

## Romans 10

- Today we move into Paul's second part of his explanation of God's plan for Israel
  - Chapter 9 was the past, and now Chapter 10 looks at the present situation with Israel
    - They had largely rejected the Messiah
    - Yet Paul said that God wasn't finished with the Jews
      - He wasn't going back on His promises
      - Paul's readers were simply witnessing God's election at work before their eyes
  - So what gives?
    - Paul sets out to explain the situation with Israel in his day

[Rom. 9:30](#) ¶ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; [Rom. 9:31](#) but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law. [Rom. 9:32](#) Why? Because *they did not pursue it* by faith, but as though *it were* by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, [Rom. 9:33](#) just as it is written,

“BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE,  
AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”

- What conclusion do we draw from all this past history?
  - Today, the Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, have now attained righteousness which is by faith
    - So the Gentiles have ended up on top in this race to righteousness
  - Meanwhile Israel, which has always been deeply engaged in pursuing righteousness, did not arrive at that law
    - They tried to be righteous through a living out of law
      - But they never achieved what they sought

- Because they sought it in the wrong way – by works rather than by faith
- They could never have become righteous by law no matter how hard they tried
  - They were trying, they were trying according to the flesh
    - As a matter of works
- This was no different than any other unbelievers, Jew or Gentile it's all the same
  - Men have often fashioned gods they could serve in their own ways
    - The Jews simply made their works of the Law a kind of god
    - A way to heaven other than the true way
  - Therefore, when the Truth came – a truth that required faith - they stumbled over Him
    - Because what He offered was not what they were seeking
- So Paul describes Israel's present circumstances as a kind of national stumbling
  - Brought about because their idea of salvation was different than the one God ordained
    - This was an incredibly hard truth to accept
      - The Jewish reader was probably shocked to hear Paul say that the Jewish nation in their day is being left behind
        - God is allowing them to stumble over the Messiah rather than receive Him
    - Paul is going to address their fears and shock in chapter 11
      - But before he gets there, Paul is going to hammer several nails into the coffin of hope that may remain

- Just in case anyone in his audience is hoping that there is still some chance that Israel will come to it's senses and receive their Messiah
- Paul wants to put that thinking to an end

[Rom. 10:1](#) ¶ Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation.

[Rom. 10:2](#) For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

[Rom. 10:3](#) For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

[Rom. 10:4](#) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- First, a little diplomacy on Paul's part
  - Brothers, my heart is to see my countrymen saved
    - It's not like I wish they weren't accepting their Messiah
    - So don't hear my words as if I was biased against them or wishing this upon them
  - I am even willing to testify that they are a zealous people (a kind of fanaticism for God)
    - To testify means that Paul can speak from first hand experience
      - Paul was the most zealous of all
      - "Take it from me"
  - But this zealousness wasn't directed in the right way
    - And they don't get extra credit for trying, or for sincerity
      - Sincerity isn't enough. You can be sincerely wrong
    - Their hard work was really about establishing their own righteousness rather than knowing (understanding) God's righteousness
  - As Paul reminds us in verse 4, these two kinds of righteousness are mutually exclusive

- Those who receive Christ in faith put an end to law for the sake of righteousness
- The word end (telos) means two things
  - It means end as in the termination of something
  - And it means end, as in the ultimate purpose of something
- Paul is using the word telos because he wants us to see both meanings
  - Christ puts an end to the Law in the sense that He abolishes it and brings it to an end for the sake of righteousness
  - And Christ puts an end to the law in the sense that He is the ultimate fulfillment and purpose that the Law had in mind
    - The Law was always a picture of Christ, and it had served its purpose once He had come and fulfilled it

[Rom. 10:5](#) ¶ For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

[Rom. 10:6](#) But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?'" (that is, to bring Christ down),

[Rom. 10:7](#) or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

[Rom. 10:8](#) But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

[Rom. 10:9](#) that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

[Rom. 10:10](#) for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

[Rom. 10:11](#) For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

[Rom. 10:12](#) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

[Rom. 10:13](#) for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

- How can God overlook their zealous efforts to please Him?

- Well, first, Paul reminds the reader that the method for righteousness the Jews were pursuing was never the one God called them to follow
- Where does Paul go to prove this point?
  - Where else? The Law itself
- Moses told the nation in Lev that the one who practices the Law is the one who may live by it

[Lev. 18:5](#) 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the LORD.

- So the test for whether works of law will arrive at righteous is whether you keep all God's statutes and laws
  - Can anyone ever pass this test (other than God Himself)?
    - No
    - So even as God gave Israel the Law, He stated that the only way it could be a means of righteousness or them was if they kept the Law perfectly
    - So much for that plan
  - Yet that's the way they tried to use it
- But in verse 6, Paul reminds the reader that God also told the nation how righteousness could be possible for them
  - In Deut, Moses told the people this:

[Deut. 30:8](#) "And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today.

[Deut. 30:9](#) " Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers;

[Deut. 30:10](#) if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul.

- Seems impossible, right? Almost like a false promise?
  - But Moses continues...

[Deut. 30:11](#) ¶ "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.

[Deut. 30:12](#) "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'

[Deut. 30:13](#) "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'

[Deut. 30:14](#) "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

- In reality, the commandment to be perfect is not too difficult nor is it out of reach
  - The first thing that someone has to understand is that the commandment to be perfect is out of reach if we try to use our hand to reach for it
    - Our works in other words
  - But it is not out of reach altogether
    - God uses extreme examples of what someone might think was required to please God and receive righteousness
  - Or in the words Paul quoted in Romans
    - Who will go to heaven to bring us the Messiah
      - Meaning how do we get God to give us this Messiah we know we need?
    - Or who will bring him up from the dead
      - Since the Jews knew the prophecies that said the Messiah would die
  - Paul makes the same point as God made in Deut
    - The means of salvation was not impossible nor hidden in their Law
      - It was always as close as their mouth
        - A word of faith which the church was preaching even in Paul's day
- So what did God mean by this statement? How was righteousness possible simply with the mouth?

- In verse 9 Paul explains
  - If you confess with your mouth what is true in your heart concerning your belief in the Messiah
    - You will be saved
- Because with the heart, you arrive at belief (heart is the common Biblical metaphor for the spirit or inner person)
  - And the belief itself results in righteousness
- And confess with your mouth
  - Which results in salvation
  - Confess means to say the same thing concerning a topic that others are saying
    - To agree with a school of thought
- So to confess Christ is to say the same thing about Him that others of like mind are saying
  - We speak of our confession
  - So confession here means to join in saying the same things about who Christ is and what He did to save men
    - And this confession results in salvation
    - Not only for the person with the belief, but for those who might hear the confession and be saved as well
- For whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed
- Here's what Paul is saying to the reader
  - Sure the Jews were zealous in pursuing Heaven, but they didn't get credit from God because they were pursuing it in their own way
    - And it wasn't the way God told them to do it
      - He didn't expect them to keep the Law as a means to righteousness
      - He meant for them to recognize the impossibility of self-righteousness and turn to God in faith

- And that solution was as close as their own mouth
  - If only they were to believe in the Messiah's work and confess that Messiah when He came, then salvation would be theirs
- So Paul is painting the Jewish reader into a corner concerning the fate of Israel in the present day
  - The hard fact is that most of the nation in the present day are not receiving salvation because they are rejecting the one and only means to that salvation
  - So what does someone do when pinned in a corner?
    - They fight back
    - And Paul is prepared for the fight
  - In this case, the fight is whether there is still some chance for the Jewish nation in the present day
    - Remember, the conversation is still on nations, not individuals
      - The Jewish reader is searching for some hope to hand their hat on
      - Surely, there was still some possibility of Israel coming to faith through a confession
- So brings the argument to its point

[Rom. 10:14](#) ¶ How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

[Rom. 10:15](#) How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

(Not often taught properly)

- So for you who still hold some hope that the Jewish nation will come to follow their Messiah in the present day, consider this:
  - Working backwards, Paul illustrates that there is no reason for hope on behalf of the Jewish nation today

- How then will the Jewish nation call on Jesus for salvation when they haven't believed in Him when He came to them in the flesh?
- And how will this nation receive a Christ who isn't being preached within the nation?
  - By the time Paul wrote this letter, Christianity was already beginning to feel the heat to leave the city and the nation was generally hostile to the message
  - They weren't hearing it
- And there were no preachers actively being sent to spread the news among the Jewish population
  - There were evangelists in the nation but none were received by the Jews
    - Even today, if you try to evangelize within the nation of Israel, you are deported and barred from entry
  - And how will they expect to ever encounter a preacher when none is being sent into the nation
    - Certainly, Jews themselves were not coming to faith and taking up the role of evangelist to their own countrymen
- So what's left for Paul's audience? Paul's point seems inescapable
  - The Jewish nation in their day has found itself outside God's favor and they have not been elected to receive grace

[Rom. 10:16](#) ¶ However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

[Rom. 10:17](#) So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

- Despite all his readers hopes and desires, the nation of Israel in Paul's day did, in fact, rejected their Messiah and it will result in their eternal loss
  - Even as Isaiah said it would happen, that no one would believe the report of the Messiah's arrival

[Is. 53:1](#) ¶ Who has believed our message?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

[Is. 53:2](#) For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,  
 And like a root out of parched ground;  
 He has no *state*ly form or majesty  
 That we should look upon Him,  
 Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

[Is. 53:3](#) He was despised and forsaken of men,  
 A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
 And like one from whom men hide their face  
 He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

- So Paul concludes, faith comes by hearing
  - Our saving faith comes because we hear (or receive) the gospel message
- But hearing itself comes from the word of Christ
  - The inclination to hear and receive the gospel is itself a product of God's word doing it's work in our hearts
    - Which implies that until that work is accomplished, no man can receive the gospel and accept it
- So the Jewish nation stands at an impasse
  - Without the message, without a messenger to deliver it, without a hope that a messenger will be sent much less received, and without the word of Christ prompting faith
- You think that would put an end to any thought that the nation in the present day was likely to turn back and receive Christ
  - But Paul isn't satisfied that he's put the thought to rest
    - There are still some arguments possible
  - And so Paul begins to anticipate the kinds of arguments that were likely floating around in their heads
    - And he uses a style of writing that was common in that day and is particularly common for Paul
    - The ask-answer style where Paul plays both sides of the argument
    - He makes their argument for them, and then answers it

[Rom. 10:18](#) ¶ But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have;  
 “ THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH,  
 AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.”

[Rom. 10:19](#) But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says,  
 “ I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION,  
 BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU.”

[Rom. 10:20](#) And Isaiah is very bold and says,  
 “ I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME,  
 I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME.”

[Rom. 10:21](#) But as for Israel He says, “ ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED  
 OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.”

- So the first defense the reader might try is:
  - Maybe the Jews never got their chance to hear the gospel?
    - Maybe all this time it’s just a matter of them never getting their chance to hear that the Messiah was the only way to Salvation
      - Similar to the argument we raise when we ponder how God responds to those who live in unreached places
      - Maybe they just didn’t hear about God’s grace?
  - Think back to Paul’s argument at the beginning of the book
    - All men are under condemnation
    - And now he quotes Psalms

[Psa. 19:1](#) ¶ The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
 And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

[Psa. 19:2](#) Day to day pours forth speech,  
 And night to night reveals knowledge.

[Psa. 19:3](#) There is no speech, nor are there words;  
 Their voice is not heard.

[Psa. 19:4](#) Their line has gone out through all the earth,  
 And their utterances to the end of the world.

[Psa. 19:5](#) In them He has placed a tent for the sun,  
 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber;

It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.

- So that argument won’t work to save the Jewish nation any more than ignorance saves Gentiles
- Then maybe they didn’t understand what was being said to them concerning Jesus?

- On the contrary, Paul says
  - Moses even told the nation in advance that they would be made jealous by a new relationship God would establish with a people who lacked total understanding
    - So if God can bring to faith a group who lacked complete understanding of God and His plan
    - Then certainly the Jewish nation can't use ignorance as an excuse
- And Isaiah warned that God would be found by those who didn't seek Him
  - And He would manifest Himself to a people who never asked for Him
    - This is the basis for all salvation
    - No one seeks after God, no not one
    - But what men are incapable of doing in choosing God, God will do in choosing men
- But as for Israel, God said prophetically in Isaiah that God would eventually deal with Israel

[Is. 65:1](#) ¶ "I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask *for Me*;  
I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me.  
I said, 'Here am I, here am I,'  
To a nation which did not call on My name.

[Is. 65:2](#) " I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people,  
Who walk *in* the way which is not good, following their own thoughts,

[Is. 65:3](#) A people who continually provoke Me to My face,  
Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks;

[Is. 65:4](#) Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places;  
Who eat swine's flesh,  
And the broth of unclean meat is *in* their pots.

[Is. 65:5](#) "Who say, ' Keep to yourself, do not come near me,  
For I am holier than you!'  
These are smoke in My nostrils,  
A fire that burns all the day.

[Is. 65:6](#) "Behold, it is written before Me,  
I will not keep silent, but I will repay;  
I will even repay into their bosom,

[Is. 65:7](#) Both their own iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together," says  
the LORD.

"Because they have burned incense on the mountains  
And scorned Me on the hills,  
Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom."

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