

Start your study here

Read Read, Record, Reflect, Respond

Prayerfully	Reflectively	Extensively	Creatively	Intensively	Specifically	Effectively
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Romans 9:30-10:21

Repeated
Alike
Different
Accentuated
Related
Think Context!

- 30 What shall we say, then?
That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it,
that is, a righteousness that is by faith;
- 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness
did not succeed in reaching that law.
- 32 Why?
Because they did not pursue it by faith,
but as if it were based on works.
They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,
- 33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."
- 1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.
- 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God,
but not according to knowledge.
- 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God,
and seeking to establish their own,
they did not submit to God's righteousness.
- 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
- 5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law,
that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.
- 6 But the righteousness based on faith says,
"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' "
(that is, to bring Christ down)
- 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 that we proclaim);
- 9 because, if you confess with your mouth
that Jesus is Lord
and believe in your heart
that God raised him from the dead,
you will be saved.
- 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified,
and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.
- 11 For the Scripture says,
"Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."
12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek;
for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.
- 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
- 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?
And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone preaching? I
- 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"
- 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel.
For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"
- 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- 18 But I ask, have they not heard?
Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world."
- 19 But I ask, did Israel not understand?
First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation;
with a foolish nation I will make you angry."
- 20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me."
- 21 But of Israel he says,
"All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people." (ESV)

Review: If God is faithful to His Word (9:6) and has provided a means for Gentiles and Jews to be saved, a means which He initiates, what is man's responsibility?
Two key questions:
Observations: 1) Time elements, 2) contrasts, 3) different phrases which are roughly synonymous to "salvation"

9:30 "attained...righteousness"
10:1 "saved"
10:3 "establish their own...righteousness"
10:4 "righteousness...who believes"
10:6 "righteousness based on faith"
10:9 confess with mouth...will be saved
10:9 believe in heart
10:10 "believes and is justified"
"confesses and is saved"
10:12 "bestowing riches on"
10:13 "will be saved"
10:15 "good news"
10:16 "obey the gospel"

Romans 9:30-10:21

Rom 1:17; 3:21, 22; 10:6; Gal 2:16; 3:24; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 11:7

Indicates a transition as in 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 8:31; 9:14

30 What shall we say, then?

That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith,

Contrast 1

31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.

32 Why?

Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works.

They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

33

as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

Paul's compassion and passion for the lost (9:1-3)

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

This challenges the modern notion that it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you really believe it. Paul would say—you must believe the right person

Contrast 2

3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

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

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

Contrast 3

6 But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'"

Incarnation

7 or "Who will descend into the abyss?"

Resurrection

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);

Human Responsibility in salvation

9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

the Lord—contrast to Caesar

"because"—explanation of how the word of God is near—in one's confession of it with one's mouth

After all the stress on faith alone (see ch 4) it seems inconsiderable that Paul is adding a second condition—particularly placing it prior to "belief." Therefore it is probably better to see his as an outflow of the quote in vv. 6-8. Confession is the outward manifestation of an inner reality.

10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

11

For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."

12

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

13

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

10:14 call

Is Paul now turning to an apologetic for why they should support his ministry? Probably not.

The message must be proclaimed if people are to hear it and then believe.

- 14 How then will they **call** on him in whom they have not **believed**?
And how are they to **believe** in him of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone preaching? I
- 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”
- 16 **But** they have not all obeyed the **gospel**. ← Interesting use of language
For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”
- 17 **So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.**
- 18 **But** I ask, have they not heard?
Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.”
- 19 **But** I ask, did Israel not understand?
First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation;
with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”
- 20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”
- 21 But of Israel he says,
“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”
(ESV)

Working Idea (this is to help you see how the main idea was developed)

Paul moves his discussion from the right God has to sovereignly initiate the salvific process, to God’s justice and mercy, now to man’s responsibility.

He will develop two aspects of man’s responsibility, the responsibility to believe the gospel and the responsibility to proclaim gospel.

What does this mean for Gentiles—an opportunity for salvation? What does this mean to Jews—failure if they continue to reject the Messiah and cling to the Law?

Main idea:

God’s activity in saving not only Jews, but Gentiles as well depends on His initiative but also requires man’s response.

Teaching idea/explanation:

As you teach this section you will be able to provide balance—balance between sovereignty and human responsibility. This passage will show that in God’s plan, His sovereignty does not create fatalism.

You will need to spend time on Romans 10:9-10 and 14-17. The first passage, due to what appear to be two conditions for salvation and then later, for the importance to our sharing the gospel in a post-modern culture.

Introduction



The question that most naturally arises in studying Romans 9 and 10 is: “If God is sovereign, is man responsible?” That is the question chapter 10 we will seek to answer, particularly in the case of Israel.

Review

If God is faithful to His Word (9:6) and has provided a means for Gentiles and Jews to be saved, a means which He initiates, what is man's responsibility?

Summary

Paul's second argument in defense of the proposition that God's word of promise to Israel has not failed (9:6a) is that Israel itself, by its failure to respond rightly to God's word, is at fault for its exclusion from God's new people. In 9:30–10:13, Paul faults Israel for seeking a right standing with God based on doing the law rather than on faith in Christ. Then, in 10:14–21, he demonstrates that Israel cannot plead ignorance for its failure, for God has made his plan and purpose clear to Israel in the Scriptures. The unbelief of the majority of Paul's fellow-Jews is due both to God's sovereign election (9:6b–29) and to their culpable refusal to believe. Unconditional divine election and human responsibility stand side by side, and neither should be allowed to cancel or mitigate the other.¹

Overview

Chapter 9 deals primarily with Israel's **PAST** (as God's chosen and privileged people).

Chapter 10 deals primarily with Israel's **PRESENT** (as a nation which has refused to submit to God's gospel).

Chapter 11 deals primarily with Israel's **FUTURE** (a nation which someday will be saved and which will enjoy the fulfillment of the new covenant promises).

Preview

God's present dealings with Israel, then, can only be interpreted on the basis of the past (10:1-21). Once again, Paul prefaces his remarks by expressing his desire for Israel's salvation (10:1). For the present time, Jew and Gentile have equal access to God (10:1-13). Yet the nation is still unrepentant even though they repeatedly heard the message (10:14-21).²

Catch Phrase / Key Phrase:

Righteousness by faith

Outline

- I. **Doctrine: Justification—The Righteousness of God Revealed 1:18–11:36**
God's Gracious Provision of Righteousness is Acquired by Faith in Jesus Christ
- A. **The Need of It 1:18–3:20 What a Mess!**
The Righteousness of God Revealed in Condemnation: The Universal Need of Righteousness
The Bad News: All condemned for sin—no exceptions
- B. **What It Is 3:21–5:21**
What a God—The Way of Salvation
Justification: The imputation of righteousness to all who believe
- C. **How It Affects Me 6:1–8:39**
Sanctification: The Impartation of Righteousness
The Purpose of Salvation: Conformity to Christ's Image
 - 1. Believer and Sin 6:1-23
 - 2. Believer and the Law 7:1-25
 - 3. Believer and the Holy Spirit 8:1-39
*The believer's relationship to the Holy Spirit gives assurance of victory in Christian life.*³
To have victory over sin—you must live in the Spirit
- D. **Why Israel Rejected It 9:1–11:36**
Vindication: Israel's Rejection of God's Righteousness

The fourth major section now turns to an issue which would have been in the back of his readers' minds: If God is so righteous, how could he give Israel so many privileges (including

¹ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

² Daniel B. Wallace, *Romans: Introduction, Argument, and Outline*, bible.org

³ Dr. Harold W. Hoehner's outline (DTS, Spring 1991, Exegesis of Romans 206, unpublished class notes)

unconditional promises) and then reject his chosen people? Chapters 9–11 deal with this issue (note especially 9:6—“It is not as though God’s word has failed”), the vindication of God’s righteousness in relationship to Israel.⁴

1. Israel’s Rejection Considered in Light of God’s Sovereignty, Justice and Mercy 9:1-29
 - a. Paul’s grief 9:1-5
 - b. Present situation: the rejection of some not inconsistent with God’s promise 9:6-13
 - c. God’s relationship with humanity is based on who He is 9:14-23
 - (1) God’s character 9:14-18
First problem: Is God just?
 - (a) Answer “may it never be”—not fully stated or intended to be already understood 9:14
 - (b) God is sovereign—He is free to choose 9:15
 - (c) It is God who is merciful 9:15
 - (d) God demonstrates His power, glory and mercy by His choice 9:16-18
 - (2) God’s sovereignty 9:19-24
Second Problem: Why does God find fault if it is His Sovereign choice?
 - (a) Question: Why does He find fault: for who withstands His will? 9:19
 - (b) Answer: None is given. Rather Paul deals with the attitude of the one who asks such a question 9:20a
 - i) Vessels of wrath 9:22
 - ii) Vessels of mercy 9:23
 - iii) All for the purpose of showing the riches of His glory 9:23
 - d. Recipients of Mercy 9:24-29
 - (1) God’s plan restated 9:24
 - (2) God’s plan to save Gentiles 9:25-26
 - (3) God’s plan to save some Jews 9:27-29
2. God’s Present Dealings with Israel 9:30-10:21
 - a. The nation’s rejection of the Messiah via legalism 9:30-10:4
Rejection of righteousness by faith in favor of pursuing righteousness by the Law
 - (1) Israel refused righteousness by faith 9:30-33
 - (2) Paul’s concern over Israel’s condition 10:1
 - (3) Israel ignored righteousness by faith 10:2-4
 - b. Equality with the Gentiles 10:5-13
Righteousness for all who believe
 - c. Obstinance of the Jews 10:14-21
 - (1) Gospel must be heard in order to be accepted 10:14-17
 - (2) Major of Israelites have heard yet rejected the gospel 10:18-21

Exposition / Key Exegetical Issues to be Aware



Interactive questions

What is the most important thing you can do for your neighbor?

Love?

Share the gospel?



Perspective

This should challenge us.

It should challenge us to understand the need for all peoples everywhere to hear the gospel.

It should challenge us to understand that not all people will respond and therefore are culpable.

⁴ Daniel B. Wallace, *Romans: Introduction, Argument, and Outline*, bible.org

9:30-10:4 *Rejection of righteousness by faith in favor of pursuing righteousness by the Law*

A contrast between two kinds of righteousness rules this section: God's righteousness (10:3), a righteousness available only through faith (9:30; 10:4, 6, 10), and one's own 'righteousness' (10:3), a righteousness that is bound up with the law (9:31; 10:5) and with works (9:32). Paul develops this contrast in three somewhat parallel paragraphs (9:30–33; 10:1–4; 10:5–13). In each he accuses Israel as a whole of missing God's righteousness in Christ, the only righteousness that can save (see 10:1, 9–10), because of its preoccupation with works and the law of Moses. An approach to the law informed by right knowledge would have led them to Christ and true righteousness, for the law itself points forward to Christ (10:4).⁵

9:30-33 Israel refusing righteousness by faith

Paul's question *What then shall we say?* (30) introduces the new stage in his argument. It suggests that he will be dealing with an issue raised by his previous discussion. This issue is the unexpected development in salvation-history that he has just mentioned (24–29): Jews, God's 'chosen people', are left as only a remnant, while Gentiles, once far from God, are now being called 'sons of the living God'.⁶

9:30-31

Statement

Righteousness by faith

Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (ESV)

Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— (ESV)

Romans 3:22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: (ESV)

Romans 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) (ESV)

Galatians 2:16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. (ESV)

Galatians 3:24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. (ESV)

Philippians 3:9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— (ESV)

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (ESV)

9:32-33

Reason

This goal they did not obtain, nor could they ever attain it. For the law, as Paul has made clear earlier, can never bring righteousness (3:20, 28; 4:13–15; 8:3). Paul, therefore, disrupts the parallelism between Gentiles and Israel to bring out the fact that Israel are to be faulted both for what they were pursuing (*a law of righteousness*) and for the manner in which they were pursuing it (*not by faith but as if it [i.e. righteousness] were by works*). So narrowly were their eyes focused on the law that, rather than embracing Jesus Christ, the true goal of the 'race' (see 10:4), they have *stumbled over* him. Paul borrows this imagery from Is. 8:14, which he quotes along with Is. 28:16 in v 33.⁷

Principle: It is possible to be religious without being righteous

⁵ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

⁶ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

⁷ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

10:1-4 Israel ignoring righteousness by faith

10:1

Paul's concern restated

10:2-4

Statement

Reason

The Jews' preoccupation with the law is again the underlying problem, as Paul implies in v 4. For they have failed to understand that Christ is himself the 'culmination' of the law. Paul uses the word *telos*, which some translate 'end' (NIV; RSV) and others 'goal'. In keeping with the race imagery of the passage, however, the word probably contains elements of both these translations. Christ, Paul is saying, has all along been the goal to which the law has been pointing; and, since that goal has now been attained—Christ has come—the pursuit of the law should now be at an end. **This verse stands along with Mt. 5:17, as a key expression of a dominant NT theme: the culmination or 'fulfilment' of the old covenant law and all its institutions in Jesus the Messiah.** With that culmination comes also God's intention to offer righteousness to anyone who believes, Gentile as well as Jew (see 9:30; 10:12–13).⁸

Summary

Righteousness is only obtained through faith, not pursuing the law.

Principle: It is possible to be religious without having a relationship with God—it does matter what and who you believe.

Application:

While most of us would not pursue righteousness by the Law, and while most of us are thankful that salvation is a free gift obtained by grace through faith—many seek to live out that salvation by pursuit of rules. This may at times even be subconscious.

10:5-13 *Righteousness for all who believe*

Israel ignoring the Old Testament teaching on righteousness by faith

Interactive questions

If men and women are responsible to respond to the gospel to be saved—what is our sense of urgency in sharing the gospel?



Talk about it

How often do you change your plans in order to seek an opportunity to share the gospel?

What are you willing to give up or take on in order to have opportunities to share the gospel?

What could you change (or what should you change) in order to have more opportunities to share the gospel? (schedule, interaction with people, being more gracious and kind to people, etc.)

10:5-10

Righteousness available by faith

Paul's third statement of the contrast between the two ways of righteousness (10:5–13) has two main purposes. It uses the OT itself to reassert that the key difference between them is the difference between 'doing' (the law) and 'believing' (the gospel) (5–10) and reinforces the 'universalistic' dimension of the righteousness of God by faith (11–13; cf. 10:4b: *for everyone who believes*). Paul's quoting of the OT apparently 'against itself' in vs 5–8 has been the topic of considerable controversy and discussion. We cannot avoid the problem by eliminating the contrast between vs 5 and 6 (Cranfield, for instance, would translate 'and' at the beginning of v 6) or by denying that Paul is truly quoting the OT in v 6–8). Rather, we should understand Paul to be teasing out a fuller meaning of the passages he quotes in the light of Christ's coming. Lv. 18:5 may stand as a valid expression of *the*

⁸ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

righteousness that is by the law because it focuses on what was characteristic of the Mosaic legal system: doing. Only by obedience, Moses repeatedly emphasized, could a Jew *live*, *i.e.* enjoy God's covenant blessings. Taken on its own terms, severed from the undergirding promise of God, the Mosaic law offers the possibility of righteousness and life only if it is truly done. By focusing so narrowly on the Mosaic law the Jews had put themselves in the position of being able to find life and salvation only by 'doing' it—an impossible task, as Paul has made clear (*cf.* 3:9–20).

It is precisely the ready availability of the *righteousness that is by faith*, in contrast to the impossibility of achieving the righteousness that is by the law, that is the point of Paul's selective quotations from Dt. 30:12–14 in vs 6–8. The Deuteronomy passage encourages obedience to the law of God by reminding the Israelites that the *word* of God's law *is near*, and that there is no need to ascend to heaven or into *the deep* (Paul may here have mixed an allusion to Ps. 107:26 with his quotation) to find it. Paul can apply the text to Christ's death and resurrection (6–7) and to the *word of faith*, the gospel (8), because he sees in Christ the culmination of the law (4). What the OT attributed to the law Paul now understands to be 'fulfilled' in Christ and the gospel message: the ready availability of the means of righteousness. To continue to strive to fulfil the Mosaic law as a means of righteousness—as the Jews were doing—is to miss the fact that God has now brought near his word to people in the message of the gospel of Christ's death and resurrection.⁹

10:5 Righteousness by Law described

10:6-8 Righteousness by faith described

10:9-10 Righteousness by faith appropriated

The word at the beginning of verse 9 could be translated "that" or "because".

If we translated it "that," it would specify the content of the "word of truth" and would place two consecutive content clauses which is awkward.

If we translated it "because" (as in the ESV) it is an explanation of how the "word of God" is near, which better fits the context.

"Confess," is the same term as found in 1 John 1:9, meaning "to agree with" or "say the same about something." But when used in a more creedal fashion, as here, the idea seems to expand to not only "agree with" but "declare or profess." And it may even in a creedal context mean to agree or declare with others the same thing.

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord

This is an affirmation that Jesus is God. The term used for "Lord" was the equivalent to the term used in the Old Testament to refer to Israel's God—YHWH—a connection to the God of Israel, a statement of His eternity—YHWH, the self-existent one.

So the affirmation that Jesus is Lord not only indicates that He is God, but that He is eternal. With the added identification using the personal name, "Jesus"—this is also a statement about incarnation.

To the Roman audience, this was not only a confessional statement—it was a reaction to the pagan culture.

Romans were challenged to declare their allegiance to Caesar by declaring, "Caesar is lord." This was their belief that the Caesar was deity—part of the pantheon of their gods.

Christians were often persecuted for the unwillingness to declare Caesar to be "god."

Emperor worship naturally caused problems for Christians, since the titles given to the emperor ("Lord," "Prince of Peace," "Son of God," "Savior") were the same as those used for Christ. The confession "Jesus is Lord" (Rom 10:9) was bound to conflict with the claim "Caesar is Lord." Christians who would not sacrifice to the emperor were charged with treason. The conflict

⁹ D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (4th ed.; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

between emperor worship and Christianity remained a focal point for the persecution of the church until the time of Constantine (A.D. 306–337).¹⁰

Does Paul present two conditions for salvation: believing and confessing?

Because this is a significant question and a familiar, yet perhaps misunderstood passage, we need to delve a little deeper.



Think about it

It is noteworthy that there are over 150 passages that require only faith for salvation. They must be considered in interpreting these verses. One example is the whole Gospel of John which states its purpose as:

John 20:31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (ESV)

John never qualifies his teaching on salvation by faith/belief alone with the instruction, as a condition, to confess with the mouth. But he does give evidence of those who believed who can't keep quiet.¹¹

Unbelievers are asked to agree that Jesus is Lord, i.e., God and able to save. This section is based on a quotation from Joel 2. Romans 10:13 (quoting Joel 2:32) refers to Jesus as Yahweh.

In the New Testament the word *kurios* has several meanings. It is used (a) of an owner (Luke 19:33); (b) of a master, that is, one to whom service is due (Matt. 6:24); (c) of an emperor or king (Acts 25:26); (d) of idols, ironically (1 Cor. 8:5); (e) as a title of respect (Matt. 21:30) or courtesy (John 12:21); and (f) as the equivalent of the Hebrew Yahweh, the August name of God. Matthew 4:7 is an example of the sixth meaning: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 6:16, which has the word Yahweh. So Jesus was referring to the Father (or to Himself) as God.¹²

When Paul wrote in v. 10 that believing leads to justification and that confession leads to salvation, he was not speaking of two separate processes.⁵² Justification and salvation are being used interchangeably in this context.⁵³ To believe with one's heart means to commit oneself at the deepest level to the truth as revealed and experienced.⁵⁴ Confession is giving expression in words to that conviction. Phillips says of the one who believes, "It is stating his belief by his own mouth that confirms his salvation." Those who genuinely accept the truth of Jesus' resurrection and therefore his deity are willing to go public with their conviction.⁵⁵ That kind of commitment will never lead to disappointment. Calvin's picturesque comment regarding those who would consider the confession of the mouth as superfluous is that "it is quite nonsensical to insist that there is fire, when there is neither flame nor heat."⁵⁶ The prophet Isaiah said, "No one who places his trust in him will have cause for shame" (Isa 28:16).⁵⁷ The promise extends to Gentile as well as to

¹⁰Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 700.

¹¹ One classic example is John 4.

¹² Livingston Blauvelt, Jr. "Does the Bible Teach Lordship Salvation?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* (January-March 1986), p. 38.

⁵² A. Nygren comments that when Paul spoke of believing with the heart and confessing with the lips he was not distinguishing between the two but "using a rhythmic parallelism of the sort very common in the Old Testament" (*Commentary on Romans*, trans. C. C. Rasmussen [Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1949], 383–84). Fitzmyer adds that "the chiasmic balance stresses the different aspects of the one basic act of personal adherence to Christ and its effect" (*Romans*, 592). The order in v. 9 (confess-believe) reflects the order in Deut 30:14, the source of the quotation ("the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart"), while the order of logic and experience (believe-confess) is followed in v. 10.

⁵³ Theologically, salvation tends to be a more inclusive concept including sanctification and glorification as well as justification.

⁵⁴ The aorist πιστεύσῃς refers to the initial act of placing one's faith in Christ as Lord.

Phillips J. B. Phillips, *The New Testament in Modern English*

⁵⁵ "Christianity is belief plus confession," writes W. Barclay; "it involves witness before men. Not only God, but also our fellow men, must know what side we are on" (*The Letter to the Romans*, rev. ed., DSB [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978], 139).

⁵⁶ Calvin, *Romans and Thessalonians*, 228.

⁵⁷ As Paul interpreted, Isaiah's "precious cornerstone" is Christ. Cf. 1 Cor 3:11; 1 Pet 2:4–7.

Jew.⁵⁸ God does not have alternate methods of salvation for groups from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The one Lord is Lord of all. He is rich in blessing (cf. 2 Cor 8:9; Eph 3:8) to all who call upon him.⁵⁹ Turning to the prophet Joel, Paul reminded his readers that salvation is for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord (Joel 2:32). Nowhere in Scripture is the universal scope of salvation presented with greater clarity. Although God's redemptive plan was worked out in history through one particular race, it was meant from the beginning for the benefit of all people everywhere.¹³

Paul's rhetorical purpose at this point should make us cautious about finding great significance in the reference to confession here, as if Paul were making oral confession a second requirement for salvation. Belief in the heart is clearly the crucial requirement, as Paul makes clear even in this context (9:30; 10:4, 11). Confession is the outward manifestation of this critical inner response.

The content of what we are to confess and to believe reflects basic early Christian proclamation. The acclamation of Jesus as Lord is a very early and very central element of Christian confession; as is the conviction that God raised Jesus from the dead. Paul's focus here on Christ's resurrection is not, of course, intended to detract from his death or from other aspects of his work; as Calvin explains, the resurrection alone is "often 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." Paul may also focus on our belief in the resurrection as a final answer to the question "Who will descend into the abyss? (That is, to bring Christ up)" in v. 7. The gospel, then, is "near" to us because it requires only what our own hearts and mouths can do; and when we respond, it brings near to us God's salvation.¹⁴

In these verses Paul stated the content of that message concerning faith. Confessing **with the mouth that Jesus is Lord** is mentioned first to conform to the order of the quotation from Deuteronomy 30:14 in Romans 10:8. The confession is an acknowledgement that God has been incarnated in Jesus (cf. v. 6), that Jesus Christ is God. Also essential is **heart-faith that God raised Him from the dead** (cf. v. 7). The result is salvation. The true order is given in verse 10: **For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified** (lit., "it is believed unto righteousness"), **and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved** (lit., "it is confessed unto salvation"). Yet these are not two separate steps to salvation. They are chronologically together. Salvation comes through acknowledging to God that Christ is God and believing in Him.¹⁵

When Romans 10:9–10 speaks of believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth, this means identification with Jesus. When an individual comes to Jesus, he is acknowledging his need and is identifying with Jesus' willingness, ability, and desire to deal with the problem in full so he can receive what Jesus offers. **The person knows he has made not just a momentary decision but a decision to enter into a relationship with God. He is trusting a person, not just propositions, and the need is met not only in a moment, but also through a process.**

Another illustration of the same truth is that when an individual comes to Jesus it is not like voting for a candidate, only to walk away and never deal with the candidate again. Rather, it is a recognition that when God deals with a person's sin and meets his need, he has changed sides and has associated himself with the One who supplies righteousness to those who come to Him. The unbeliever is turning to the living God from idols (1 Thess 1:9). In coming to Jesus for

⁵⁸ Bruce comments that the phrase in 3:22 "there is no difference" had a "grim sound" because both Jew and Gentile were under the condemnation of sin, but here in 10:12 the same words have a "joyful sound" because they proclaim to both that his free pardon is for all who will claim it (*Romans*, 193).

⁵⁹ ἐπικαλέω here refers to the cry of confession that Jesus is Kyrios (*EDNT* 2.29).

¹³ Robert H. Mounce, vol. 27, *Romans* (electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001, c1995), 210.

¹⁴ Douglas Moo, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) pp. 657-658.

¹⁵ John F. Walvoord et al., *The Bible knowledge commentary : an exposition of the scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), 2:478.

salvation, he recognizes his need for a change, and by God's grace he is changed. In fact he volitionally accepts a change of masters, from sin to God (Rom 6:16–18).¹⁶

The practical lesson of this passage is this: Publicly identifying with Christ has a cleansing and sanctifying effect on our lives. If nothing else, openly confessing Christ makes the Christian conscious of his lifestyle. He now knows that non-Christians will quickly respond to his inconsistencies and compromises with, "I thought you said you were a Christian?" Inevitably, the vocal Christian becomes careful to live godly because he or she never wants a non-Christian friend to confront him with hypocrisy. The world is certainly watching Christians. But it is watching Christians who can be identified as such. I can be a secret Christian, but I can never be a victorious, secret Christian. One vital principle for victorious Christian living is the public, vocal, regular identification with the Lordship of Jesus.¹⁷

A fuller discussion of this difficult statement with a variety of interpretations:¹⁸

10:9–13. Paul explains the content (i.e., *hoti=that* instead of *because*) of *the word of faith* that functions as a synonym for the gospel message found in Romans 10:9–10: **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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** Perhaps no other verses have been as widely misunderstood as these. Hence numerous interpretations appear in the commentary tradition. (1) *Lordship salvation view*: Confessing *the Lord Jesus* refers to a personal conviction that includes trusting, repenting from sins and submission to His lordship (MacArthur, *Student Bible*, 1522). A passage like Matthew 16:25–26 seems to suggest the same. However, none of these conditions appear here, and the term *Lord* refers to Jesus' deity (cf. view 5) not His mastery over the believer. John's gospel, which is primarily evangelistic in purpose (20:31), never mentions Jesus' lordship as a condition for eternal life. Though Jesus' call for allegiance in Matthew demands obedience, His offer of salvation refers to a host of blessings now and in eternity (cf. Glasscock, *Matthew*, 350) but not eternal life. Hence one must ask, "*Does salvation here refer to justification?*"

(2) *Two condition view*: Some interpret these verses as referring to justification-salvation conditioned upon two separate prerequisites, *confess* and *believe* (Boice, *Romans 9–11*, 3:1209; Hodge, *Romans*, 341, 343). Clearly Paul states at the end of both verses that salvation rests upon two conditions. Yet, this view lacks any parallel support in the New Testament that conditions justification-salvation upon confession (cf. 1 Tim 6:12). Hence Paul does not mention confession as a condition for obtaining justification in section 3:21–4:25.

(3) *Synonymous view*: Others also view vv 9–10 as referring to justification-salvation, but the apparent conditions of confession and faith are relegated as mere synonyms (Nygren, *Romans*, 383; Moo, *Romans*, 657). In this view, confession and faith can be interpreted as Old Testament parallel statements, since both terms appear in vv 9–10 (Bultmann, *TDNT*, 6:209). Three things argue against this view: If confession and faith are synonyms, why are two conditions set forth before obtaining salvation? Furthermore, vv 9–10 really develop a chiasmic not a parallel structure (Edwards, *Romans*, 254). Also, it is not wise to blur the distinction between *mouth* and *heart* since out of forty-two occurrences where both of these terms appear in the same verse, they are almost always distinguished.

(4) *Genuine evidence view*: One may see confession of the mouth as the external evidence of the genuineness of internal faith (Murray, *Romans*, 2:56). Matthew 15:18 supports the idea that verbal confession expresses external evidence of an internal reality. Yet, there is nothing in the context to suggest that confession is an evidence of true faith. That is totally imported into the passage. In other places where people believe in Christ, automatic confession does not result (cf. John 12:42).

¹⁶Darrell Bock, "A Review of The Gospel according to Jesus," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1989), 146:38.

¹⁷John F. Hart, *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society Volume 12* (The Grace Evangelical Society, 1999; 2002), vnp.12.2.35.

¹⁸This section is provided to show differences of interpretation rather than my agreement with all the exegetical discisions of the author or the final conclusions. You will notice that I even disagree with the first point, that the first work in verse 9 should be translated "that" instead of "because."

TDNT Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; translated and edited by G. w. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76)

(5) *The deity of Christ view*. Yet, others understand confession to be a creedal statement (e.g., Deut 6:4) based on faith that Jesus is God. This would imply that believing in Jesus' deity is a condition for justification-salvation (Harrison, *Romans*, in *EBC*, 112; Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, 70–73). While confessing Jesus as Lord does refer to His deity (as vv 13 and 14:11 supports), the question remains, “Does confession refer to justification-salvation?” If confessing Jesus' deity is a prerequisite condition to obtaining justification how were the early disciples in the Old Testament and New Testament justified since they did not grasp His deity (Mark 4:41; John 14:7–9)? One would have to postulate an existing condition for justification *now* that was absent in a previous era. While information about the object of faith (Jesus) increases through new revelation (name, status, place of birth, type of death and resurrection, etc...), the bare minimum of information and sole condition for justification does not change: the object of faith is God's promised Messiah (cf. 4:3) and the only condition for justification is to believe in Him alone (cf. 3:21–4:25).

(6) *Christian deliverance view*. Contextually, vv 9–10 reiterate the truth in Deuteronomy 9:4 and 30:12–14, which is quoted in vv 5–8: namely that obeying and calling for divine help (conceptually understood as “salvation”) is available to all who are justified (v 6; Hart, *Why Confess Christ?* 29, 31). No doubt Paul thinks of Christ's coming “from above” and rising “from the dead” (vv 6–8) to correspond with the truth of vv 9–10. Hence one should link the theme of salvation-deliverance to live in vv 1, 5 and 9–13 as providing abundant life only to those who *believe* and *confess*. Although Paul begins v 9 by mentioning confession before belief, the conjunction *for* in 10:10 explains the correct logical sequence of occurrence, as v 14 explains the correct sequence that leads to a proper interpretation of the kind of salvation in view.

Therefore, one must first, *believe in your heart* (v 9)...which is paralleled with and explained in v 10 as, *with the heart one believes unto righteousness*. When faith in the heart (=mind, cf. v 8) occurs, one receives God's imputed righteousness (*dikaïosynē*). Paul normally uses the term *dikaïosynē* in Romans for justification by faith (1:17; 3:21–4:25; 10:6). Hence the word *saved* cannot mean salvation from hell (which justification provides; cf. 5:9) since faith alone is not the sole requirement for this deliverance. One must *confess* (=call, see below) with the *mouth* here as a condition for salvation (BDAG, 290; cf. vv 14–15). As with the call in vv 12–13, salvation is obtained through the *mouth* but justification comes through the *heart*. Hence these two aspects of how a person responds to the gospel occur sequentially. Though they may occur simultaneously (cf. v 8), causing a bit of confusion, they are not the same event (cf. v 14–15).

Paul consoles those who *believe* and publicly *confess* (or call on divine aid) by quoting part of Isaiah 28:16. This was written in a time when Jerusalem trusted in other gods to deliver them from the Assyrian invasion. Hence Paul's quote encourages believers to rely on God for help: “**Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame**” because God is the only “basis for spiritual and physical salvation” (Martin, “Romans,” in *BKC*, 1078; cf. 1:16). Perhaps analogous to the Assyrian invasion is God's desire to deliver the Jews from the wrath to come at the hand of Rome in A.D. 70. Though chapters 9–11 primarily address Israel (hence the term *saved* must be viewed under its Hebraic rubric; cf. Lopez, *OT Salvation—From What?* 49–64), Paul universalizes the deliverance of vv 9–13 to include **Jew and Greek** alike.

The confession of vv 9–10 is picked up again by the phrase **call upon him** in v 12 and repeated by the phrase in v 13 “**whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved**” quoted from Joel 2:32. In Joel's context calling on God expresses a request of deliverance from temporal wrath. This is the same type of present wrath that continues throughout Romans (1:18; 2:5, 8; 3:5; 5:9; 9:22; 12:19; 13:4–5). Hence those who view the salvation of vv 9–10, 13 as speaking of deliverance from hell have completely ignored the thrust of the book or the context from the passages Paul quotes. To be delivered from God's wrath one must first believe and then obey. Furthermore, the deliverance-from-hell view also ignores that in the Old Testament (believers in Gen 4:26; 26:25; 1 Kgs 18:24–27; Ps 14:4; 18:3; 31:17; 50:15; 53:4; 79:6; 80:18; 116:2; Isa 55:6; 64:7; Jer 29:12) and the New Testament *calling on the name of the Lord* is a Christian practice (cf. Acts 7:59; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Tim 2:2; 1 Pet 1:17; cf. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 593). This phrase was a way of identifying Christians who invoked the aid of God and were publicly associated with the risen *Lord* by calling His name (e.g., in Acts 9:14 Paul identifies believers through their public association with Christ). To call on Christ in public praise or prayer acknowledges Him as Lord, because it shows Christian submission by coming to Him who is

EBC The Expositors Bible Commentary, edited by F. E. Gaebelin et al., 12 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976)

BDAG *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)

BKC Bible Knowledge Commentary

worthy to receive worship and who responds to one's worries. God never promises to deliver closet Christians; but only those who *confess* or *call on Him* before men will receive aid from heaven (cf. Lev 26:40–42; 1 Kgs 8:33–36; 2 Chr 6:24–26; Matt 10:32; Luke 12:8; Jas 5:16; 1 John 1:9; Rev 3:5).¹⁹

10:11-13

Universal availability of righteousness by faith

Notice how the need for God to initiate the process—sovereignly directing as described in Romans 8-9—does not preclude the universal availability.

Paul then (v. 11) supported his position by re quoting part of Isaiah 28:16 (cf. Rom. 9:33), adding the Greek word translated **everyone**. God responds with the gift of provided righteousness to each individual who believes. Then Paul reminded his readers of God's impartiality, as he did when discussing human sinfulness (3:22). Just as all who sin will be judged, so all who believe will be saved and **richly** blessed. This conclusion also is supported by a quotation from Joel 2:32: **Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved**. To **call on** the Lord means to pray in faith for salvation.²⁰

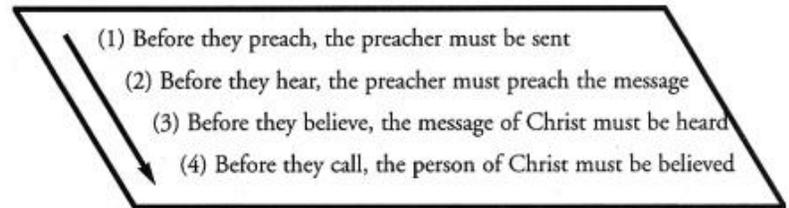
10:14-21 Obstinace of the Jews

10:14-17

Gospel must be heard in order to be accepted

10:18-21

Majority of Israelites have heard, yet rejected the gospel



Summary

Israel's rejection had nothing to do with any lack of opportunity to hear or ability to understand. It rested solely upon the nation's willful disobedience (v. 21).⁷³ They insisted on personal merit based on works to gain God's approval. All the time they knew that God's requirement for righteousness is faith. Denney notes that God's outstretched arms were "the symbol of that incessant pleading love which Israel through all its history has consistently despised."⁷⁴ And why today do so many people reject the gospel? It is not necessarily because they have not heard or do not understand. Perhaps one reason is that "they find it hard to see, in a man who was hanged, the master-clue to the riddle of the world."^{75 21}



Implications/Application

For the gospel to be believed, people must hear it.

For the gospel to be heard, people must proclaim it.

Some people will not believe even when they hear and understand the gospel.

If the gospel is rejected, individuals bear the culpability.

What about, if the gospel is not proclaimed? Are we held responsible?

Key Point

Man is held responsible to respond to the gospel

¹⁹ René A. Lopez, *Romans Unlocked Power to Deliver* (Springfield, Missouri: 21st Century, 2005), 210.

²⁰ John F. Walvoord et al., *The Bible knowledge commentary : an exposition of the scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), 2:478.

⁷³ The quotation is from Isa 65:2 (LXX).

⁷⁴ Denney, "Romans," 2:675. Although the difference is slight, others understand the outstretched hands more in the sense of welcome than supplication. Calvin writes that "God stretches forth His hands to us exactly as a father stretches forth his arms, ready to receive his son lovingly into his bosom" (*Romans*, 236–37).

⁷⁵ Hunter, *Romans*, 98.

²¹ Robert H. Mounce, vol. 27, *Romans* (electronic ed.; Logos Library System; The New American Commentary Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001, c1995), 213.

Man is also responsible to share the gospel



What do we learn
About God?

Righteous



Act on it

This passage, particularly the last section reinforces our need to have compassion for the lost and not only a willingness but a desire to share the gospel.

I have often said that it is easier for me to go across the ocean (on a mission trip) and share the gospel than it is to go across the street.

How can we not only believe it is important to share the gospel, but how can we take personal responsibility to share the gospel?

Perhaps our first step is like Paul's in Colossians 4:2-6
Pray for opportunity.

Second step—as you pray for opportunities, slow down to see the opportunity.
Pray for clarity and boldness

Third step—
Walk with wisdom and grace before the world
Witness with the Word

Romans 9:30-10:21

30 What shall we say, then?

That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it,
that is, a righteousness that is by faith;

31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness
did not succeed in reaching that law.

32 Why?

Because they did not pursue it by faith,
but as if it were based on works.

33 They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,
as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God,
but not according to knowledge.

3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God,
and seeking to establish their own,
they did not submit to God's righteousness.

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

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law,
that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness based on faith says,
"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' "
(that is, to bring Christ down)

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 that we proclaim);

9 because, if you confess with your mouth
that Jesus is Lord
and believe in your heart
that God raised him from the dead,
you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes and is justified,
and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

11 For the Scripture says,
"Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek;
for the same Lord is Lord of all,
bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

- 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?
And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone preaching? I
- 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”
- 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel.
For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”
- 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- 18 But I ask, have they not heard?
Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.”
- 19 But I ask, did Israel not understand?
First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation;
with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”
- 20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”
- 21 But of Israel he says,
“All day long I have held out my hands to
a disobedient and contrary people.” (ESV)