

Romans 10 “Believing and Confessing”

Well if you remember last week we were talking about the sovereignty of God and that simply means that God has His hand on everything in life and He is the head honcho so to say and He has authority to do as He pleases as He watches over the affairs of men and nations and especially when it comes to His chosen people Israel.

As we finished our study last week we had the following verses from Romans 9:30-33 which say ³⁰**What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; ³¹ but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. ³² Why? Because *they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. ³³ As it is written:***

“Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

It's an amazing thing to see as history has unfolded that the people of Israel the very ones chosen by God have not entered into the promises and blessings that God has for them and the simple reason is because they choose to relate to God based on their accomplishments and their pursuit of keeping God's law.

On the other hand the Gentiles and that is you and I and anyone that is not Jewish have now found ourselves receiving the blessings of God simply because we have chosen to live by faith in Jesus who gave His life on the cross for our sins.

Now this week we turn the page and really chapter 10 deals with the opposite side of the coin when it comes to the sovereignty of God and the choice of man, as this week in our text we are going to be seeing that man indeed has a choice on a number of occasions.

Let's go ahead and look at verse 1 which says this **Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.** I love Paul's heart as he goes through life...I mean here is a man that really for all intents and purposes has a huge ministry all over the world and he has seen incredible success when it comes to sharing Jesus but most of it has taken place in the Gentile world.

In fact, most of the time Paul ministered it was the Jews that were persecuting him and causing problems and speaking against him...and yet Paul had this tremendous burden in his heart to see his own countrymen saved and ministered to.

We are told here that it was his heart's desire and prayer to God...and I wonder today what is it that is within your own hearts desire? What is it that pulls and tugs at you each day of your life and what is it that drives you as you look to serve the Lord Jesus Christ?

I think we shouldn't just have the desire but we should regularly be praying about it and seeking the Lord and lifting up that desire that sits within our heart of hearts. I wonder today how is our prayer life?

I know as we are here today that we can relate to Paul...that we have loved ones that don't know the Lord, that there are those in our lives that need to hear the truth and the love of the Lord Jesus and in our heart of hearts we are desperate that they might come to know Jesus...May we be like Paul constantly warring for them in intercessory

prayer, refusing to give up on them, refusing to cease in our constant efforts of them surrendering to the love of God.

Let's look at verses 2-3 which say the following 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.**

Paul as he thought of his countrymen said that he could testify to the fact that they had a zeal for God it was just a misplaced zeal and desire and instead of receiving the true righteousness of God that is found in Jesus they instead sought to establish themselves by the keeping of the law.

Paul had a first hand knowledge of the zeal of God in his life, he had experienced it himself and he even spoke of it over in Philippians 3:4-6 which says the following ⁴**though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:** ⁵**circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;** ⁶**concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**

The word zeal is an interesting one isn't it? To be zealous for something means you have a deep desire and passion for something...and I am reminded that just because you have a passion for something doesn't necessarily mean you have a passion for the right thing.

We might think of those of the Muslim faith and they will do some very zealous things for the cause they are living for...Just because someone is zealous about something doesn't mean they are going to heaven one day. There is a saying that says "You can be sincere about something, and also be sincerely wrong"

For the Jewish people they were working towards establishing their own righteousness and this is pointing to the simple fact that they worked to keep the law of God to be right with God...They would actually take the law of God and use it in a way that was the opposite of what God had designed its use for.

You see the law was never given so that you and I could be right with God by it, if you remember the law was given that you and I and especially the Jewish people would know they fell short of the standards of God.

By the law no one can be saved and though the Jewish people were working so hard to keep it and they had such a zeal to do so they had missed the glory of walking in the righteousness of God that comes by faith in Jesus.

They as a people were ignorant of God's righteousness and that is such a sad place to be especially for the people of God who had access to so much in their lives, to them were given the blessings of God and to them the promises and the very Messiah himself and yet they had missed the goodness of truly knowing the Lord.

We do have in verse 4 the following statement which says

⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Had the Jewish people come to know Jesus they would

have discovered that the law was only designed for the one purpose of showing them they can't achieve righteousness on their own...Of the law of God Galatians 3:24 says that it serves as a tutor to bring us to Christ, it was never given that someone might by keeping it be found right with God.

Over in the book of Galatians 3:21 we have the following which says this of the law ²¹ Is the law then against the promises of God? **Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.**

Again, as an example of how verse 4 works out Paul had experienced this in his own life and over in Philippians 3:7 right after he had said he had worked so hard and done so well to keep the law he said ⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. You see when you come to Jesus the law has ended its work in your life, it has brought you to the point that you realize you can never keep it and be right with God and ultimately it leads you to Jesus.

Look with me at verse 5 which says ⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." Over in Leviticus 18:5 the word mentions what Paul quotes here and it simply said if a person could ever keep the law in its entirety they would find that it brings life...As an example of this we might think about Adam and Eve while they were in the garden with a much more simplified form of the law, in that they had only one law and that was to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...If they were obedient what would they have? Life eternal the opportunity to walk with God forever.

But what did they find...even the one law when it was broken brought death...and so if someone can look at the law of God and they can keep it perfectly they could live.

Over in the book of James 2:10 the Word says ¹⁰ **For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.** This is really an incredible verse isn't it? I mean think about how you could live your whole life perfectly and yet if you make one mistake, if you get angry once, if you tell one lie all the keeping of the law you have done only makes you guilty of breaking it all.

Now let's look here at verses 6-8 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):** Have you ever had a hard time understanding what Paul was saying when he wrote something? I know I have, and I'll be honest that this is one of those times that we can scratch our head and wonder what is being said.

I'm going to work to make it very simple here for us from my perspective...What I believe Paul is working on saying is that the righteousness of faith that is found in Jesus Christ is not some difficult to attain task that we must perform...Having faith in Jesus is near to us and it's found near to us as we simply confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts...and you'll see that's what Paul says in verses 9-11 in just a minute.

Salvation will never be found by our efforts or by how good we are or how much energy we exert into doing what is right before God.

I love it that God has reached you and I as we have gone through life...I love it that I didn't have to go through some ritual or some rite to bring Christ down to the earth...Jesus chose to come to this world to give His life for you and I. Over in the book of Philippians 2:5-7 the Word says this ⁵**Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,** ⁶**who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,** ⁷**but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.**

Have you ever just stopped and considered how awesome it is that Jesus came? I mean here we are in our filthy sin and our failures and Jesus comes in all His glory to minister to you and I to work in our lives, to give Himself for us.

And really that is the difference between all of the religions of the world and Christianity isn't it? Every religion in the world says I must do something to get God to notice me and bless me and allow me to be with Him...Christianity though says no way no how can I ever do anything to reach God...He came to me and by His grace and mercy saved me by dying on the cross for my sins.

From the same vantage point you and I don't have to descend into the abyss to resurrect the Lord Jesus or accomplish some great feat...Jesus rose again on His own merit from the dead that we might be justified.

Jesus has done the work and that's good news for you and I...The Jews needed to learn just like you and I need to learn that no matter

how hard we might try salvation is found in the simplicity of accepting Jesus in our hearts.

Now Paul as he is talking about what we have just read about ascending and descending is actually borrowing from the Old Testament I believe...It comes from Deuteronomy 30 and the Lord in this passage of scripture is telling the people of Israel that there is blessing in obedience and curses that will come upon them if they go the wrong way...and the Lord said to them that when they call to mind the things that God had said to them after they found themselves driven out of their own land, and they simply chose to obey His voice that He would bless them and bring them back.

In that context listen to what we have over in Deuteronomy 30:11-14 which says this ¹¹ **“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. It wasn’t far off for the people of God,** it wasn’t too hard to grab hold of...if they only heard the Word of God and then obeyed they would find great blessing.

Similarly to God’s people obeying the Word look how simple it is for you and I to accept the Lord Jesus in our hearts if you look at verses 9-10 which say 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.

When you think about all we have looked at here in the book of Romans it's absolutely amazing that the gift of salvation all boils down to simply confessing and believing. That's all it takes to become born again of the Spirit and not the flesh.

How wonderful that we can be saved not by some great huge work but by grace through faith as salvation takes place in our hearts and our mouths.

I want you to notice something here in the text. Notice it says if you confess with your mouth what? The Lord Jesus...What does that mean exactly?

When we say Lord we need to understand that's a title meaning He is the authority of our lives and so when we come to Jesus we are surrendering to Him, we are giving our lives to Him, we are choosing to live under His rule over our lives.

We might remember earlier in the book of Romans when we talked about how we are no longer our own but instead we have been purchased from sin.

You know I think in a lot of ways that this is really where the rubber meets the road when it comes to salvation...So many say a prayer but they never submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, they never come to the place that they are choosing to honor the Lord, they never really turn from their sin and embrace the cross of Jesus Christ.

We can also see here that not only should our mouth be confessing Jesus as Lord but something should be happening in the depths of our

hearts. In the deepest part of our being there should be something changing as we consider what Jesus has done for us.

You know I can remember when I came to know Jesus that initially it was more about what happened in my heart...I actually didn't initially even pray the salvation prayer...It happened when someone was praying for me and you know as they did so my heart all of a sudden just kind of burst open and there I was in the presence of God calling out to Him that He might save me. It was afterwards that I began to openly say Jesus was Lord of my life.

When you believe in something it should cause you to act. It kind of reminds me of what the Bible says over in James 1:22 which says ²²**But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** I think it's the same concept in that you not only hear something or take it in but you actually do something about it.

As we come to Christ not just with our words but from the depths of our soul notice two results in verse 10...that we are found to be righteous and we find salvation.

I want to remind us of the context of the chapter at the beginning as the Jews were said to what? To be trying to attain to righteousness by their works...what a contrast for us to see here as Paul again is laying out that simple faith is what makes us right with God.

Take a look at verse 11 which says ¹¹**For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** At the beginning of our study I mentioned we were going to see the other side of the coin between God's election and man's choice...and here we

can see clearly that man does have a choice as to whether He will believe in Jesus or not.

Believing in something is a choice you and I make on an everyday basis isn't it? I choose whether to believe the fake news, the conspiracy theory news, the conservative news or the Facebook news...

You and I when it comes to the depths of our heart and what we want to believe have choices also. We can believe that we will find happiness in the things of the world, we can believe in the Muslim god or any number of gods in this world.

but which belief is it that will allow you to not be put to shame? It says here the one that believes in Him and of course that is talking about Jesus Christ. You know as you go through life you are going to have to make choices and you are going to form beliefs but I have to tell you there is only one person that you can trust in and you will never be put to shame and His name is Jesus.

Look at verses 12-13 which say ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

I think sometimes we can get these verses out of context with the rest of scripture...I want to be clear that there is a distinction between the people of Israel and the Gentile world. God has a special plan for His people Israel and He will complete that plan.

But when it comes to salvation you and I and every human on the planet are in the same boat...We all need Jesus. Whether you grew up

learning the scriptures of the Old Testament as the Jewish people do or you grew up in the streets of China or right down the road from the church you are a person that needs Jesus.

It says here that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved...Sometimes we may have a hard time with that. We may think of the Hitler's of the world and the Osama Bin Laden's of the world and we may struggle with thinking that if they cried out to Jesus that they would be saved. Jeffrey Dahmer a serial killer actually came to know Jesus while in prison and was even baptized.

We might think of Paul the apostle before he came to know Jesus and how he persecuted the church and threw them in jail and worked to cause them to deny Jesus and even watched as Stephen was stoned right in front of him...the Lord saved that man though.

Perhaps you are here today and you don't know Jesus and in the depths of your heart you have the idea that God would never want you, that He would never accept you for all the wrongs you have done...I am here today to tell you that **WHOEVER** calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Anyone who wills may come to Jesus and you will find that when you do so the Lord will accept you and surely save you.

Look at verses 14-16 which say ¹⁴How 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? ¹⁵And 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!”

Well I believe very firmly that you and I have a responsibility, a **stewardship we could say from the Lord Jesus** to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world around us.

Jesus told the disciples that they were to go into all of the world and proclaim the Gospel **and that they were to make disciples and really how can anyone come to know Jesus** if they don't hear the truth.

Too often you and I cower in the fear of our own hearts when we need to speak up and proclaim the truth of Jesus. **When you are out in the world you might remind** yourself that the person next to you may right now be on their way to an eternity in hell.

It says here how shall they preach unless they are sent... I believe ALL of us are to have the heart and mentality that we are sent by the Lord to speak to the world. **2 Corinthians 5:20 says** ²⁰ **Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.** **An ambassador is one who is sent on behalf of or as** a representative of another...**and I believe that's how you and I are to be** as we go through life.

People need to hear about Jesus, they need to hear about the wonders of our Savior, they need to hear about the Lord's work in our hearts and how He has changed us and brought us to Himself.

I want us to recognize here the end of verse 15 which is a quote from Isaiah 52:7 and it says **How beautiful are the feet of those who**

preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!

I'm not sure about you but when I think about my body the last thing I think is beautiful would probably be my feet...Now some of you love your pedicures and I get all that but the foot at least for me is not all that beautiful.

But you know there is sure an awful lot of beauty in the lives of those that bring the gospel to others...

and notice that the gospel we preach is the gospel of what? It's the gospel of peace.

As humanity goes through life and as we watch the world around us do you know that there are an awful lot of people that just simply don't have peace. Their hearts are in turmoil, their families are falling apart, their kids are often off the rails and then you and I get to be sent into their lives to speak and minister to them and to present the ONE that can give them peace, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I mentioned that the quote found in verse 15 is taken from Isaiah 52:7 and in the context of that chapter of the Bible God is speaking to His people and speaking of how they had been taken captive to Egypt and Assyria and then in verse 7 of that chapter we begin to see the glory of how the Lord is going to restore and minister to His people and that God reigns and their watchmen shall lift up their voices and they shall sing together when the Lord brings back Zion.

Isaiah spoke of a glorious day His people would have...they were suffering now but one day they would be ministered to and blessed.

You and I have a similar message to those who are held captive by sin...we are here to proclaim glad tidings of great peace to all who

might put their faith in Jesus...and I have to say that the person that brings that kind of good news that your sin can be forgiven, that you can know God personally has beautiful feet indeed.

Are you sharing with others as you go through life? May we make it an ambition of our hearts to share the hope that we have.

Look with me as we continue on in verses 16-17 which say 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.**

This is again from Isaiah and its actually taken from Isaiah 53...have you read that chapter before? You might do so for homework and this is really interesting to me as I kind of try to put myself in Paul's shoes I almost feel like this is like a little hidden message from Paul to the Jews who might read this letter as the Holy Spirit led him to write these things.

Paul is talking all about the good news of Jesus Christ and the love of the Savior and his heart for the Jewish people and he is talking about how people need to hear the truth and how simple faith in Christ is what saves someone and then when he says these words from Isaiah 53 do you know that most Jewish people knew exactly what he was talking about for they know the scriptures and in Isaiah 53 if you look at that for homework you are going to see that it speaks all about the coming of the Messiah and how He would suffer for the sins of the world and He would bear our iniquities and He would be beaten with stripes and you wouldn't even be able to tell that he was human for how disfigured He was.

When a Jewish person heard a scripture referenced they would often know what it was referring to and so as Paul referenced this scripture and spoke of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and hearing it and believing it I believe the hope of Paul and the Holy Spirit was that His own people would examine the scriptures.

Look with me at verse 18 which says 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.”** At the end of the day there will not be one excuse that anyone on the planet will have for not receiving Jesus...The Gospel has gone to the corners of the globe and especially it has gone to the people of Israel...think of how they have so much access to the truth of God’s word, and the promises they have been given and yet they refuse to walk in the grace of God.

Verses 19-20 say 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.”**

As Israel has rejected the Lord as they chose not to obey we know the Lord has turned His attention to the Gentiles and God uses you and I to work towards provoking the people of Israel to jealousy...The hope of God is that His own people would see how amazing God’s love is and they would long in their hearts to know and experience His great love.

Paul even makes mention that we Gentiles have found God though we had not sought for Him...That's interesting indeed for this whole chapter is talking about our choosing Jesus and then here...the Lord essentially says I went looking for them when they weren't looking for me at all.

Verse 21 says ²¹ **But to Israel he says:**

**“All day long I have stretched out My hands
To a disobedient and contrary people.”**

Just think of how much God loves His people, how desperately He wants the people of Israel to come to know Him and to enter into the blessings that He has for His chosen people.

Jesus loved the people of Israel when He was with them even though they would reject Him thoroughly. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 23:37-39 which says ³⁷ **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”**

I have a real problem today with those that say the people of Israel are written off by God, that He is finished with them...Paul certainly didn't think that as he wrote to the church in Rome and next week we'll see Paul double down on the love that God has for His people and the simple fact that He is not finished with Israel as a nation and as a

people group and that one day they will come to faith in their promised Messiah.

Today, I have to ask you have you confessed the Lord Jesus with your mouth and have you believed in your heart? Perhaps God is speaking to you today that you need to get right with Him...If so I want to just encourage you to come forward after the service as I would love to pray with you and you can come to know the Lord and His great love.

Before we close we have communion today and I want to just encourage you that if you believe in Jesus you would partake of remembering what the Lord has done for us.

Let's pray

Romans 10 “Believing and Confessing”

Introduction

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Verses 9-10

James 1:22

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2 Corinthians 5:20

Isaiah 52:7

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Matthew 23:37-39