



Righteousness By Faith

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation... Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 10:10-11).

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“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. 5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:1-13).

Introduction

One of the greatest tragedies in life is to be sincere and yet be wrong. A person may be earnest, devoted, religious, and zealous, but still miss the very thing he seeks. In Romans 10, the Apostle Paul expresses his deep burden for Israel. The Jews possessed the Scriptures, the covenants, the promises, and the worship of God, yet many remained outside God's salvation because they sought righteousness by works rather than by faith. This passage teaches three great truths:

1. The danger of misplaced zeal.
2. The simplicity of God's way of salvation.
3. The universality of the Gospel invitation.


I. THE DANGER OF MISPLACED ZEAL (Romans 10:1–4)

Let's consider four different aspects of the danger of misplaced zeal.

A. Paul had a burden for lost people

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10:1). Paul was not content merely to discuss theology; he longed for souls to be saved. Elsewhere he wrote: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" (Romans 9:1–2). Why was he so burdened? It is because he knew the eternal destiny of the lost.

Consider Moses after Israel worshipped the golden calf. He prayed to God saying: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32). Great servants of God carry great burdens for the lost because of their understanding of the eternal dangers of lost souls. A church that no longer prays for souls has forgotten the heart of God.



B. Zeal alone cannot save

"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2). The Jews were passionate about religion. They fasted, prayed, attended the synagogue, and studied the Law. Yet their zeal was misdirected.

Before his conversion, Paul himself was zealous. He reported that: "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church." (Philippians 3:6). Yet all that zeal was employed against Christ.

A traveller may run at great speed down a road, but if he is travelling in the wrong direction, his speed only carries him farther from his destination. **Sincerity cannot substitute for truth.**

C. Ignorance of God's righteousness leads to self-righteousness

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:3). The problem was not lack of effort but refusal to submit. The natural heart wants to earn salvation. Yet Scripture declares that "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). And again: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). God does not improve human righteousness; He replaces it with Christ's righteousness. **Such ignorance will result in great surprises at the end of life.**

D. Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4). The Law reveals sin but cannot save. Paul wrote: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Romans 3:20). The Law points us to Christ.

The ceremonial sacrifices of the Old Testament all pointed forward to the Lamb of God. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Christ fulfilled what the Law anticipated. Missing this, results in forfeiture of the benefits.

II. THE SIMPLICITY OF GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION (Romans 10:5–10)

Let's consider the simplicity of God's way of salvation in three parts:

A. The righteousness of faith is accessible

Paul contrasts the righteousness of the Law with the righteousness of faith. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Romans 10:8). Salvation is not found through impossible human effort. Paul says: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?" (Romans 10:6) and "Or, Who shall descend into the deep?" (Romans 10:7). Christ has already come from heaven. Christ has already risen from the dead. The work has been completed. **It's that simple!**

Imagine a condemned prisoner trying to pay a debt he can never satisfy. Then a benefactor pays the debt in full and presents a signed receipt. The prisoner's task is not to earn freedom but to receive it. So Christ has paid sin's penalty. He said in John 19:30 - **"It is finished"**.

B. Salvation requires faith in the risen Christ

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9). **It's that simple!** The resurrection is central to the Gospel. Paul declared: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). Faith is not mere intellectual agreement. It is personal trust in the living Christ.

The Philippian jailer asked: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). **The answer was simple:** "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).



C. True faith produces open confession

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). **It's that simple!** Faith begins inwardly but does not remain hidden. Jesus said: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). A genuine believer is not ashamed of Christ.

III. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL INVITATION (Romans 10:11–13)

Let's consider the universality of the gospel invitation in three parts:

A. No believer will be disappointed

"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Romans 10:11). The promise is certain. Peter echoes the same truth: "He that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (1 Peter 2:6). Every promise God makes in Christ is dependable.

B. The Gospel is for all people

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Romans 10:12). The Gospel destroys every human barrier. Paul wrote elsewhere: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

When Peter entered the house of Cornelius, he learned that God's grace extends beyond Israel. He declared: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). The Gospel is God's answer for every race, nation, language, and social class.

C. The invitation is open to everyone

The climax of the passage is one of the most glorious promises in Scripture: "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**" (Romans 10:13). The word "whosoever" includes every sinner. Jesus Himself declared: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). And again: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

The doors of a refuge city in ancient Israel stood open to anyone fleeing for safety. Likewise Christ stands ready to receive every sinner who comes to Him. No one has ever come to Christ in true repentance and faith and been rejected.

Conclusion

Romans 10:1–13 teaches that:

- 1) Religious zeal without truth cannot save.
- 2) God's righteousness is received by faith, not earned by works.
- 3) Salvation is available to every person who calls upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Jews stumbled because they sought to establish their own righteousness. The Gospel calls us instead to submit to God's righteousness in Christ. The question is not whether we are religious, sincere, or moral. The question is whether we have trusted Christ alone.

Hear again the invitation: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). And hear the Saviour's promise: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Amen.