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Romans Road to Recovery / Salvation / Romans 10:5–13

- Righteousness isn't a mountain to be climbed; it's a Person to be received.
- True belief in the heart overflows into a confession of surrender.
- Discover why the rescue is already finished and guaranteed. Romans 10:5-13.

Sermon Title: The Mouth and the Heart

Subtitle: The Accessibility of Salvation

Main Idea: Salvation is not an impossible mountain to climb; it is as near as the word of faith in your heart and mouth.

Scripture: Romans 10:5-13

INTRODUCTION

In 1924, two British mountaineers named George Mallory and Andrew Irvine set out to do what the world believed was absolutely impossible: reach the summit of Mount Everest. They were the best climbers of their generation. But they were last seen just a few hundred yards from the top before a storm rolled in, and they disappeared into the clouds forever.

For nearly thirty years after that tragedy, Everest was considered physically impossible for a human being to conquer. The problem wasn't just a lack of effort or willpower. The problem is what climbers call the **Death Zone of Mt. Everest**.

Once you climb above 26,000 feet, the atmosphere changes. There simply isn't enough oxygen to sustain human life. Your body literally begins to shut down. It doesn't matter how hard you trained or how much zeal you have. In the Death Zone of Mt. Everest, human effort is fundamentally insufficient. The mountain demands a physical perfection that human beings simply do not possess. **The harder you try** to climb in your own strength, **the faster the mountain crushes you**.

It wasn't until 1953 that Everest was finally conquered. And what was the secret? The climbers realized they could not survive the Death Zone on the mountain's terms. They couldn't just breathe harder. **They had to rely on an external source of life**. They had to bring supplemental oxygen—pure breath that came from completely outside the mountain's deadly atmosphere. To survive, **they needed life supplied from somewhere else outside of themselves**.

Last Sunday, we gathered together to celebrate the empty tomb. We looked at the

resurrection of Jesus Christ and we celebrated Him as our "Risen Priest and King." We saw His ultimate victory over sin, death, and the grave. We had the joy of celebrating a baptism as a testimony of the impact of all the work of Jesus Christ in the life of our brother in Christ.

But sometimes, if we are not careful, we subconsciously view Easter the wrong way. We treat the resurrection like Christ just planted His flag on the summit of an impossible spiritual mountain, and now God is calling out from the top, saying, "*I made it! The victory is up here! Now you just have to climb up to get it!*"

- We look at the mountain of God's Law.
- We look at the absolute perfection His holiness demands.
- We strap on our religious gear, and we try to climb.
- We try to establish our own righteousness.

But just like those early climbers, we eventually hit the **Death Zone of our Spiritual Everest**. We realize that the Law demands a perfection we simply do not possess. We start suffocating under the weight of our own failures.

But the beauty of the Gospel—the reality of what we celebrated last week—is that Jesus Christ is the only one who ever perfectly conquered the mountain of God's Law. He never lacked breath; He walked in the pure atmosphere of perfect righteousness.

But He didn't stay on the summit. He saw us suffocating, and **He came down**. He brought that external source of life—His own perfect, finished righteousness, (His spiritual oxygen)—right down into the Death Zone of our Spiritual Everest. He wraps us in His own life, and He finishes the rescue for us.

Today, we are going to look at Romans chapter 10. And the Apostle Paul is going to show us exactly how we receive the victory of Easter.

He is going to show us that because the Priest and King lives, salvation is no longer an impossible mountain to climb; it is right in front of you, waiting for your heart to believe and your mouth to confess. So...

I. We can stop climbing the mountain of the Law because the King has already finished the work.

If we look at the first four verses of this chapter, Paul breaks his heart over national Israel. Why did they miss the Messiah? Because they had zeal without knowledge. They were trying to establish their own righteousness. They were trying to climb the

mountain. But look with me at Romans chapter 10, starting in verse 5.

Paul writes, *"For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness."*

A. The Law demands an impossible ascent to perfect righteousness that we can never achieve (Rom. 10:5)

- Paul is quoting Leviticus 18:5 here, and in the Greek, the weight of the entire verse falls on one concept: **doing**.
- It requires you to perfectly do everything, at all times, without a single slip.
- If you want to get to God based on your own righteousness, you have to climb the mountain of perfection.
- But the Law was never meant to be a ladder we climb to reach God; it was meant to be a mirror to show us how desperately we need a Savior.
- We **cannot** survive the exhausted climb of perfect performance.

So what do we do, if we cannot survive the climb of perfection with God's Law?

B. The Gospel reveals that we do not have to reach up to heaven or down to the grave, because Christ already finished that rescue mission for us (Rom. 10:6-7)

- Look with me at the point that Paul is making here, that we don't have to reach to where God is through our perfect good works, He reaches down to us.
- Listen to the shift in verse 6 and 7. Paul contrasts the crushing weight of the Law with the grace of the Gospel.
- He says, *"But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down), or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).'"*
- Exegetically, Paul is telling us that asking "Who will ascend into heaven?" is acting as if the Incarnation never happened. That somehow, we must reach up to Christ to bring Him down to our lives. But Paul reminds us here that Christ has already come down!
- And asking "Who will descend into the abyss?" is acting as if the Resurrection we celebrated last Sunday never happened and the weight of our resurrection to Christ is somehow on our shoulders to accomplish.
- Christ already accomplished this life by coming down for us, dwelling with us, and

fulfilling the Law.

- Christ already conquered the depths through His own resurrection and came up! He successfully bridged the infinite gap between heaven, the grave, earth, and all of humanity.
- The rescue mission has been finished by Jesus Christ

C. The distance to God is now bridged not by our exhausted climbing, but by His accessible Word (Rom. 10:8)

- Because it is finished, look at the result in verse 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 are preaching."

- Salvation is not a geographical journey.
- It is not a mystical quest.
- It is right here.
- It is resting on our lips and echoing in our chests.
- Since the impossible work is completely finished and the Word is right here, the only questions left are: how do we respond to it, how do we connect with it, how do we receive it?

We connect with the Word of the Gospel as...

II. We embrace this finished work through belief and surrender in our hearts which then overflows into outward confession of our surrender (Rom. 10:9)

- Look at verse 9. This is one of the most beautiful, concise summaries of the Gospel in the entire New Testament:

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

- Paul gives us two vital pieces of saving faith here.

- Let's look at the internal piece first.

A. The heart's first step is to completely trust the historical reality that Jesus is alive

- Verse 9 says we must
"...believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead."
- Biblical belief—the Greek word *pisteuō*—is not just having a warm, fuzzy feeling.
- It is not taking a blind leap in the dark.
- It is a whole-hearted, life-altering reliance on the physical, undeniable fact of Easter morning.
- Your heart has to anchor itself to the reality that the tomb is actually empty and Christ has risen.
- But internal belief is never meant to stay hidden in the dark.
- When you truly believe the King is alive, it changes what you say and how you live.

B. The mouth's role is to testify through our confession that we agree with God that Jesus is the absolute Lord of our lives

- The first part of verse 9 says,
"...confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord."
- The Greek word Paul uses for "confess" is *homologeō*.
 - Literally, it means "to say the same thing."
 - When we outwardly confess the inward reality of the resurrection and Jesus as Lord, we are not just giving Him lip-service or reciting a magic password to get into heaven.
 - In the first-century Roman Empire, the required oath of loyalty was *Kaisar Kyrios*—Caesar is Lord.
 - To stand up and publicly say *Iēsous Kyrios*—Jesus is Lord—was an act of absolute treason against the empire. It was dangerous. It could cost you your life.
- But it was also the ultimate theological declaration.
 - When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the sacred, unpronounceable name of God—Yahweh—was translated as *Kyrios*.
 - When we confess Jesus as Lord, we are not just saying He is a good teacher.

- We are declaring that Jesus of Nazareth is Yahweh in the flesh.
- We are testifying that we agree with God the Father that Jesus is Yahweh.
- We are laying down our own rebellion, dropping our own agenda, leaving behind the powers, methods, and answers the world has to offer, and verbally yielding to His sovereign authority over our lives.
- That is the outward confession of our surrender.

C. These are not two separate steps, but one unified response of saving faith (Rom. 10:10)

- Notice how beautifully Paul weaves these two realities together in verse 10:
 - *"...for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."*
- Look closely at those two resulting words: righteousness and salvation.
 - Sometimes we read a verse like this and think Paul is giving us a chronological, two-step checklist—as if you get righteousness first, and then if you confess hard enough, you eventually earn salvation.
 - But Paul is describing the exact same reality from two different angles.
- Righteousness is the legal standing.
 - It is the internal, invisible miracle where God wipes your record clean and declares you right before the Judge.
 - Salvation is the comprehensive rescue.
 - It is the ultimate reality of being delivered from death and brought into His kingdom.
- Paul is showing us that genuine faith involves the whole person.
 - You cannot have one without the other.
 - You cannot have true, inward heart-belief without it eventually overflowing into outward confession.
 - A changed heart will **always** produce a surrendered life and a surrendered mouth.
 - True inward righteousness inevitably produces ultimate salvation.
 - And look at the grammar Paul uses: "**you will be saved.**" It is a passive verb.
 - You aren't doing the saving. You do the trusting; **God does the rescuing.**

- And the most beautiful part of this unified response of faith is that the King offers it to absolutely everyone.

III. We can finally rest in this finished work, because the King guarantees we will never be disappointed (Rom. 10:11-13)

- Before we read these verses, we need to deeply and carefully consider this truth.
- God's salvation through Jesus Christ cannot nor ever will let us down, it will never fail us, it cannot be revoked, and it can never be taken away.

A. The promise is absolute security from the absolute sovereign God: when we trust the King, we will never face the shame of trusting the wrong foundation (Rom. 10:11)

- Look at verse 11:
 - *"For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will **not** be disappointed.'"*
- When we hear the word "disappointed" today, we usually think of a temporary letdown.
- But the Greek word for "disappointed" that Paul uses here is much heavier than that.
- It literally means to be put to utter shame or to be disgraced.
- Imagine spending your entire life exhausting yourself, climbing the mountain of the Law, relying on your own good works, only to reach the end and realize you trusted the wrong foundation.
 - That is ultimate disappointment.
 - That is eternal shame.
 - Paul goes back to the Old Testament, quoting Isaiah 28:16, to contrast the nation of Israel stumbling over the Law with the believer resting securely on Christ the Cornerstone.
 - When you abandon the climb and build your life on His finished work, you have a divine guarantee: you will **never** be put to shame.
 - You will never face the disgrace of eternal judgment.
 - You can finally stop striving and just **rest** in His security.

This is what Christ offered in

Matthew 11:28–30 NASB95

²⁸ "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. ³⁰ "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

One of the sweetest things about this gracious rest that God offers through Jesus Christ is that it is available to all. Your heritage, location, vocation, life-status, intellect, religion, gender, color of your skin, or nationality makes no difference.

B. The grace is absolutely level: this guarantee is offered to anyone, regardless of their background, past, or future (Rom. 10:12)

- And who gets this guarantee?
 - Notice the incredible dispensational shift in verse 12.

*"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for **all** who **call on Him**."*
 - Paul explicitly highlights the mystery and beauty of this Age.
 - To a first-century Jewish mindset, this was scandalous.
 - They believed they had the exclusive rights to God.
- But Paul is bringing his entire letter full circle.
 - Back in Romans chapter 3, Paul said, "**there is no distinction, for all have sinned.**"
 - We were all equally condemned.
 - Now, he says "**there is no distinction**" in salvation.
- **Because we were equally condemned under the Law, we can be equally saved under grace.**
 - The ground is completely level at the foot of the cross.
 - It does not matter what your background is, what your religious heritage is, or how many times you have failed in your past.
 - The King's grace is perfectly level, and His riches are available to anyone.

C. The rescue is absolutely ready: we simply drop our baggage and call out to Him (Rom. 10:13)

- Because the playing field is perfectly level, and because the guarantee is absolutely secure, the final invitation is stunningly simple.
- Look at verse 13. Paul quotes the prophet Joel:

*"for **Whoever** will **call** on the name of the Lord **will be saved.**"*

- The Greek word for "call" here means to appeal to a higher authority for rescue.
 - Notice what it doesn't say. It doesn't say "whoever cleans themselves up first."
 - It doesn't say "whoever climbs high enough, fast enough."
 - It simply says, **whoever calls**. When you realize the rescue is completely finished and guaranteed, you stop climbing, you drop your baggage, and you just cry out.
- This verse reminds us that if we do cry out in faithful acceptance, "**we will be saved**" once for all time, never to be lost in our sin ever again. We will be free. We can finally rest in Him.
- I don't want to give the wrong impression here about this rest Paul is speaking of.
 - This is not a surrender that allows us to sit back in our rocking chair and wait passively for the end.
 - Paul will take us to the "so what" when we get to Romans 12.
 - Until then, it is imperative that we know the foundation of what God has done through Christ for us and by faith, now in us.
 - It is imperative that we understand what this foundation enables us to build.
 - It is imperative that we understand for what purpose God has given us this foundation upon which to build, how we build it, and with what urgency we are to build.

The change that happens here is a surrender of our weak and crippled strength (our own efforts) so that we might receive His unlimited governed power (that when used, never needs to rest).

Eph. 2:10 tells us that...

Ephesians 2:10 NASB95

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

This speaks of the purpose of His offer, not only to save us from our sins, but to free us from the chains of those sins so that we might now live by Him, through His inexhaustible power, to accomplish what He has designed up to accomplish.

CONCLUSION

As we close today, let's picture ourselves back on that mountain we spoke of at the start.

- Some of you came into this room this morning living in the **Death Zone of your Spiritual Everest**.
 - For years, you have been trying to climb the mountain of God's perfect Law in your own strength.
 - You have been carrying the heavy, exhausting baggage of trying to be good enough, trying to serve enough, trying to establish your own righteousness.
 - And if you are completely honest with yourself right now, you are suffocating.
 - You are exhausted.
 - You realize you don't have what it takes to reach the top, and you are terrified of the judgment that awaits you.
- I want you to hear the promise of Romans 10.
 - Look up.
 - The Risen King is not standing at the summit, shouting at you to climb harder.
 - He is standing right beside you on the side of the mountain.
 - He has already perfectly conquered the climb, and He has brought His own pure, perfect life right down into the **Death Zone of our Spiritual Everest**.
- God is offering you His finished work.
 - The rescue is completely ready.
 - You do not have to take one more agonizing step up that mountain to earn it.
 - Do you remember what Paul said in verse 8? "*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.*" It is as close as the air you breathe.
- To survive the Death Zone of our Spiritual Everest, you have to stop climbing, and you have to take in the life that is being offered to you.
 - You have to open your mouth and breathe.
 - That is what salvation is.
 - You stop striving.
 - You open your mouth and confess that Jesus is your Lord.
 - You breathe the truth of His empty tomb deep into your heart, and you trust His finished work to save you.

- If you have never done that, today is the day to stop climbing.
 - Drop the baggage of your own righteousness.
 - The ground is level, and the King is waiting.
 - Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
- If you have done that, then know what God has given you
 - Stop trying to go back to climbing up to Him
 - Stop trying to go back to climb without the oxygen that He has given you
 - Stop worrying that His oxygen is going to run out just when you need it
 - Step out and confess through your words and how you serve, that you are His and He is yours.
 - Believer, it is time to stop rocking on the porch and start using the inexhaustible power that He has given us through the power of His Son's sacrifice and victory.

Remember...

The King has already come down the mountain to meet you

1. ++**Stop the Climb**: Acknowledge today that your own "doing" will never be enough to survive the mountain of the Law.
2. ++**Surrender the Struggle**: Align your heart with the truth of the empty tomb and testify with your mouth that Jesus is your absolute Lord.
3. ++**Rest in the Guarantee**: Trust and keep trusting that because the work is finished, you will never—not now, and not at the final judgment—be put to shame.
4. ++**Serve without Fear**: Now that the mountain has been conquered for you, get to work for the Kingdom. Serve Him boldly, knowing that your standing is secure and you no longer have to fear the failure of falling short.

Main Idea: Salvation is not an impossible mountain to climb; it is as near as the word of faith in your heart and mouth.

The King has already come down the mountain to meet you; you don't have to reach Him, you only have to call out to Him, accept His power, and live in it.