

23. ROMANS SERIES: God's Plan of Salvation - Part 3

Romans 10:1-13

In the previous chapter Paul established the entrance of Gentiles into the true Israel of God, and the rejection of the physical nation of Israel in and through God's sovereign electing purpose. In this chapter, Paul is once again concerned with showing the correct method for entrance into the true Israel of God. He does this chiefly out of concern for his fellow countrymen, recognizing their great need of embracing God's way of salvation. God's way is the sure and only means of entrance into the Kingdom of God, for all other methods are found greatly wanting. Indeed, all others methods are doomed to fail.

Please Read Romans 10:1-13

Verse 1: This verse gives a clear indication of Paul's 'heart-pain' for his fellow countrymen (9:1ff). Writing to fellow believers, Paul assures them of his great love for the Jews, despite the very telling words of the previous chapter. In fact, Paul's great longing and prayer is that the Jews be saved. He prays about this because He knows that God must save them, even though they need to exercise faith and repentance. This confession of true heart concern and love for the Jews further confirms the great need of Israel and the terrible state that they are in.

QUESTION: What measure of concern do you have for your lost neighbours, friends and family? How is this seen in your life?

Verse 2: The use of the word *for* here, indicates that this verse gives an explanation as to why Paul longs for, and prays for, the salvation of the Jews. The reason given by Paul is one that Paul testifies to, as if on their behalf, being very aware of their condition. Remember Paul was in that same state at one time. The simple reason is that despite all their religion they knew not Christ in truth.

That the Jews have a great zeal for God is without dispute, for they labour to gain acceptance with God (9:31; Gal 1:14). Yet the toil and zeal of the Jews is misdirected and is in vain, for it is not according to God's revealed way of salvation. So despite all their

religious activity, the Jews were still spiritually dead.

QUESTION: Is this paralleled in any way in the churches of today? Explain.

Verse 3: This verse explains how the Jewish zeal was wrong and misdirected. It was so because they were ignorant of the righteousness of God and how man for salvation obtains righteousness. Rather than accepting the righteousness of God given to sinners through Christ by faith, the Jews sought to establish their own righteousness through law-works (2:17ff; 3:20; 9:31,32; Philip 3:9). They just would not acknowledge God's appointed means of salvation.

Verse 4: That the Jews misunderstood the law is seen in how they were ignorant of the true end of the law, for Christ is the goal of the law. This error was widespread in the Jews despite the possession of the Old Testament Scriptures for centuries. Rather, the Jews sought to merit their own salvation through a self-deceived perception of being able to keep the law themselves.

But the law in reality shows a person's inability to obtain righteousness through self-merit. With such an inability to keep the perfect requirements of the law, the sinner is led to look outside of himself for another source of righteousness, even Christ (Gal 3:24; Col 2:17; Heb 9:9). The sinner then finds by faith, a perfect righteousness imputed to him, meeting the just demands of God's law, thus fulfilling it (Mt 5:17) and terminating the laws demands upon the sinner.

Verse 5: That a perfect righteousness is required by the Mosaic Law is shown by Paul, in quoting Leviticus 18:5. In order to gain a right standing before God via law-works, one must obey perfectly, without even the slightest disobedience in any area. This is clearly something unattainable to all men. Yet in Christ, such righteousness is reached, for He did so keep the requirements of the law.

Verses 6,7: In verse five, Paul has given the Law's method of obtaining salvation, '*but,*' the gospel's method is another. The Law demands perfect obedience, but in these verses Paul gives a method that is in contrast to that of the Law.

The '*righteousness of faith*' is here personified, and is said to speak in the way quoted from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. This righteousness is that which is obtained by faith in Christ.

The contrast is that the Law demanded an impossible perfect obedience for righteousness, but the '*righteousness of faith*' demands no such impossible feats. We do not need to find our way to heaven, or go into the lowest of depths in order to obtain this righteousness (Ps 139:6-9; Pr 24:7). The use of Deuteronomy 30:11-14 does not involve that of a direct proof text, but is used as a manner of speaking, in the same way it is used in Deuteronomy 30:11-14. The thing required in both passages is not some impossible feat,

but something that is attainable. That the things mentioned are not needed is admitted, because Christ has already achieved them for us. Therefore, what Paul is saying, is that contrasted with the Law, the Gospel method is easy, for it simply involves believing.

Verse 8: In this verse Paul is still using Deuteronomy 30:11-14 and the personification of righteousness by faith, in order to show the contrast between the Law and the Gospel. Rather than prescribing something difficult to attain, the righteousness that is by faith prescribes something much easier, able to be received by both the heart and mouth (Ps 37:31; 40:8), and that is to believe what is proclaimed and heard.

Verses 9,10: These verses explain the quotation of verse 8, that is, of how the mouth and heart are used to obtain the righteousness that is from God. The mouth is to confess the Lord Jesus as sovereign Lord, especially of ourselves (Mt 10:32; Lk 12:8; 1 Cor 12:3; 1 Jn 4:15). The mouth is the external testimony of the heart, and is therefore a fruit of salvation. The heart is to believe in Christ's resurrection, which is the public recognition of Christ successfully accomplishing His work for sinners (4:25; Acts 13:32,33; 17:31; 1 Cor 15:14; 1 Pet 1:3-5), and especially for ourselves. The heart is mentioned in order to testify of a sincere and genuine faith.

The word '*for*' indicates the reason as to why these two things are necessary. Faith is the way of receiving the righteousness of Christ for ourselves, while confession is the means of demonstrating the possession of this salvation in Christ.

NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY QUESTION HERE: How will a believer not be put to shame (Romans 10:11)?

Verse 11: The word '*for*' again indicates a further confirming of truth taught in a previous verse, and in this case verse 11 will explain how faith is the means of obtaining righteousness from God. Paul quotes Isaiah 28:16 in order to show that this righteousness is obtained by faith in Christ only, and that this way is open to all who will believe, whether they be Jew or Gentile.

Verse 12: This verse also builds upon the verse previous to it, as the word '*for*' again indicates. That the way to righteousness by faith is open to all is evident by the fact that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles before God. Both are condemned before God and the Law, and both must therefore receive righteousness from God in this way. There is no distinction shown between Jew and Gentile, for God is rich in mercy toward both, should they call upon Him.

Verse 13: This verse further confirms verse 12, and is a quote taken from Joel 2:32, proving from Scripture the universal way of obtaining righteousness by faith (1 Cor 1:2), and that is by calling unto the Lord for his/her salvation.

NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY QUESTION HERE: What is the usual avenue for a person to become a Christian? What is mentioned in this chapter?

INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY

How will a person in the remotest parts of the Sahara desert become a Christian? Explain how the passage answers the question?

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