

The Gospel in Romans: Romans 10:5-13

INTRODUCTION

1. Divine sovereignty and human responsibility: these are compatible themes expounded in Romans 9 and 10.
 - a. It is essential for us to recognize God's sovereignty, to believe salvation is the gift and work of God alone.
 - b. But it is just as necessary to recognize every person's accountability before the gospel to believe and be saved.
2. Paul has clearly defended God's sovereign electing grace in chapter 9, but he also affirms man's duty to the gospel.

I. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN RIGHTEOUSNESSES (5-8)

A. *The Righteousness from the Law* (5)

1. There is a sense in which a person can be "righteous" on the basis of the law or law-keeping.
 - This is clearly accommodative in Scripture since no one perfectly keeps the Law. (e.g. Luke 1:6; 2:25)
 - Paul distinguishes "righteousness from the Law" from being "righteous through faith."
2. What does righteousness from the Law require? Perfect obedience, complete adherence to it.
 - We minimize God's holiness, the Law's demand, and our sinfulness if we say it requires any less.
 - The Law is a unit; therefore, if you violate any part, you are a law-breaker. **Jas. 2:10-11**
 - This does not mean every adulterer is also a murderer, but every violator is equally a law-breaker.
 - Consequently, it is humanly impossible to be justified before God by keeping the Law. **Gal. 3:10, 12**
3. Some believe they can be justified by their obedience when forgiven for their wrongs.
 - But this minimizes the standard of the Law and the nature of true righteousness.
 - Righteousness is not only being free of transgression; it is active holiness and obedience. **Jas. 4:17**
 - Forgiveness does not fulfill the Law; even if it cancels all our wrongs, we would still be unrighteous.

B. *The Righteousness from Faith* (6-8)

1. In contrast to the righteousness based on obedience to the Law is the righteousness from faith.
 - This righteousness belongs to faith; it is the righteousness of God received through faith. **Php. 3:9**
 - Paul turns to the OT, to the writings of Moses, just like his critics, to expound this righteousness.
2. The apostle appeals to Deuteronomy 30:11-14 to convey important truths about God's righteousness.
 - This righteousness is not a matter of human performance, effort, or accomplishment.
 - It is not far off, hard to reach, or virtually impossible to obtain. Righteousness is readily accessible.
3. How ridiculous would it be to try to bring Christ down from above or up from below?
 - The incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension are historical facts, completed acts of God!
 - The Lord did these things. What can man contribute to them? What is lacking for any man to do?

"Both Rom. 10:6 and 7 should be interpreted together as an admonition warning people what they should not do. They should not seek to bring Christ down to the earth or raise him from the dead, for these things have already been done. They were accomplished by God for the sake of his people, and thus the response called for is *believing*, not *doing*." –T. Schreiner, *Romans*, 559
4. Paul quoted Lev. 18:5 in describing the righteousness from the law; now he quotes from Deuteronomy.
 - Is Paul suggesting the Law contradicts itself, that Moses is not in agreement on how one is saved?
 - Not at all. Paul appeals to the Pentateuch to correct his critics' misinterpretation of it.
5. The tension and contradiction that appears to exist between OT and NT is due to misreading them.
 - God did not have one plan to save people in the OT and another plan to save people in the NT.
 - The contrast between law and grace is not about an essential contradiction between different ages.
6. The Law serves three purposes: restrain evil, magnify sin, and guide God's people in holiness.
 - The Law was never intended to be a path to righteousness, but it is the path of righteousness.
 - We frequently create conflicts in the biblical text by misreading its essential unity and coherence.
7. The important question is this: Which righteousness do you seek? Righteous by your work or by Christ's?

II. THE CONDITION OF JUSTIFICATION (9A, 10B)

A. *Belief in the Heart*

1. Though we speak (rightly and biblically) about unconditional election, justification has a condition.
 - The elect are not justified in eternity past when chosen by God, nor when Jesus died on the cross.
 - The elect are justified when they believe in the Lord Jesus and trust Him for salvation. **Jn. 5:24; 8:24**
2. We must believe in the heart, that is, we must be convinced of and convicted by the truth of the gospel.
3. The gospel speaks of God's holiness, our own sinfulness, and Christ's sacrifice. Do you believe it? **Jn. 3:16**

B. *Leading to Confession with the Mouth*

1. Why is confession so important? Because saving faith is not merely intellectual or emotional assent.
 - Many believed intellectually in the claims of Christ but remained lost. **Jn. 12:42-43; 2:23-25**
 - The demons believe and tremble, yet they are not thereby justified or saved. **Jas. 2:19**
2. Faith in Christ is more than knowledge of the head or heart; it is conviction, reception, and rest in Him.
 - Real faith leads inevitably and necessarily to confession of Jesus as Savior and Lord. **Mt. 10:32-33**
 - We cannot be convicted of who Jesus truly is and remain silent for long about it. (cf. Jn. 19:38-40)
3. "Jesus is Lord" is the earliest and most basic Christian creed and confession.
 - Though absent in many modern versions, the confession was a prerequisite for baptism. **Ac. 8:36-37**
 - This confession set believers apart from the rest of the world and put them at odds with the culture. "No Jew would do this who had not really trusted Christ, for *Kurios* [κύριος] in the LXX is used of God. No Gentile would do it who had not ceased worshipping the emperor as *Kurios*. The word *Kurios* was and is the touchstone of faith." –Robertson, *Word Pictures in the NT*, (s.v. Romans 10:9)
4. This confession is *not* inconsistent with what was said earlier about sovereign, unconditional election.
 - While anyone can say words, true confession is a gift and result of the Holy Spirit's work. **1Cor. 12:3**
 - Election is the behind the scenes reality of conversion. Faith is the visible human response of it.
5. You cannot remain passive in response to the message of Christ. Will you stand with Him or against?

III. THE CONTENT OF FAITH (9B, 10A)

A. *Jesus as Crucified and Resurrected*

1. Faith in the Lord Jesus has a doctrinal content, a specific, theological context for one's trust in Christ.
 - This doctrinal content relates to the message of Christ incarnate, crucified, risen, and exalted.
 - If these historic events are not true, then the Christian religion is false and worthless. **1Cor. 15:13-19**
2. Christianity is the only world religion to wager its entire value on the truth of an historical event.
 - Though some other religions claim historical context, they do not demand allegiance on that basis.
 - Only Christianity says, "If the resurrection is true, believe in Christ. If false, do not believe at all."

B. *Jesus as Lord*

1. Jesus is Lord, He is the Master and Commander, Leader as well as Redeemer, or He is not Savior at all.
 - Christ's authority and His redemptive work and its benefits cannot be separated. **Lk. 2:11; Php. 3:20**
 - *Savior* (σωτήρ) appears 24x in the NT; *Lord* (κύριος) appears 721x – the vast majority refer to Christ.
2. Some believe you can separate Jesus as Savior from Christ as Lord, but the NT knows no such division.
 - It is certainly true many are saved before they grasp the full implications of Christ's Lordship.
 - In fact, one could argue our growth in sanctification is the ever increasing awareness of that truth!
3. One does not have to understand all that Christ's Lordship entails to believe in Him and be justified.
 - But we must beware of any artificial and unbiblical division of Jesus as Savior and Christ as Lord.
 - Doing so is an implicit denial of His authority and a dangerous encouragement to antinomianism.
4. We are not justified by our obedience; we are justified by receiving and resting in Christ thru faith alone.
 - Nevertheless, this faith is a repentant trust in the risen Lord and a corresponding submission to Him.
 - It includes the confession of our own emptiness, renouncing everything to belong to Him alone.

IV. THE COMPASS OF THE PROMISE (11-13)

A. *All Who Believe*

1. Whom does the gospel call and invite? Have we traded Jewish exclusivism for something similar?
 - No human can know the names of the elect or whose name has been written in the Book of Life.
 - What we can know is this: God has chosen from every nation, and His word will not return void.
2. All who believe – Jew or Gentile; male or female; white, black, Hispanic, Asian – will be saved.
 - The promise is "whoever believes." No believer in Jesus will be turned away from Heaven's Gate.
 - It is true none will turn to Christ in faith without electing grace. But He receives all who turn. **Jn. 6:37**

B. *Anyone Who Calls*

1. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. To call on Jesus is to trust Him alone for salvation.
 - No one is lost because they were not chosen by God. They are lost because they continue in sin.
 - Why do you remain in your sins? Why do you not turn to Him in faith and cry out to God for mercy?
2. He will hear you. He promises to do so. He is true to His word. He will hear, forgive, and save your soul.

“What then, according to this section, is necessary to salvation? First the fact of the historic Jesus Christ, incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning as Lord, and accessible. Secondly, the apostolic gospel, *the word of faith* (8), which makes him known. Thirdly, simple trust on the part of the hearers, calling on the name of the Lord, combining faith in the heart and confession with the mouth. But still something is missing. There is, fourthly, the evangelist who proclaims Christ and urges people to put their trust in him. It is of Christian evangelists that Paul writes in the next paragraph.” –J. Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 285

V. APPLICATION

A. *We Must Rest in the Righteousness of Christ Alone*

1. His finished work is our only hope. Not most of our hope. He is everything, the only one who can save.
2. Human beings are, by our sinful nature, continually drawn to justify our lives by our own work.
 - This is madness. You cannot be saved by Law. You are utterly undeserving of being saved.
 - Do not attempt to prove your worth or morality to a perfectly holy God. Rest in His righteous work.

B. *We Must Believe and Confess Jesus as the Resurrected Lord*

1. You can't be saved by your goodness, but you also can't be saved by simply throwing up your hands.
2. You must know where to turn, specifically, you must know to whom you must turn: Jesus Christ.
 - The doctrinal core of the gospel is crucial, and neglecting it is to empty the gospel of its power.
 - People must know who Jesus is and what He has done in order to biblically trust and be saved.

C. *We Must Cry Out to the God Who Promises to Hear and to Save*

1. Have you cried out to the Lord? If you have, rest in His promise of grace. If not, why do you wait?
2. There are two dangers here: denial of the grace God promises and delay in crying to Him to save.
 - If the former, do not doubt the word and promise of God. Believe in the grace He freely supplies.
 - If the latter, repent and turn to Christ before it is too late. You may never have another opportunity.

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Gracious Lord, when we contemplate how far we have fallen, how greatly we have transgressed Your holy law, what an offense our sins and our selfish lives are surely to You, we marvel that You would look upon our sinful state and extend Your hand to save us. Jesus, we thank You that You came to earth, fulfilling the Law and dying in our place. We thank You, God, that Jesus rose again and reigns at Your right hand in Heaven even now. Lord, we pray that those here today who have not trusted in Christ would do so even now. Send Your Spirit into their hearts, convict them of their sins, show them the beauty of Your Son, and grant them repentance. And help us who do believe, Lord, to renew our faith, to reaffirm our confession, to be reminded that salvation is Your work alone. We praise you and thank You, O God, that You are a God who saves.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

James 2:10-11 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. (11) For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

Galatians 3:10-12 For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." (12) But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them."

James 4:17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Philippians 3:9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith--

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

John 8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 12:42-43 Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; (43) for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

John 2:23-25 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. (24) But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people (25) and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

Matthew 10:32-33 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, (33) but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Acts 8:36-37 (NASB) As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch *said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" (37) [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:13-19 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. (14) And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. (15) We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. (16) For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. (17) And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (18) Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Luke 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.