice—we must believe in God—"who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead"—we must believe in the resurrection...
22. But—and this is very important—notice how Paul then specifies two things with regards to that resurrection...
23. [a] Who was delivered up because of our offenses—that is—He was delivered up to be crucified for our sins...
24. [b] Who was raised because of our justification—that is—He was raised because He secured our justification...
25. This is the very heart of what we believe—we believe that He died vicariously—and that He rose victorious...

II. The CHARACTER of Faith—v10

A. Faith believes from the heart

1. Here the apostle Paul clarifies—we must believe the truths concerning His person and work—from the heart...
2. This of course is extremely important—Christianity is a religion of the heart—God is concerned with our heart...
3. Thus—what the father said to his son in Proverbs 23:26—God says to us all—"My son, give me your heart..."
4. This of course is the promise of the NC—that God would replace the heart of stone—with a heart of flesh...
5. That is—that we would have a new heart to believe with—that we might seek the Lord will all of our hearts...
6. Rom.2:28—"for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter..."
7. Rom.6:17—"but God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered..."
8. This can be illustrated with the Ethiopian eunuch—if you remember he was reading from the prophet Isaiah...
9. Acts 8:35-36—"then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized..."
10. Acts 8:37—"then Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God..."
11. The eunuch must believe with—"all his heart"—that is—with a "whole heart"—and not merely a part of it...
12. Thus—I suggest that "heart" here is synonymous with "soul"—and not merely in contrast to the mind or head...
13. That is—"the heart" includes the mind, affections, and will—the entire or whole soul—the essence of man...
14. Charles Hodge—"The word *heart* is not to be taken in its limited sense, for the seat of the affections. It means the whole soul, or inner man..."
15. Thus when the apostle says—we believe with the heart—he means—we believe with the whole soul or heart...
16. [1] The understanding—that is—we understand the facts about Christ and we embrace them as the TRUTH...
17. [2] The affections—that is—we believe and embrace the truth with conviction, depth of feeling, and passion...

18. Now—this is very important to understand—while the "heart" includes the mind—it goes beyond the mind...
19. That is—to believe from the heart or with the heart—entails more than being intellectually convinced or swayed...
20. The demons are convinced that the facts of the gospel are true, Jas.2:19—"you believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble..."
21. Now—the belief that saves goes deeper than this—it includes the conviction that the facts are true of itself...
22. For example—if someone told you about a surprise birthday party for someone else—you might nod your head...
23. But—what if someone told you about a surprise birthday party for you—you would embrace that truth differently...
24. Perhaps I could say—the first news who received merely with your head—the second—without your heart...
25. [3] The will—that is—by "will" I mean—that part of man that "chooses"—or, that actively embraces Christ...
26. This of course is variously illustrated throughout the Scriptures as—eating, walking, looking, and receiving...
27. Thus faith is often described as "believing in, into, on, or upon Christ"—and not merely believing about Christ...
28. Rom.6:17—"but God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered..."
29. Here we have all three elements of the soul represented—[a] the understanding, [b] the affections, and [c] the will...
30. They understood the doctrine—they believed from the heart—they obeyed [that is—they responded to Christ]...

B. Faith confesses with the mouth

1. Let me simply say on the front end—that confessing Jesus as Lord—is also an act of the soul or of the heart...
2. In other words—the confession that Jesus is Lord goes beyond the lips—but is deeply rooted within the heart...
3. Matt.15:8—"these people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me..."
4. Thus—we must understand that there exists this inseparable connection between the heart and the mouth....
5. Or—put another way—the confession of this passage goes beyond a mere verbal response—but includes the bowing of the heart...
6. There are some who reduce this text to a mere verbal confession—that is—that all it means is you repeat the phrase—Jesus is Lord...
7. But—I suggest to you—that a person can confess Jesus is Lord—confession can be made—without saying a word...
8. I mean—otherwise—for example—how would a mute person be saved—if they were unable to speak words...
9. No—by "confession" Paul means—a bowing of the heart—a submission of Him as our Sovereign and King...
10. For example—think of those words of Paul in 1Cor.12:3—"now one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit..."
11. That is—no person can bow the knee to Christ—no person can own Him as Lord—except by the Spirit's work...
12. This of course doesn't deny that a person—any person—can verbalize the phrase or saying—Jesus is Lord...
13. But—by saying—"Jesus is Lord" is meant—saying it from the heart—owning Christ as Lord from the heart...

14. Ps.2:12—"kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him..."
15. To "kiss the Son" is the same as "bowing to the Son" as "paying homage to the Son"—it's owning Him as King...
16. Notice also that this confession is one and the same with believing—"kiss the Son...put your trust in Him..."
17. Phil.2:9-11—"therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father..."
18. That this text speaks of what will be true of all men (in a forced way) in the day of judgment—I do not deny...
19. But what will be true of all men (by force) is presently true of Christians—they willingly own Him as their Lord...
20. Notice—bowing and confessing are one and the same—in other words—to confess Jesus as Lord is to own Him as your Lord...

C. Faith knows and feels its need

1. This is implied in that—"with the heart one believes unto righteousness" and "confession is made unto salvation"...
2. In other words—we come to Christ knowing that we desperately need righteousness and that we need salvation...
3. Isa.45:8—"rain down, you heavens, from above, And let the skies pour down righteousness; Let the earth open, let them bring forth salvation, And let righteousness spring up together. I, the LORD, have created it [Ps.40:10; Isa.51:5-8; 56:1; 61:10]..."
4. Isa.46:12-13—"listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, Who *are* far from righteousness: 13 I bring My righteousness near, it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger. And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory..."
5. Rim.1:16-17—"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. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith..."
6. [1] We need righteousness—"for with the heart one believes unto righteousness"—that is—to obtain righteousness...
7. [2] We need salvation—"and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"—that is—to obtain salvation...

III. Lessons

1. [1] The importance of doctrine—that is—at the heart of Christianity—there exists various doctrines or truths...
2. The divinity of Christ—the humanity of Christ—the virgin birth and incarnation—the crucifixion and resurrection...
3. Thus if you were to survey the history of the church—you will find that these have always been under attack...
4. Now—what happens is—someone objects to this and says—We don't believe upon doctrines but a person...
5. True—nobody is saved by believing upon doctrines—but nobody is saved without believing certain doctrines...
6. [2] The relation of Savior and Lord—that is—no one was ever saved by Jesus who did submit to Jesus as Lord...
7. [3] The simplicity of faith—here I want to speak to you who are not Christians or not sure if your Christians...