

Romans 10

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Rom 10:1 “Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

Rom 10:2 For I bear them witness 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.”

To whom is Paul referring? He is referring to the same people he was talking about in the previous “chapter” and that is the people who are Jewish by race and who thought that they were really serving the living God. Paul desired for them their salvation, but he knew that God is the One Who chooses to give people the required faith. Paul witnesses for them that they have a great zeal for God, but their zeal is not based upon true knowledge of Him. They worship zealously a god that they have made up. Certainly the same is true of people today who shame us true Christians by their living for a false god. Such people live a life of devotion to a false god just as people did in the time of Paul. Some of these people were Jews by race and they worked with all of their power to live according to a righteousness of God that was not truly God’s righteousness. The Pharisees were determined to turn the Jews back to a true worship of God by their selfless obedience of the Laws of God. However they did not really understand that they could not completely obey the Laws of God. Only God can obey the Laws of God and God gave the people the Laws to show them that they must be totally dependent not upon themselves, but upon God through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Certainly the following is very true:

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.

John 3:18 “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

The only ones who can believe in the true Son of God are the ones to whom God gave the faith that they could believe. Everyone has been judged guilty already for the following says that the wrath of God abides on him, which means that it continues to abide on him who does not believe and obey the Son.

John 3:36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

The world was judged following the sin of Adam and Eve and the wrath of God has abided on everyone since that time. But God gave a way to salvation through the coming

of His Son so that those who believed before He came and those who believe after He came receive the mercy of God and everyone else receives the justice of God. Do you want mercy or do you want justice? For me, I chose mercy because God changed me so that I am capable of such a choice. Praise God!

Rom 10:4 “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

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 thus, "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 shall be saved;

Rom 10:10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

The Law is a curse to those whom God has not chosen because they cannot obey it but, to those whom God has chosen, obedience to the Law is not a basis for salvation. The perfect obedience of the Law by Jesus is imputed to us and so therefore is the righteous of The Son. Therefore Christ is indeed the end of the curse of the Law to those of us who really believe in Jesus as the Christ. As we have seen in Romans chapter 3, it is only a changed heart that can truly believe in Jesus Christ and with that changed heart man can really believe in Jesus. This belief then results in the righteousness of Jesus Christ being imputed to the chosen and as we live in the world and confess to the world that Jesus is the Christ the result for us is our eternal salvation.

What is Paul saying in verses six and seven? Paul is saying that we totally trust and depend upon God. There is absolutely nothing that we can do on our own to either save ourselves or to obtain any salvation for anyone else. Nobody but God could have sent Jesus down to earth to obtain our salvation and nobody but God could revive Jesus from the dead to prove that His work was efficacious for our salvation.

Verse eight says that those to whom Paul is preaching are those who have already received the gift of faith and therefore they can hear and understand the preaching of the truth of God. To everyone else the preaching is foolishness:

1Cor 1:18 “For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

Verse 9 is a key verse to our being a Christian. The Greek word translated “Lord” is “Kyrios”, which is the Greek word used in the Septuagint to translate the word for God as Yahweh or as Jehovah. To confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord is to say that Jesus

is God and confessing Him as such is saying that He is the only God and that He is our God. When we confess Him as our God, we are saying to the world that we belong to Jesus. We can confess Him by going to “church”, by participating in the Lord’s Supper, by our behavior at work and play, by what we do when we are “alone”, etc. We cannot be a silent Christian. If we do hid our belief when someone at work tells a dirty story and we laugh and join in, then – if we are indeed a Christian – the Holy Spirit will convict us of our sin and then we must do double duty. We must apologize to our “friends” for joining them in the laughter at something that was really offensive to us as a Christian and we must truly repent of such behavior. A true Christian will go to his grave professing Jesus as Lord. The story of Polycarp is certainly a fine example. This 86 year old Christian was burned at the stake because he would not say that Caesar was Lord. A person can have only one God and that must not be anyone or anything other than the true Lord. Believing in our heart means that we believe in all of our being that Jesus Christ is God. This belief is the very core of our being and we cannot deny our core being. This belief indeed does carry forward to our future saving from the awful wrath of God that will descend upon the entire world one day.

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 upon Him;

Rom 10:13 for "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."”

All of these verses are consistent. Verse 11 is consistent with John 3:16 also. The person who truly believes as stated above will not be disappointed. God will indeed take His children into Heaven with Him forever and there will never be any disappointment there. Some translations use “put to shame” instead of “disappointed” in this verse. This translation does point us in a bit of a different direction, I think. The age in which we live is an age that does not admit of any shame at all for anything. We hear that people have lost their ability to blush, which has about the same meaning. However, the first definition of “to be shamed” is to be disappointed and my discussion above applies to that definition. We will not be disappointed by holding firm to our belief in Jesus Christ as Lord. But what the world has done is to get rid of any core believe system that might cause them to be shamed by their actions. They want to visit a bar and have an affair with another person then they put out of their mind anything that might cause them to be disappointed in themselves by their actions. The Christian can, of course, fall into a sinful situation but his core belief system will cause extreme shame and disappointment in himself arise so that to be rid of the pain the Christian must repent and do whatever he/she must do to rectify the situation. Today the world parades their sins before the whole world with absolutely no shame. To the Christian what these people are doing is extremely embarrassing to the human race in their minds. Do you know the saying “whatever is done in Vegas stays in Vegas”? Such an attitude is very popular today in that one can go away to some place where nobody knows them, do whatever they “really want to do” and then go back home with no shame at what they have done. The true Christian cannot do this.

Those who do not know shame here will find shame forever:

Daniel 12:2 "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."

Please examine your heart if you feel no shame for those people depicted as visiting Vegas with the attitude portrayed on television today. The shame that I feel for them should help me in not falling into some of the traps of temptation that do come my way.

Regarding verses 12 and 13, we certainly praise the Lord for I am a Gentile and God did indeed send His Word to me. Most of the people to whom I am in contact daily are Gentiles. Jesus is Lord of all His chosen people regardless of race and whomever God chooses may with great confidence call upon His name and share with the immeasurable riches of forever with those of other races. The word "call" can be interpreted as "screaming with desperation", which is what all of us felt when we truly understand something of the holiness of God, the unholiness of ourselves, and the chasm that existed between God and us without Jesus.

Rom 10:14 "How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Rom 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!"

Here we see a great call for mission work. God is certainly going to save His chosen people from His wrath, but He usually (not with Paul and not with some others) chooses to work through people to people. How wonderful it is to be allowed to be involved in the salvation of another person. Only God can save someone, but He may choose you to use His words to someone else to open his/her heart. It is so wonderful to see the scales fall off of another human beings eyes as God uses His word to cause someone to be born again. Don't let anyone put you on a guilt trip by using this verse to say that your neighbor might never become a Christian if you don't go talk to them about Jesus. God alone is Sovereign and He may choose to use you, but nobody is going to go to Hell because you do not witness to them. But what a joy it is to be used by God in such a miraculous event! Never turn it down!

Rom 10:16 "However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

Rom 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

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."

Paul also says that not everyone who physically hears will be born again. Only those to whom God gives faith will actually believe the truth when they hear it. My experience is mostly with people who do not believe the truth, but that does not mean that I failed!

Such a reaction is divinely appointed only by God. Only when Jesus says “Arise” will the spiritually dead be given faith and arise from their death to hear and obey the truth.

Rom 10:19 “But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the 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 sought Me not, 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.””

God made His first chosen people jealous by choosing Gentiles for salvation. God also used other nations to punish the Jews for their disobedience. From a worldly perspective certainly the Jews should all have been seeking the true God and seeking total obedience to Him alone. However they did not do this. Only 2 out of the about 3 million Jews who left Egypt arrived into the Promised Land!

1Cor 10:1 “For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

1Cor 10:2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1Cor 10:3 and all ate the same spiritual food;

1Cor 10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

1Cor 10:5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

1Cor 10:6 Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved.

1Cor 10:7 And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.”

1Cor 10:8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.

1Cor 10:9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.

1Cor 10:10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.”

Here we see the examples set before us that could cause us to be “laid low in the wilderness” if we have not truly believed and trusted in Jesus Christ as our Lord:

- Crave evil things.
- Be idolaters with no concern for real spiritual matters.
- Act immorally.
- Try the Lord.
- Grumble against the Lord and anything in our life for all that we have has been given to us by Him.

References

1. All Bible quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, Moody Press, 1975.
2. James Montgomery Boice, "Romans, Volume 3, God and History", Romans 9 - 11, Baker Book House, 1993.
3. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Romans, Exposition of Chapter 10, Saving Faith", Banner of Truth Trust, 1 Murrayfield Road, Edinburgh EH12 6EL, 1991.