

## **Pt 35 Romans 10:1-4, My Heart's Desire**

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Last week we finished up Chapter 9 by looking at verses 24-33 and made the exclamation, Even Us! Or Even We can be saved. We saw the great struggle the Jews were having with the fact that God would save the Gentiles regardless of them being outside of the Abrahamic Covenant and their disregard of the Law and they couldn't understand how they, as Jews, would be rejected by God because they rejected Jesus. Paul quoted the Old Testament to them which foretold of Jesus being a stumblingstone to them. That is what the last 4-verses of Chapter 9 was dealing with.

As I told you last time, those last 4 verses really fit with the first 4 verses of Chapter 10, so I want us to read those as well this morning so that we have everything in proper context.

### **Romans 9:30-33**

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;*

33 *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

### **Romans 10:1-4**

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

After Paul quoted those Old Testament Scriptures which revealed how Christ had become a stumblingstone for the Jews, he then follows it up with his heart's desire:

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

That phrase "**heart's desire**" is only used 3-times in the entire Bible. Twice in the Psalms and once, here in Romans Chapter 10. It means the thing that our soul, mind, body, and spirit longs for. We desire a lot of things in life but when it comes to the desires of the heart, things are different. The desires of the heart are the most powerful motivator on earth. When your heart desires something you cannot be satisfied until it comes to be.

For example: Thirty-nine years ago, when I first saw the woman that would eventually become my wife, my heart's desire was that she and I would be together forever. If I couldn't have her as my wife I didn't want to live. She consumed my every thought and action. My entire life was devoted only to her because she was and still is my heart's desire.

When your heart desires something, you will do whatever it takes to make it come about. That's what drove Paul in the Gospel ministry. He mentions it numerous times in his writings.

He said this in **Romans 9:1-3** I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

In his letter to his young son in the faith, Timothy, Paul says this: **2 Timothy 2:10** Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Paul was willing to endure many hardships just to be able to deliver the Gospel to the lost. Here he says the "**elect**" which would include Jew and Gentile alike. Paul does see several Jews come to saving faith during his ministry, but it is apparent from reading his letters that his heart's desire was to see them all come to Christ.

The desire of every Christian's heart should be that all the world is saved. Of course, we know ALL the world will not be saved but ALL the world has the opportunity to be. When we start getting caught up in everything else and forget about the lost then we have lost our focus as a Church. The number one job of the Church is to propagate the Gospel message. That is one of the reasons we congregate together, to be equipped to go out into the world and share the Gospel message.

Many people think the sharing of the Gospel is limited to the preacher, the pastor, the evangelist, the missionary, but the Lord's Great Commission is to all believers.

There are many ways of sharing the Gospel. You don't have to stand behind a pulpit and preach or hold revival services; no, sharing the gospel can be accomplished through various methods such as passing out Bible tracts, witnessing to your co-workers, having a conversation with a stranger, helping in various ministries or events where you meet lost people. If your heart's desire is to see people be saved, then you will find a way to share the Gospel.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

Not everyone would be able to speak with the authority that Paul is able to when it comes to the Jews. But Paul is a Jew and all his life had walked in the way of Judaism. He was able to speak of this "**zeal**" that the Jews had. He mentions his own zeal in times past in several places in the Bible:

When Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and he stood before the people to give his defense, listen to what he told them: **Acts 22:3** I am verily a man *which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.*

In his defense in front of King Agrippa, Paul said this: **Acts 26:4-5** My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians when he was having to defend his ministry and calling, he said this: **Galatians 1:13-14** For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more **exceedingly zealous** of the traditions of my fathers.

In his letter to the Philippians, he says this: **Philippians 3:4-6** Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the

tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 **Concerning zeal**, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

So, if anyone can "**bear record**" or speak of the zeal of the Jews, it was Paul. Which goes to show us that you can have zeal about something and be completely in the wrong. A lot of people are zealous about things in this life, but they are completely in the wrong.

Such as: **Black Lives Matter** – this is nothing more than a terrorist organization operating under the guise of equal rights for those of color. If black lives really mattered to them, they would focus their attentions on the thousands of black lives being taken in the abortion clinics and on the streets of democratic ran cities. Instead, they focus on being loud, obnoxious, and violent. They take every opportunity to vandalize and loot and carry out their animalistic hate-filled behavior. So, yes, they have a lot of zeal but it misguided zeal.

**Jehovah's Witnesses** – There are an estimated 7-million people that claim to be Jehovah's witnesses. This religious group is one of the most zealous of all and will defend their beliefs with everything they have. They are nothing more than a cult with distorted views of the Bible. Here are 7 base beliefs of the JWs:

1. Jesus Christ is not God. Rather, he is Michael the archangel.
2. The Holy Spirit is not a person, but an "active force." J.W.'s are unitarians, denying the Trinity.
3. When you're dead, you're dead. Man has no eternal soul, any more than animals.
4. Jesus Christ was not raised bodily from the grave but was recreated as a new "spirit body."
5. Jesus returned invisibly in 1914. There is no "visible coming" planned in the future.
6. There is no hell. Just like animals, when we die, it is over.
7. Only 144,000 people achieve heaven. The rest, faithful Witnesses who have died, will be recreated on earth during the kingdom of the "New World."

They are a very religious group with lots and lots of zeal – more zeal than most Baptist I might add. Yet their zeal is misguided and is not about Christ.

Paul said in verse 2... **they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.**

There was no question that the Jews had zeal for God but everything they were doing was running contrary to the Gospel without any knowledge of Christ.

**3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.**

The Jews had no understanding of Christ and who he was – they were operating out of ignorance. Paul once too lived that way and he wrote in his letter in **1 Timothy 1:12-13** **And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.**

The Jews number one goal was to become righteous; however, they were trying to do it through themselves. Paul said they were ... **going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God** If we have said it once, we said it a thousand times; the Jews priority was to try and live the strictest way always conforming to the Law. They believed that by keeping the Law and living a life of routine and ritual would make them righteous. They never even considered being made righteous through God's righteousness, they were trying to, as Paul stated, "**establish their own righteousness.**"

They had forgotten the words of their own Prophet: **Isaiah 64:6** **But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.**

There are many people today that are trying to establish their own righteousness.

- **The Roman Catholics** teach that good works are necessary to achieve salvation.
- **The Methodist** teach you must maintain good works to remain justified before God.
- **The Jehovah's Witnesses** teach you must be obedient to the Watch Tower Society.

Works is the predominant teaching in most religions because it appeals to man's flesh. We like to think that we can have something to do with achieving our salvation. If we can do some kind of work to prove ourselves then that will make us feel better about ourselves. The problem with that is it is unbiblical. The Bible actually teaches us the opposite of that thought.

**Titus 3:4-6** **But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;**

The Bible says in **Proverbs 14:12** **There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**

It SEEMS like we ought to be able to keep the commandments and do good deeds and it be accounted unto us for righteousness, but we all know where that leads – to death.

Paul gives us the answer in the last verse of our text:

**4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.**

Christ is the answer. All we do is believe on Him and rely upon HIS righteousness. It is not of OUR works but HIS works: **Ephesians 2:8-9** **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

It is not us keeping the law that makes us righteous. Jesus Himself said this in **Matthew 5:17-18** **Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.**

Jesus fulfilled the Law so that you and I would never have to keep it and He said that He fulfilled it. That is why when hanging on the Cross of Calvary Jesus declared that his job was finished: **John 19:28-30** **After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.**

When Jesus said, "**it is finished,**" that completed any work that anyone would ever have to do again to achieve salvation.

I am thankful that it was not up to me to achieve righteousness. It was not up to me to save myself. Jesus accomplished everything needed for all that to happen without any input from me.

Now, it is my heart's desire that others be saved the same way that I was.