

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, December 27, 2023

Romans 10:4–9

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

⁵For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “*The man who does those things shall live by them.*” ⁶But 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*) ⁷or, “*‘Who will descend into the abyss?’*” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But 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): ⁹that 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.

The Law Always Taught “Faith Alone”

Main idea: The law always taught that righteousness was not by works but by dependence upon the sovereign God Who brought His salvation near to us, working His salvation in us by grace.

Introduction: Being careful about claiming to be biblical.

1. The Law’s Point about Righteousness

1. Reminder: it is a law of righteousness, but not everyone who pursues it attains to righteousness (9:31). It teaches righteousness by faith, not by the works that it commands (9:32).
2. God Himself, then, has always been the only hope of righteousness that the law offered. (But, n.b. Luk 18:9–14).
3. So, Christ has always been the law’s point about righteousness; now this point has finally been revealed (cf. 3:24–26)—especially in His incarnation and resurrection (cf. 4:25).

2. Men Mistaking Moses, apart from Christ

1. v5 is a mistakenly abortive reading of Lev 18:5. How do we know? 9:31–32!
2. Those who quote Moses this way are disagreeing with Moses Himself. Lev 18:5 and Deut 30:11–16—cf. Heb 3:1–6 (and the whole book of Hebrews, and the use that Scripture as a whole makes of the Exodus, cf. Lk 9:31).

3. Understanding Moses, as clarified and crystalized in Christ

1. The apostle expositing Deut 30:12–14 line by line.

2. God's bringing the Word near (not in the heavens or across the sea), at Sinai—and the greater fulfillments of the incarnation and the resurrection.
 1. We couldn't possibly have contributed to either one.
 2. The Word, and His ministry of the Word to us, is not a dead Word that is far from us, but a living Word by which He comes near to us and applies to us a living Christ!
 3. If we have come to have the Word of faith in God—now faith in an incarnate Christ and a resurrected Christ—in our mouth and heart, it has not been by our efforts, but by God's almighty mercy!

Conclusion: God is almighty and most merciful! Believe in the resurrected Jesus! Confess Him as YHWH in the flesh! By His grace to you, you may do so. And He Who gave the Lord Jesus to become man and die and rise again, and Who has given You the faith to believe in and confess Him, will surely bring you into everlasting enjoyment of the entirety of His salvation!

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 10 verses four through nine. These are God's words. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. To everyone who believes. For Moses' rights about the righteousness, which is of the law. The man who does those things shall live by them? 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. 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. Amen. That sends this reading of God's. Inspired. And And there aren't worth.

We must be careful when we claim to be biblical. There are many people who claim to be biblical. And really what they are doing is They are misreading things from the Bible, according to their own imaginations. Or even worse, reading things from themselves into the Bible, using the word that they find there.

And this is something that, Many Jews had done many Israelites. Had done thinking. That they were standing upon the shore foundation. Of Moses. So they are quoting Moses or rather. Paul is. Repeating what he has heard them say. As we've seen him several times throughout the

book. And several times already, since the beginning of chapter 9, repeat things that he's heard people say in response to the gospel.

And one of the things he's heard people say is in verse 5, Moses writes about the righteousness, which is of the law. The man who does those things shall live by them? And that is a quote from Leviticus 18, verse 5. But if we were to go back to Leviticus 18, Verse 5, we would find that three times.

And Leviticus 18 verses one through five. God highlights that he is the one who makes the difference in his people. In fact, that becomes a refrain from for the rest of chapter 18 and the book of Leviticus. Now, in God's providence we have been going through the book of Leviticus and just three weeks ago, we were in chapter 18 And so he has mercifully helped us to be able to remember that.

But even if we didn't remember that, even if we weren't able to go and look at Leviticus 18 verse 5 and see that Trying to use that verse. To view righteousness from the law as something that we can get by. Our works does not work in Leviticus 18. The apostle goes on to quote, another passage when he says, but the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, And do you know whom he's quoting?

In verse 6. Also Moses. And so, Uh, we must be careful. About claiming. To be biblical. Uh, we need to read the bible. Both in the local context and in the context of scripture as a whole Now, even if he had read, or quoted from Samuel or David, or Isaiah, We would not say, That those were disagreeing with Moses, would we?

Because it's the Lord himself who gives his word and so this is a helpful, reminder to us. That not only should we read passages according to the message that is emphasized. By the particular passage and with each part, each line, each phrase having its place in the message of that passage.

So reading Leviticus 18:5 in the context of Leviticus 18:1-5 and the context, Of Leviticus 18. As a whole and Leviticus as a whole But also, because all scripture is breathed out by God. That no prophet spoke from himself. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

We must read every passage of the bible in light of and as informed by every other passage in the bible. And this, of course, Will be a great help to us. So what does the law say? About righteousness. That's what? That's what he's getting at here in verses five through nine.

Which is why We have included verse 4 even though we referred to it and covered it in some measure last week. Because what the law says about righteousness, Is that righteousness comes only from what God has done. By resting in God by his work for us and his work in us.

It's entirely by grace entirely through faith and therefore entirely in and through Jesus Christ. And so the law that had always offered a righteousness, not as if it were by works, But by faith, in God, who saves, Has always had, as its point, always had as its goal always had, as its end, Christ.

And that's what he says in verse 4. And that's what he's explaining in verses 5 through 9. Christ is the end. Of the law for righteousness. To everyone who believes. So this evening, we'll consider This portion of God's word under those these three heads first, the law's point, About righteousness.

He's called it a law of righteousness at the end of chapter 9, but what is it that the law had to say? What is the point that the law was trying to make to Israel and to us? About how a man has made righteous with God. And so, that's the first thing we'll consider this evening.

The law's point. About righteousness. And then we'll consider the second place that. If we try to set Moses against Moses or even if we just tried to understand Moses. Now, apart from what God has shown us in Christ, then we will miss that which gives us the most clarity, which crystallizes for us what God was already teaching and had already taught in Leviticus and in Deuteronomy. But now bless God that's the Lord Jesus does in all that we know of God and all that we know of life with God and his salvation, he comes and he clarifies and crystallizes for us.

How a man has made right with God. That it is only by faith. And so we'll see the danger of mistaking Moses. Apart from Christ, as we see that verse 5. Read in isolation from what he says in verses six through nine can be our mistake by our flesh.

By the darkness that is in our minds and hearts through sin. If we try to read verse 5 apart from that understanding in verses 6 through 9, then we may end up in the same basket as Israel and the same condition as Israel from verse 31 and 32.

Of the past of the last chapter. And then in the last place, after a warning about mistaking, Moses apart from Christ. We'll see. How we are to understand, Moses, and especially Moses. On this point in Deuteronomy, 30 verses 12 through 14. As clarified and crystallized to us. In Christ.

And that. Um, Blessed. X position. As the apostle goes a line at a time through that quote from Deuteronomy, 30 and gives explanation by Jesus of how to understand. Each of those lines. First, then the law's point about righteousness. Remember it was a law. It is a law of righteousness.

We read that. Chapter 9 verse 31, but Israel pursuing the law of righteousness. It's a law of righteousness, but not everyone who pursues it. Attains to it. You see that in verse 31 of the last chapter Israel pursuing the law of righteousness. Has not attained to. The law of righteousness.

You see the law? Teaches a righteousness that is by faith. And so if we just know that the law is a law of righteousness, and if we just know that the law is a law that describes righteousness. But we think we can get there by our trying to do.

What it describes rather than God, working in us. That were to work out in our doing, what the law describes. If we think that it is by the works, that it commands, then we will not attain. To the righteousness that it's immersively and blessedly teaches us. Now, God's good providence to us this idea of having him work in us by his word that which works out of us by his grace that that in reference to sanctification here.

Thinking, especially Uh, about his work in justification. Which is true as well, isn't it? Even when works come out of us and sanctification. God is the one who worked in us to produce those works. But when faith and believing in our heart and confessing with our mouths, comes out of us, None of which are to be thought of as meritorious works.

But even that faith, even that speaking. Is God. Is the consequence of God working in us. And praise God. That was something that God had already taught. The Spirit had already taught through Moses. In Deuteronomy. Chapter 30. So we know already even from what we heard,

preached, when we were there at the end of chapter 9 That god himself, has always been the only hope.

Of the righteousness that the law offered. Did you know that it's possible to know that? And believe that. And still not. Have. That. Do you remember in? Jesus is parable. Of the pharisee and the public and the Pharisee, and the tax collector who were at synagogue together, And each of the men were praying.

And bless God. We hope that we will be the ones. Who, who pray to god. Have mercy on me the sinner. Uh, Most accurately and completely literally translated. That was the prayer of the public. And do you remember the prayer of the Pharisee? God, i thank you. That i am not.

Including not like this man. Over here. The Pharisee understood. That justification. Is by grace, is by faith. And yet he was proud in himself. He knew the doctrine. But he did not have the reality. Of the doctrine. And so, the lord jesus says of the publican that he Went home.

Justified. But expressions of theological truth. Are not always the display or demonstration. Of actual theological faith. We actually need to engage God. And no ourselves. In the way that the bible describes him. And in the way that the bible describes us, But god himself has always been. The only hope.

Of the righteousness. That the law offered. And so christ has always been the law's point about righteousness. This is one of the things that earlier in In the letter, the apostle Is so glad about you can hear the The discovery and the wonder coming through, In towards the end of chapter 3, It was obvious, that justification was always, but grace alone, through faith alone.

But how would god accomplish This righteousness for us. How would he secure it? And in that last third or so of chapter 3 is he begins to talk about jesus as the propitiation and and those being made right with god who trust and in jesus christ and he says The that god would vindicate his righteousness.

Now the looked at it appeared before as though he was passing over sin and not actually punishing it and how can god justify a sinner? But finally, And the incarnation. And obedience and sacrifice of the sun. God is demonstrated as both just. And justifier. Of the one who has faith.

In jesus christ. So christ is the end. He's the key, he's the goal. Of the Of how the law always told us that a man might be righteous by the merciful powerful saving work. Of the living god. And not only in his incarnation. Where god himself, became a man in order to be our righteousness in the gospel.

It's not the righteousness of a man that is for us by faith. And from faith to faith, it's the righteousness of god and so, god himself became a man But also, he reveals and makes clear that this has worked as been accepted. And that you see at the end of chapter 4, Where christ was offered up on a count of our sins.

But he was raised. On account of our justification. So that we can, we can read Leviticus 18 correctly, especially in the light of deuteronomy 30, and come to the conclusion. That a man may be right with god, a man may have life from god. Only by the sovereign merciful gracious work of god in which we depend upon him entirely by faith.

You you could come to those conclusions. But to understand how the lord accomplishes it, To come to the goal, to the end of that teaching in moses, and leviticus and Deuteronomy. You

must come to the knowledge of christ. Which, Of course, moses. And abraham and Elijah and all those believers have rejoiced over to see That brings us to men.

Mistaking Moses. By setting him against moses. And that's these men who these, who have responded to paul's preaching of this wonderful truth of being made right with god. Depending entirely upon what god has done and especially on upon what God has done in christ. And as the apostle has gone to, from jewish synagogue to jewish synagogue and preached this One of the things that he's sadly encountered.

Is that there have been many men like that? Pharisee. When jesus. Describe the pharisee and the public. And there have been many men who were sure that they were right with god by what they were doing. And yes, they they might say well, It's god who enabled me to do it but i'm the one who did it.

And so, if you really pressed them, They found the difference between themselves and others, not so much in god who worked in them, but in themselves, and what they had worked And they would say, well don't, you know? Moses. Writes about the righteousness, which is of the law. The man who does those things shall live by them?

And they accurately, quote. Out of context. A portion of leuiticus 18, verse 5. Well. Satan accurately quotes, the bible sometimes too, doesn't he? Of course he inaccurately quotes the bible. He's An equal opportunity to deceiver. But just accurately quoting the bible. Does not mean that we are getting the bible right, or god, right?

Or salvation, right? And so it's interesting. He uses he names the author in verse 5 probably because that's how he has heard it. You remember one of the things that they accused jesus of was that he spoke against moses? And one of the things that they accused, the apostles of was that they spoke against moses.

And perhaps and it's often this way, isn't it with somebody who has their favorite verse that they like to cherry pick for whatever their error is. They don't know. The rest of their bible very well. And so perhaps the apostles even provoking them by not naming moses. In verse 6, when he says, but the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, do not say in your heart, who will ascend into heaven?

They say, i've heard that before. Wherever i heard that before, and they dig through their bible and that It's moses. So wonderful. Account of, Dr. Shafer Uh, lobria, i think it was in switzerland and doesn't matter where and Um, They had a drew staying with them. And, He had agreed with the Jew that he would.

He would not read to him. From the new testament and one day. Um,

One day, dr. Shafer quoted the bulk of Isaiah 53. And that you got very angry with him. And told him, you know, i told you never to talk to me from your new testament. And dr. Schaefer showed him. And his hebrew bible from where he had been quoting. And the lord actually used it to convert the man.

The apostle may be doing something like that here. And he's doing it. Very much in the similar context, if you turn to Deuteronomy 30, And here, he just quotes. From verses 12 through 14. But i think it's really helpful for us. To read from. Verse 11 to verse 16.

Says, for this commandment, which i command you today is not too mysterious for you. Nor is it far off? And then the portion that's quoted here. In romans 10, 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.

Nor is it be on 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. But the word is very near you in your mouth. And in your heart. That you may do it.

See, I have set before you today. Life and good. Death and evil. And that I command you today to love Yahu your God to walk in his ways to keep his commandments. His statutes and his judgments that you may live and multiply and you are, your God will bless you in the land, which you go to possess.

And you see this absolutely destroys the idea. That Moses was teaching a work's principle in. Leviticus 18 verse 5. Because here, he's saying if you do these things. It will be good and life for you instead of death and evil for you. And you say, well that sounds like a work's principle.

Well, how can you say it sounds like a word's principle. When he's so emphatic, in the passage that God has not brought this nearby work, or given you to get this by works? Where you go up to heaven, or you go across the sea, or you put it in your heart, or you put it in your mouth, God, brought it down from heaven.

God brought it near to you, God, put it in your heart, God put it in your mouth. So, that the Sanctification portion. And the blessing portion. And the life portion that's there in verse 15 and 16, which the apostle doesn't even quote here. In Romans chapter 10. But you can see how resounding and answer it is.

To the misreading. Of Leviticus 18, verse 5.

And some men mistake. Moses. Apart from Christ. As the apostle takes us through, then verses 12 through 14 of Deuteronomy 30. He's giving us a lesson that he discovered probably on the Damascus Road. Because he too had been very proud of himself. A Ben-Zomite to Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee.

Above anyone else as to the righteousness that is in the law. And he's using language that he would have used before, right before his conversion. Righteousness, that is as if it were by works and not by faith, 931 and 932 blameless. He used to talk that way. And then he met the resurrected Lord Jesus.

And he discovered that God had come down from heaven, to become a man. And he discovered, that this man had lived to obediently and died. Atoningly and rose again from the dead with power and was now ascended into glory from whence, he addressed Paul on that road to Damascus.

And he came to understand. Deuteronomy 30. Yes, God had done. This. Miracle. Giving the law at Sinai. Thundering it to the people and then giving the rest of it to Moses and God by his prophet, even bringing it all the way down the mountain to them, so that they didn't all have to go up the mountain, but God had brought it to them by his prophet.

And that they didn't have to go over the sea or make some great journey. Hey, no sooner had. He plucked them out of Egypt. That he met them in the wilderness and brought his law to them there. So that when it is really in their heart, when it's really in their mouth, that it was God who had done that, not they themselves.

And that's true so far as it goes and Deuteronomy 30. But there's a, how much more isn't there? When you think about the word as far as the words, the scriptures. And the word himself, God, the Son.

And so it was seeing what god has done in the incarnation what god has done and the resurrection. What God, the spirit was now doing in giving faith and bringing convictions so that people can confess what they believe about. Jesus, It was in seeing and understanding and praise god by his saving.

Grace, even to saint, paul himself experiencing that That paul came better to understand. The Teaching of the spirit by moses, the teaching of moses under the spirit In deuteronomy. 30 versus 11. Through 16. And so we see that moses as a servant and the same house. Over, which jesus is the son?

Just as hebrews 3 verse one through six, teach us. Of jesus, didn't. Didn't oppose Moses and certainly Moses was not opposing. Jesus said, he says there and hebrews 3. The Moses was faithful in all his house. And yet, one of the things that christ had prophesied or rather, one of the things that Moses had prophesied was that the lord would raise up from among them a prophet like himself and a prophet that would supersede himself.

So that when the great prophet came, That they were to listen to him. Just as when Jesus and moses and elijah from the mountain and Amount of transfiguration. And peter sees the three and he's astonished and he wants to make three tents. He's misunderstood Moses and elijah altogether. Because moses and Elijah.

Also would say, hear him And god mercifully powerfully. Says, this is my beloved son. Here. Him. And so the book of hebrews as a whole, Shows how not just in. In demonstrating that righteousness of god. That is by grace alone, through faith alone. That mostes himself preached. But even by fulfilling and superseding, all of those types and shadows as ceremonies that looked forward to the lord jesus so that we don't do them anymore.

There's been a change in priesthood, there's been a change in law, it no longer has to be repeated. The whole book of hebrews. Was interesting to think. This is probably some of What the lord jesus and moses and elijah were talking about Node 9, 31. Sadly, our english version says Um, his decease.

And then it footnotes it and you get excited for the footnote and then it says Literally, his departure. Oh, dear congregation. The word is is exodus. Moses and elijah were talking to jesus on the Mount of transfiguration about his exodus. So that the salvation that god had given his people in the exodus under Moses was a type, a figure and it's used that way in the rest of the bible over and over again pointing to god as the one who saves us.

In saves us, not just from egypt, but saves us from all bondage from bondage to our sin, from bondage to the devil, from bondage, to the condemnation, that the law rightfully pronounces upon us, but he doesn't just save us. He saves us for himself. He saves us by himself and for himself.

This is what moses had taught. But how easy it is to mistake him. Apart from christ. And praise god. And the third place. He has given us to understand moses now. As clarified and crystallized. In christ. Coming now to look more. Carefully then at versus six through nine. But the righteousness of faith speaks, in this way.

Do not say in in your heart. Who will ascend into heaven? That is to bring christ down from above. Now, i suppose that there were those among the israelites who in retrospect thought that they could have done Moses's job as well as he did. Although, Uh, You know, the memory feds, feds quickly.

For them on that. Because when god thundered from sinai, you remember, Everyone else in the whole nation of israel was sure of one thing, they did not want to be the one who went up to hear. They didn't even want to hear at the bottom of the mountain. And it's supposed they they might have thought.

Well. You know, any of us could have You know, at one point, even Aaron and Miriam. Kind of say that, don't they and dothan and a barium. Um, death and the Beerham. Uh, say. The the similar thing. But then he adds the incarnation here. If we thought, We could ascend into heaven.

To get god's word. At sinai, as it were, Then we expose ourselves as fools. How much could any one of us have helped? With the incarnation. Could you go up to heaven? And make god. Into a man. You know, samuel rutherford Um, Used to like to say that his own conversion was maybe the second greatest miracle that he had ever, Heard of god doing the first great miracle.

Was god becoming a man. He bridged. The creator creature distinction. He added. To the divine son. Without affecting his divine nature. Without affecting his divine personhood. He added to him. A true and full. Humanity. We can say those words. But because we have no. Way of conceiving or having access to what the divine substance is.

We can't understand the greatness of what those words represent. You and i could not help. The lord jesus become incarnate. Become a man.

Or. Who will descend into the abyss and to describing here go across the depths Is the original that a paraphrases here, but he shows that the same point as is. So plain in the resurrection of the lord jesus, That is to bring christ up from the dead. Those who loved him.

Most dearly The best that they could hope for. Was to get to the body with the spices that they had procured. To attend lovingly. To the corpse of their lord. Cannot resuscitate him. Let alone resurrect him. His resurrection was not a mere resuscitation. His resurrection was with a glorified body.

What could you or i contribute to that? And so when god in, by the By the pan of moses. When God the spirit and Deuteronomy 30 Says that putting the word in your heart or putting the word in your mouth is as impossible for you to do. As to bring it down from heaven or across from the sea.

We have a, how much more don't we? Putting the word in our own mouth. Putting the word in our own heart is as impossible for us to do. As to contribute to the incarnation of the lord jesus or the resurrection of the lord jesus. So you see how entirely your justification is a work of God's grace through faith in jesus christ?

Because the giving of that faith, that overflows from the confessing mouth is as entirely the work of god as the incarnation was as entirely the work of god as the resurrection was.

And so the word And god's. Ministry. Of the word to us. Is not something dead. And far away. That we have to buy the effort of our mind understand. And, and Form a A agreement with. Or, by the effort of our heart agree with and be convinced of No, god comes all the way.

To the center that he is saving. By the work of the holy spirit. Who gives that effectual calling? Those who love God the called, according to his purpose. Those whom he predestined, he also Called. This work of salvation is by god who Calls. The three three times then. In the that latter third or so of Romans 8, He describes the effectual calling that here is fleshed out for us.

As god bringing his word near. And putting it in our hearts. And a living and saving way. So that it overflows from our mouths. With conviction. And confessing of christ. If we have come to have that word of faith in god, Which is now faith in an incarnate christ.

And faith in a resurrected christ. If we have come to have that word in our mouth and in our heart, it has not been by our efforts. But by god's almighty, Mercy.

And indeed, god is almighty. And most merciful. And so if you are here this evening, And, You have thought that? You are saved by how accurate your theology was. Where you were saved by? How well you had made your decision or sincerely you made your choice. Than the scripture comes near.

God comes near and we pray that his spirit comes near to your heart, even as the word is spoken in your ears, And says, believe in the resurrected jesus. Believe in your heart that god had phrased him from the dead. Confess with your mouth, that jesus is the lord that he is yahweh in the flesh.

And you will know that it was by his grace that you did. So, But you're not the one who goes and gets the grace. You hear the word that comes with his own power? And you believe, And you confess. And you know that he who gave the lord jesus to become a man.

Is the one who gives you the faith. And gives you to confess and he Who raised the lord jesus, from the dead, is the one who has given you the faith to believe. And to confess him. And he will surely, he who did that in christ. And he who has done that in your own heart and your own mouth.

Will surely bring you into everlasting enjoyment. Of all of his salvation not just justification. But all of that blessed salvation, That god has intended and the son has secured and that the spirit is applying

If you confess with your mouth, the lord jesus. And believe in your heart. That god has raised him from the dead. You will. Saved. Oh man, let's pray.

Our gracious. God and our heavenly father. How we thank you. For this portion of your word. For how it announces to us. Your blessed gospel, the good news. Of you as our god and savior in your son. Who is our god and savior? And the work of your spirit and applying him to us.

As he. Your spirit is our god and savior. So we pray for his ongoing work. In our hearts. Upon our mouths. And now in the rest of our lives as well. As you who have made christ, all of our righteousness before you Make the righteousness of christ to come out.

And our character and our conduct. As you can form us to him. Thank you. O god. That this Righteousness and justification. And sanctification. Is not. As it were by works of the law. But indeed, as you have always taught us, Is by your grace alone. Through faith alone in your son alone and to your glory alone.

For which glory? We ask. And jesus name. Amen.