

Romans 10 — Righteousness That Comes by Faith

Paul's Heart for Israel

Paul begins this chapter by opening his heart. His love for his fellow Israelites is deep, sincere, and prayerful:

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.”

This is not detached theology. This is pastoral anguish. Paul is not arguing about Israel; he is interceding for them. His concern is not cultural, political, or national—it is spiritual and eternal.

Israel’s tragedy is not a lack of religious passion. Paul acknowledges their devotion:

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

Sincerity alone does not save. Zeal without truth can actually become a barrier to salvation when it replaces humble submission to what God has revealed.

The Problem of Self-Made Righteousness

Paul identifies the core issue:

“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”

The problem is not effort, morality, or discipline. The problem is *source*. Human righteousness always tries to earn what God freely gives. It substitutes performance for trust, achievement for surrender.

Paul states the decisive truth:

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

The law reveals sin, but it cannot remove sin. The law exposes guilt, but it cannot grant righteousness. If righteousness could be achieved through human effort, the cross would have been unnecessary. The fact that Jesus shed His blood on the cross is God’s declaration that no other way could save us. The resurrection declares that Jesus is God, Savior, and Lord, and that His work was fully accepted.

Righteousness That Is Near, Not Distant

Paul contrasts two approaches: striving versus trusting.

“The righteousness of faith speaks in this way... ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.’”

Salvation is not hidden in heaven, nor buried in the depths. It is not reserved for the elite, the educated, or the religiously accomplished. It is near, accessible, and personal.

Paul makes it unmistakably clear:

“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.”

Faith is not mental agreement alone. It is the surrender of the heart and the confession of allegiance. To confess Jesus as Lord is to acknowledge His authority. To believe in the resurrection is to trust that His death truly paid for sin and that His life now defines ours.

One Lord, One Invitation

Paul removes all distinctions:

“For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.”

Salvation is not limited by background, heritage, or past failure.

“For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

This invitation is universal, sincere, and immediate. God does not consult a list before responding to a cry for mercy. Whoever calls, whoever comes, whoever believes—God receives.

The Responsibility to Proclaim

Paul then turns the focus to the mission of the church:

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?”

Faith does not arise in a vacuum. It comes through proclamation. The gospel must be spoken, shared, and sent.

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”

The world is saturated with fear, division, and despair. But the church carries good news—news of forgiveness, reconciliation, and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Faith Comes by Hearing

Paul concludes with a foundational principle:

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Faith grows where God’s Word is heard, believed, and trusted. A weak faith is often the result of neglecting Scripture. The more we know God as He has revealed Himself, the easier it becomes to trust Him fully.

God’s Persistent Invitation

Paul ends the chapter with a powerful image:

“All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

This is the heart of God—not withdrawn, not cold, not indifferent, but patiently extended. God’s grace continues to reach out, calling people to Himself through Jesus Christ.

Practical Application

- Religious activity cannot replace repentance and faith.
- Sincerity without truth leads to misplaced confidence.
- Salvation is not achieved by effort but received by trust.
- God’s Word is essential for strengthening faith.
- Every believer shares responsibility in making Christ known.

A Challenge for Believers

Do not drift into self-reliance. Guard your heart against substituting religious routine for living faith. Stay rooted in Scripture. Speak the gospel clearly. Let your life reflect gratitude for a salvation you did not earn but freely received through the blood of Christ and confirmed by His resurrection.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

Salvation is near you. You do not need to climb, strive, or prove yourself. Jesus shed His blood on the cross for your sins. God raised Him from the dead, declaring Him to be Lord of all.

If you will call on Him—right now—He will save you.

Confess Jesus as Lord. Believe that God raised Him from the dead. Trust Him with your life.

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”