

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #37

Romans 10:1-13

It doesn't matter who the person is, where the person lives, or how old the person may be - but every person in God's sight is a fallen sinner who rebels against God. The problem is, some people do not want to admit it. Some dare stand up on their own two feet, right in the face of the righteousness of God, thinking they can save themselves. **We may count on the fact that man's way of righteousness will never be God's way of righteousness.**

If ever there were a subject that the Apostle Paul did not want people confused on, especially in this book of Romans, it was the subject of salvation. The Apostle Paul wanted both Jews and Gentiles to clearly know what it means, from God's perspective, for one to be saved. Paul's deep burden for lost Israel (v. 1) motivated him to carefully explain Biblical salvation, and in these verses here is what he says:

BIBLICAL SALVATION IS ADMITTING TO GOD THAT YOU ARE TOTALLY AND ONLY BELIEVING IN AND RELYING UPON JESUS CHRIST FOR YOUR SALVATION.

Now you will carefully notice from **Romans 10:1** that before Paul carefully explains the gospel, he informs us that he prayed for their salvation. Those of us who have been studying the doctrine of prayer know that there are different words Paul uses for prayer and the one he uses here (δεησις) is one that means to pray about something on the basis of what is needed. This word really emphasizes a need (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 99). So Paul prayed for salvation because salvation is what is needed for every unsaved Jew and Gentile. Paul believed that praying for someone's salvation was a critical key to evangelism.

What is actually so amazing about this point is its context. The context is that of the sovereignty of God saving those He decides to save, granting His mercy to some and His wrath to others. Apparently, Paul believed that prayer could be part of the great sovereign plan of God in saving lost people, so he prayed. God is the one who saves people, but prayer is part of the sovereign mystery of Him moving. So we need to keep praying for lost people to be saved.

When you pray for your children or grandchildren, pray for their health, pray that they will do well in school, pray that they will be kept from sin, pray that they will develop in their personalities and find the job God wants them to have where they can be used of God, but do not forget to pray for their salvation. Paul prayed it for his family; you pray it for yours.

There are three major theological discussions that Paul undertakes here that clearly unlocks the gospel of Biblical salvation for Israel and for us:

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION #1 – Biblical salvation is not by religious zeal . 10:2-3

The word “zeal” is interesting because it means to have an intense burning for something. People on their way to hell often have a great religious zeal and a great burning for their religion. I find this intriguing in view of Mormons who are always talking about an intense “burning in their bosom” that their false religion is right.

But notice carefully their zeal was “not in accordance with knowledge.” That word “knowledge” (ἐπιγινώσκω) is epiginosko, knowledge-upon-knowledge, or a deep level of knowledge.

In other words, the zeal was very surface level and shallow and it wasn't Biblically sound or deep.

Now **verse 3** explains the ignorant zeal; the Jews, not even knowing about God's righteousness, just invented their own. They would not submit themselves to God's system of faith in Jesus Christ, but were trying to establish their own righteousness to make them right with God.

Do not be confused on this point, **religious zeal is not the same as being saved or right with God.**

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION #2 – Biblical salvation is not by religious law . 10:4-5

Verse 4 makes a statement which clearly refutes any concept of “law” righteousness, “Christ is the end (τέλος) (completion) of the law.” There are three ways to view this and all are right:

(Way #1) - Christ was the only Person to whom the law pointed. Galatians 3:24

(Way #2) - Christ was the complete fulfillment of the law. Matthew 5:17

(Way #3) - Christ was the termination of the law. Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:15

In **verse 5**, Paul quotes a text Moses writes in Leviticus 18:5. In that text, God says that in order for a person to live, he must keep all the law, His statutes and judgments. Jesus said in Matthew 5:48 that “you are to be as perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect” and, as one commentator observed, “only the most arrogant fool would claim to be perfectly holy at this level.”

When it comes to our salvation, Christ is the only way to be saved. He has put an end to the law. So to think one can be right with God by keeping the law is to clearly tamper with the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Someone may ask you at some point - do you mean to tell me that you believe that one can be saved by faith in Jesus Christ without any good works? Truth is, that is the only way you may be saved!

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION #3 – Biblical salvation is by saving faith . 10:6-13

There are four major theological points Paul makes:

Point #1 - Saving faith trusts Jesus Christ for righteousness, not one's own works of righteousness. **10:6-8**

In this text, Paul quotes freely from Deuteronomy 30:10-14. In that context, Moses is giving a charge to the nation Israel and he is talking about the fact that she is about to enter the Promised Land. The main issue is the blessing of God and how to receive it. Moses' point is that one does not have to do anything difficult to inherit the land, such as ascend up into heaven or descend into the deep. All one needed to do was claim it by faith.

Scaling a mountain does not merit the incarnation (**10:6**) and descending into the deep does not merit the resurrection (**10:7**). In other words, your human works have nothing to do with Jesus Christ and His righteousness.

The righteousness of God is by faith (**10:8**). One must be willing to admit that it is faith in Christ that makes one right with God. By the way, notice what it is that produces this faith, "preaching the Word of God."

Point #2 - Saving faith acknowledges that Jesus Christ is God . **10:9a**

The word "confess" means to acknowledge or to agree to. The idea here is that in order for a person to be saved, from God's perspective, he must be willing to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is "the" Lord.

Some translators supply a copulative verb "is"; "Jesus is Lord." Others supply an adverb "as"; "Jesus as Lord." However, in the original Greek manuscripts neither word is actually there, and grammatically, Jesus sits appositionally to Lord (κυριον Ιησου). We can legitimately understand this as meaning "Jesus equals Lord" or "Lord equals Jesus."

Now the word "Lord" is the O.T. word YHWH (English word Jehovah). What Paul is saying is that in order for any Jew or Gentile to be saved, he must acknowledge that Jesus in the New Testament is the same as Jehovah in the Old Testament. In layman's terms, **you must acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the only true God of the Bible to be saved.**

The thing that makes Christ's blood potent enough to take away our sins is that fact that He is God; His blood is the blood of God.

Point #3 - Saving Faith believes God's connection to the resurrection . **10:9b**

Saving faith will believe that God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead and this was the physical proof that His work of justification was fully approved and accepted by God (Romans 4:25). C. I. Scofield said Christ's resurrection "is proof that our sins are gone."

Point #4 - Saving faith confesses this belief to God. **10:10-13**

The connection between Biblical salvation and the mouth and the heart is this - When what we say with our mouth lines up with what we believe in our heart regarding saving righteousness (how one is straightened out to become righteous in God's sight), only coming by faith in Jesus Christ, we are saved.

Now carefully notice to whom this confession is made - not to a church, not to a pastor, not to a board; it is made to God (vv. 12-13). This does not refer to some public confession in front of people but to private confession to God. It does not matter if one is a Jew or Gentile.

You can know for certain whether or not you are saved by answering the following questions:

1. Will you admit in your heart that Jesus Christ alone gives you the righteousness you need to be right with God, and you cannot get this by your own works or by your attempt to keep the law?
2. Will you admit that Jesus Christ is the God of the Bible, the second member of the Trinity?
3. Will you admit that God's entire program of salvation is found in the Person of Jesus Christ and in His sacrifice and that His resurrection proves Christ is the only way to be right with God?
4. Will you pray and admit this to God?