

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon  
Wednesday, December 20, 2023

## **Romans 10:1–4**

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

### **Submitting to the Righteousness of God**

**Main idea:** We must submit to what the Bible says is the only righteousness that can save a sinner: the righteousness of God in Christ

**Introduction:** Resting upon the Lord, resting upon Christ (9:33c)→imitating His heart, taking Him at His Word, submitting to His righteousness.

#### **1. Imitating Christ's (God's!) Heart**

- a. Where did the apostle get this desire? (cf. 9:2; Ac 7:60–8:1; Luk 23:34; 1Tim 2:4; Eze 18:23, 18:32, 33:11)
- b. Where did the apostle learn to pray this way? (cf. 8:26)
- c. What is your desire? What is your prayer? Are you looking to Christ to give you His by His Spirit? Are you expressing it, as He gives it to you?

#### **2. Taking God (Christ!) at His Word**

- a. The onetime Pharisee of Pharisees is an expert witness!
- b. When Paul didn't know God as the God Who gives His own righteousness for sinners, his zeal was not truly for God like he thought it was... he knew about God, but he did not know God. Only faith in the God Who makes Himself our righteousness, operating by love for the God Whom we know as our righteousness (cf. Gal 5:6), produces "zeal that is according to knowledge."
- c. When Paul didn't know God as Christ, his zeal was not truly for God like he thought it was (cf. Ac 9:4–6; Jn 8:19, 14:7).
- d. Do you know God, not as a feeling or idea, but as the being Who has given you His Word, and Who has given Himself as your righteousness?

#### **3. Submitting to God's (Christ's) Righteousness**

- a. We must know God's righteousness that is offered to sinners to be theirs by faith.
- b. We must stop trying to establish our own righteousness.

- c. We must, instead, submit to the righteousness of the God Who has delivered us (cf. Ex 20:2; Lev 18:1–5).
- d. That is to say, we must hope in Christ alone for righteousness—the only righteousness for Jews or Gentiles (cf. 1:16), a righteousness that is only by faith.

**Conclusion:** Are you still trying to establish your own righteousness? Give up! Submit to receiving God's own righteousness as your righteousness, through Jesus Christ!

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Romans 10 verse 1 through 4. These are God's words. Brethren. My heart's desire and prayer to god for israel.

Is that they may be saved? For i bear them witness that they have a zeal for god. But not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of god's righteousness. And seeking to establish their own. Righteousness. Have not submitted. To the righteousness. Of god. For christ is the end. Of the law for righteousness.

To everyone. Who believes?

Amen. My sins. This reading of god's. Inspired. And In there and twerk.

As the apostles since the beginning of chapter 9 has been Dealing with the fact that At the time that he was writing. Comparatively few jews were coming to faith in jesus christ. One of the things that, He began. Uh, highlighting and quoting from isaiah at the very end of the chapter there.

As this combination from isaiah, 28, and isaiah 8, Of how the lord. Was laying himself, giving himself to be. Uh, a cornerstone. In Zion. Upon which The. People of israel were. Offered to rest and built. And yet, because they were seeking. Uh, to establish themselves. And trusting in their own ideas and in their own efforts.

Rather than resting upon. The lord, as their cornerstone, they stumbled over him. They were Offended. Uh, by him. And so he was to them a stone of stumbling and a rock of a fence. And this indeed was something that paul himself had experienced from much of his life. You remember, he was Of the tribe of benjamin.

A hebrew of Hebrews, a pharisee of pharisees. Uh, quite proud, indeed. Actually, of His own zeal for god, his own zeal for righteousness. But it turns out That he did not know God. And he was not righteous. But now that he has come to trust and hope and jesus christ alone.

The one who is god and became, man for us that he might be our righteousness. Now, that paul has come to trust in him and has Has been joined to him by faith. The righteousness of jesus. The character of jesus. Has begun to be worked out in the apostle Paul himself.

And this is one of the consequences of resting upon christ for righteousness. Not only is he all of our right standing before god. The righteousness of justification. But, We also then become more and more like him. As his spirit applies, the life and character of christ to us. And this is what we see coming out.

Even in the first verse even before we get to Has taking god at his word, which is something we do. And we rest upon Uh, the lord when we rest upon christ as the cornerstone. We take God as word even before we come to submitting to god's righteousness. As we see in verse 3 and verse 4, We see him.

Imitating christ's heart. Imitating indeed, god's heart. God, who has? Revealed himself although he is triune father son. And holy spirit, has displayed himself, especially in the sun and particularly In the humanity of the sun. Where the lord jesus would say. That to see him. Is to see. The father.

And so we'll consider the four verses before us this evening. Under those three headings of Of different aspects. Of resting upon christ as the cornerstone to use the language of the previous passage, which By god's help we heard last week. Or. So, or the these three headings as three aspects of submitting to the righteousness.

Of god to use the language. Of the passage before us this evening. First then, imitating. Christ's heart. Which is to imitate god's heart. He says brethren my heart's, desire and prayer to god for israel, is that they may be saved. And that's a, that's a huge to me, and to you, That.

This heart and this desire that are in paul from jesus should be your heart's desire. This praying this prayer to god, that That was a essential component of Paul's prayers. Should be an essential component of your prayers. For the salvation. Of unbelievers of those who are as of now under the wrath of god, not declared righteous through faith in jesus christ.

And especially of Israelites.

So where did the apostle get this heart's, desire and prayer to god for israel that they may be saved. The same israelites, many of whom. Have denounced. And cursed. And sterner. And beaten. And whipped the apostle Paul. On at least one occasion only stopping because they thought he was dead.

Where has he gotten? This heart's desire. That they might be saved. Well, one of the first place that we know that he got this heart's desire, that they might be saved. Is from the lord jesus himself something that he had seen. Perhaps, for the first time, And stephen, you remember?

Steven. The one of the first deacons, Had been a member of the synagogue of the freedmen which would have been paul's home synagogue in jerusalem. And one of the things that Stephen Did was he evangelized people from his home synagogue? And this created enough trouble that he ends up on trial and they They ask him.

Uh, to give an answer, which he happily does breaches a wonderful sermon for which he gets executed. And as they're executing him, and And paul is holding the coats and concurring in his execution. In the first verse of x chapter 8, We read in the last verse of Acts chapter 7, Stephen praying.

That the sin would not be charged against them. Now, this is exactly like our lord, isn't it? This is one of the ways that the spirit, especially owned this saint, stephen, who had been brought

to faith in Jesus Christ and united to Jesus Christ. And then the character and righteousness of Christ, we're being worked out, even in Stephen's own character and Stephen's own conduct.

So that it is almost impossible to read that last verse of chapter 7 without thinking of Luke 23:34. Where our Lord Jesus and the cross. Being murdered by them. Praise for them. Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do. There, without the knowledge of God. Indeed.

This is one of the ways that Jesus shows himself to be the mediator. Because God, who Desires. That all would come to the knowledge of the truth. First Timothy, 2:4 has given his son to be the one mediator between God and man, so that what we see in Christ in Luke 23:34.

And what we see in Christians, But Stephen in Act 7:60 and then Paul already, once last chapter, you remember his great Sorrow and continual grief in chapter 9 and verse 2. And then here, his heart's desire and prayer to God. These are all reflections of how God himself describes himself using the language of human emotion, although God is not affected or controlled by emotions as we are.

And Ezekiel 18, verse 23, and 18, verse 32, and 33 verse 11. Where he's cries out or pleads rather with Israel. Why will you die of Israel? Do I have any pleasure? In the death of the wicked, but rather that he would turn from his sins. And live.

This is where the apostle has gotten this desire. That. These unbelieving Israelites. Would be saved. Well, that's where he gets the desire. Where does he get the prayer? Well, he gets the prayer in part, doesn't he the same exact place? As the Lord Jesus is. Uh, praise in John 17, not only for his apostles, but for those Who would believe in him through the word?

Of his apostles. And just recently in chapter 8, and verse 26, we learned where true and proper praying comes from. It doesn't come from us, We don't know how to pray. We don't even know what we should pray for. And yet the Spirit helps us in our weakness. He said, in chapter 8 and verse 26, The Spirit helps us in our weakness and certainly this heart's desire, and this prayer to God, for Israel, that they would be saved as a consequence of the Spirit, helping the apostle, in his weakness.

Does not because of how wonderful Paul was in himself. It's because the Spirit is applying to him a perfect savior. And when we find ourselves not desiring to or unable to pray, like we know we should We may consider passages like this. That the apostle. Had not only a heart's desire but prayer to God that they would be saved and that that was something that the Spirit gave him from Christ.

The same Christ in whom you trust. If you're a believer. The same Christ to whom you are united. And worked out in him by the same Spirit. Who is applying Christ also to you. So what are your desires? If you have a heart's desire, That unbelievers would be saved unbelievers from your own nation.

From your own community. Even those who have despised and hated and attacked you. If that is your heart's desire, then it comes from Christ. If you don't have that heart's desire, And you know, that you should Then you must get it from Christ. You will not find it in your heart by wishing that it was there.

So look to Christ ask for the help of his Spirit that he would stir up in you a desire to see the lost saved. And especially among them. Israelites. Those into whose tree, you have been grafted Those from whom the shoot came that has actually the root of the tree.

The lord jesus himself. Shall we not with? Our savior. Desire with our hearts as he desires with his heart. Which desire was reproduced in paul. And pray as his spirit teaches us. And so, what? Is your desire. What part does the salvation of others have in your prayers? Are you looking to christ to Work out his own heart, his own desires and you by his spirit, this is something that is one of our great privileges and union with him.

Not only in a place like this, but That wonderful. Witness that he gives to the philippians in the first chapter, how he longs for them. With the Guts with the innards. Of the lord jesus christ. I'm sure that if you Or a believer. You are grieved. By how little your affections reflected thus far.

The affections of christ. Are reproduced more, and more in believers. Look to him cry out. For. His heart. To be imitated. Reproduced. Than yours. Since one aspect of those one characteristic of those. Who have come to rest upon the lord, jesus as our cornerstone and to have given up, not only making ourselves right with god by our works, but even given up producing righteousness in ourselves.

By our works. But rather in union with christ and resting upon him and looking to his spirit, Expressing. That. Which is from christ. But has now being worked out in us or to use the language of philippians 2. Working out. Our own salvation which god is working in to each of us.

And that wonderful little word own there. That for every single believer. There is a unique work of god. Reproducing the heart of christ, reproducing, the praying of christ, reproducing the character and conduct of christ. So that each one of us has our own one of those works that god is working in us to will unto work and because he is working in us.

It's not passive. It's trusting, it's resting but it's not passive. Because he is working it in us, we work at out of us. And do you not? Yearn with your heart. For the loss. To be saved. And cry out to god, and enjoy as you do. So. That your prayers are being answered.

God is conforming. You To his son. Owning you as his adopted child. By the work of his spirit. So imitating. Christ's heart in verse one. And, Then the second aspect of resting upon god as the cornerstone Resting upon christ as the cornerstone is taking god at his word. Taking god as word.

Verse 2. For i bear them witness that they have a zeal for god. But not according to knowledge. Now, paul is the expert witness. Isn't he? Having a zeal for god, but not according to knowledge. No one had had such a zeal. As paul did. And yet no one.

Had such a shocking discovery. That, that seal had not been, according to knowledge. Oh, how? Sure he was when he set out for Damascus papers in hand authorizing them? He could probably remember. The approving looks on the faces of the Sanhedron, when he, he had gone to request the papers.

Is researched the particular names of those who. Whom he would find hiding out in Damascus and drag them back to jerusalem to stand trial for their professed christianity. All, he was sure that he was doing this for god just as jesus had told his fossils. That the time would come that those who killed them, would think that they were serving god by doing so.

And yet, before he even got to Damascus, He was shocked. I trust horrified. To discover that his deal. Had not actually been for god. That's all. Because he didn't know God. He had that all that knowledge about The Hebrew bible. But he hadn't known god as the god who gives his own righteousness for sinners.

Which isn't a new thing. When Jesus comes. It's been a necessary thing ever since the fall. It's been something that God has displayed to us. All righteousness of a substitute that is a righteousness that is as good as God. Or as good as God requires. Who's going to be?

A sacrifice of a substitute. That was great enough to atone for our sin against the glory of God. Who could that be? Certainly Eve seems to have known. When she said she has brought forth a man and then our English translations. They translate it with. But it's the same Hebrew word, exactly the sign of the direct object.

And she had been told that her seed would crush the serpent's head. The same serpent to head overcome her and Adam, and they're unfallen state. And so more, and more clearly throughout the Old Testament, but certainly throughout the entire old testament, God revealed himself, declared himself as the God, who had give his righteousness, to be the righteousness of those who deserved as wrath.

How glorious the mercy and love and power to deliver and wisdom to design such a salvation Of this God who had revealed himself. Throughout. The entire old testament and yet Paul knowing those scriptures. Had been doing just as he has said about the Israelites in verse 31 of the previous chapter.

Pursuing a law of righteousness, but not attaining to it, why? Because he did not seek it by faith. But as it were, By the works of the law. Do you know God? Not as a feeling or as an idea. But as the being who has given you his word in the bible,

Do you know him as the one who in that word that he has given to you? Has offered himself to you. To be your righteousness. Wiping away your sin. And giving you his own right standing, his own righteousness to be your standing with him. Because if you don't know God this way, you may have great zeal and whether that zeal is a zeal that expresses itself in a commitment to Very strict obedience or at that zeal is A zeal that expresses itself in a tireless energy to serve, or if that zeal expresses itself in warm and intense feelings, or if that zeal expresses itself in

And enjoying.

Singing praises and, and expressing your self greatly about God. Whatever your zeal is. If it is not for the being who has given you his word. In the bible. And told you in that word that he gives you himself to be your righteousness. Then your zeal is not according to knowledge.

And if your zeal for God is not according to knowledge. Than your zeal isn't actually for the true God. This is what the Lord Jesus. Told those Jews. Who were rejecting him? They didn't know God. They didn't recognize God's son. The God who had offered himself. To be their righteousness, through faith in his promise.

And now he had come in, his son offering himself to be their righteousness, and they weren't interested. They had established their own righteousness, so they thought it was offensive to them. That he would suggest that they needed to be freed. What you set us free. We are children of Abraham, we've never been slaves of anyone.

I'm quite obviously, they meant. Spiritually. Because the children of Abraham had often been slaves of almost everyone.

And so we must take God as word. Indeed taking God as word. Means not thinking that. Genuine goodness can be produced by circumcision or uncircumcision. But only by faith.

Operating by love. Knowing. About god. And resting upon him alone for our righteousness. But not just resting relating to him.

Who has given himself to be our righteousness. Faith. Operating. By love. And so paul, when he Didn't know god as god has presented himself in his word. He didn't truly know. God, he had zeal that wasn't according to knowledge. And now that god has come in the person of his son, his last word has great declaration of himself.

You can't say that you're an old testament, believer but are not a new testament, believer. Because it is christ of whom the old testament spoke. And if you don't receive him, according to all of his word, you are not receiving him according to any of his word. Think sometimes.

When people think about, Old testament to believers. They think that you could still somehow be an old testament believer today, because, you know, it wasn't Just genesis to Deuteronomy and not at one point, or wasn't just genesis through samuel enough at one point or wasn't just genesis through malachi enough at one point.

And yes, at every point. All that god had revealed in which he had proclaimed himself as righteousness for sinners was sufficient at the time. But the obligation To receive god at his word, is an obligation to receive him at all of his word. And when the revelation is full, You can't say, well, you know, i'm just a genesis through Deuteronomy believer.

Any more than it was permissible for this Samaritans, to do so. When the other 34 books had been written. And you cannot say i'm just a genesis through malach, i believe her. There's no such thing. Faith is a gift of god. The same god, who has spoken the whole thing.

The whole thing that is all about christ and all from christ. And this was what paul was learning. On the road to Damascus. When the light sun and he fell down. And he heard the voice. Why are you persecuting me? Suddenly, he realized, That he didn't know the god of light at all.

Who are you? Lord. I am jesus. And your persecuting.

Do you take god as word, which is to say? Do you take god? As. The one who has revealed himself, finally, and fully in jesus christ. That it is in jesus. He has made himself known to you. It is in jesus. He has given himself to be your righteousness.

It is in jesus. That he has given himself for you to know. And to love. And to belong to. So that you both rest upon the lord, jesus, as your god, you rest upon the triune god in the lord jesus christ, and you relate To the triune god in the lord jesus christ.

In union with whom you can call the father, your father Because you have been in dwelt. By his spirit and joined to his son. And someone aspect of resting upon the cornerstone is imitating. Christ's heart, which is to say, imitating god's heart. And another aspect of resting upon the cornerstone is taking god at his word.

Which just to say taking christ at his word, And then the last place. The third aspect. The most direct one. Resting upon the cornerstone is to submit to god's righteousness. Which is just submit to christ's Righteousness. So the problem wasn't just that they did not know, god verse two, they did not know god because they didn't know his righteousness, they didn't know him as the god who was giving himself to be there righteousness.

For they being ignorant of god's righteousness. And seeking to establish their own righteousness. Have not submitted to the righteousness of god. And so there's three things

there that are fairly plain. The spirit would give us eyes to see it first. We must not be ignorant of god's righteousness, we must know.

God's righteousness. That is offered to us as sinners to be our own by faith. This was the, the great last piece of the puzzle for Martin Luther. Martin Luther hated romans. Because roman said in it, the righteousness of god is revealed and that was horrible news for a sinner.

And then suddenly was Martin Luther who loved romans? When he realized that, what it was saying, when it says in it, the righteousness of god is revealed. Was that in the gospel, god has revealed that his righteousness, is not merely executed upon sinners, but in the gospel, it's offered two sinners to be.

There's And so don't be ignorant of god's righteousness. Here, his word proclaimed to you that says god offers you his righteousness. That you will be as right before god as god is. Because he offers you christ. To be your righteousness. And jesus, who had no no sin was at the cross made to be sin so that you might become by faith in him.

Not just the righteousness of a perfect man. But so that in him, we might become The righteousness of god. Second Corinthians. 5:21. So, first part of verse 3, don't be ignorant of god's righteousness. No, god's righteousness, as that, which is offered to you by faith. Second part of verse 3, First beginning.

Again, in verse 3, for they being ignorant of god's righteousness. And seeking to establish their own righteousness. So, the second part of Understanding and applying verse 3, i hope is pretty obvious. Stop. Seeking to establish your own righteousness. That is not how the gospel works. You know, it's possible even to to read and understand the first part of verse 3 and say, all right I am gonna establish my righteousness by not being ignorant of gods.

I'm gonna establish my righteousness, by believing in justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in christ alone, to the glory of god alone. What if i just done? I've taken the names of the doctrines. And the mastering of the ideas and by them tried to establish my own righteousness.

And so, if the first part is to not be ignorant of god offering himself to be our righteousness, his righteousness, to be our righteousness. The second part is, stop seeking to establish your own. We heard earlier about how our hearts are being conformed to christ's if we are believers and there's actually righteousness coming out of us.

But it's not. Our own righteousness. Apart from christ. It's our own salvation. In his saving us, he's working in us to will according to his pleasure in his saving us. He is working in us to work according to his pleasure. The only righteousness that comes out of a christian.

Is that righteousness that comes from his union with christ? That comes by the spirit working in him. And so our works are the fruit of salvation.

So, stop trying to establish. Your own righteousness. Indeed. He gives us this wonderful language by which to think of it. How a man has made right with god at the end of verse 3, Submit. To the righteousness of god. Be like that. Yeah, that younger brother. Who has never won a wrestling match.

With his older brother. And yet they keep having it and it always ends up with the same way. The younger brother. I give up. I give up. A yield. I don't know if anybody actually still says uncle. That was supposedly a thing. But we must yield, we must submit.



To god being our righteousness to give up.

And accept that he has given himself. To be our righteousness. This is something that God makes plain in a couple of places. Right, where the Jews will? Lord willing next week, consider and in the next passage, right in the very places that are seeking to establish their own. The younger children this week.

How many commandments did God give on Mount Sinai? I didn't take the time to go through the rest of the book of Exodus and see how many dozens or hundreds. It might be. But the children's catechism means, how many did he thunder in the hearing of all Israel? How many did he write on the tablets of stone?

And isn't that one of the places that these Pharisees would seek to establish their own righteousness? And yet? How does it begin? God spoke. All these words saying I am Yahweh. Your god. Who brought you out of the land of Egypt? Out of the house of bondage. Righteousness is a consequence of salvation.

Is a fruit of salvation. It comes from being joined to the righteous. God who could take such a sinful people. And even produce righteousness. And then, and then the one that's going to be quoted. And next week's past passage Luke eight, not look Leviticus 18 Verse 5. And they lift.

You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which of a man does he shall live by them? Just, but we've just been through Leviticus 18. And what was the refrain? I am Yahweh, I am Yahweh, your god. You must be holy because I Yahweh your god. I'm holy. And even if you're just read the first five verses then Yahweh spoke to Moses saying to the saying speak to the children of Israel say to them.

I am Yahweh, your god. According to the doings of the land of Egypt where you dwell you shall not do. And according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I'm bringing you, you shall not do, nor shall you walk in there, ordinances. You shall observe my judgments and keep my ordinances to walk in them.

I am Yahweh your god. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments. Which of a man does he shall live by them? I am Yahweh. I'm Yahweh who saved you from the one bondage. I'm Yahweh. Who is saving you into the paradise.

And yet, they did not. They did not know God as he was presenting himself to them. And they. We're seeking to establish their own righteousness. So they didn't submit they didn't yield. Give up. To him. And so the Bible was always saying God alone. Could be the righteousness. Of sinners.

By his redemption. But his salvation. Indeed. That, which is finally and fully revealed in Christ. Verse 4. Was always. Was always the righteousness to which the law. Attested. For Christ, is the end of the law. For righteousness to everyone who believes. Now, there are different ways of understanding the word end.

Even the word *telos* can mean. Um, time. So, the laws for righteousness, the laws, for righteousness, the laws, for righteousness, the laws, for righteousness, and then here comes Christ. Another law is not for righteousness anymore. That is not. What this verse is saying. Saying that the law had always presented God as a God who offers himself to be a righteousness.

And now finally and fully at the climax that was always intended. That was the goal of what the law was saying. He has revealed himself in Christ as all righteousness. Christ is the end. Here's

the climax. The goal. Of the law for righteousness. So that if they would have pursued it as if it were by faith 932, They would have attained to that righteousness, that was always presented to them.

They pursued the law of righteousness but they pursued it in the wrong way. Because the law had always said, believe in god, alone has promised alone, his provision alone. His righteousness alone, you can't do it. Stop trying to establish your own submit to his receive his righteousness to be yours by faith.

And yet we can see, can't we? How much more clearly and fully. His word. Pleads with us. When it presents god to us in christ. The god, man. God, who became an embryo. Had grew into a baby. And a child. And a man. And every thought, Every desire. Every word.

Every pleasure. Every action. Full only of love and obedience to caught. And yet that man fully man. Is still one divine person. It is the righteousness of god, the son. That has offered to us in the man. Jesus christ. Because christ can never be split. And so here's our substitute as a man.

But when we believe in him, We are joined to one who is god? And man. We have god's righteousness. Just like the law. Had always promised. And offered. Christ. Is the end of the law. For righteousness, for everyone who believes And that's code language. We won't take the time.

Uh, to look at Um, 116. And Um,

924. Sorry. 116 and 924. That this for everyone who believes their first for the jew. And then for the gentile, Is saying that this is the way it has always been. And so if you are still trying to establish your own righteousness, Give up. Submit to receiving god's own righteousness.

As your righteousness. Through jesus christ. Men.