

Are You Safe from God?

Overview of the Book of Romans

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Bible Text: Romans 10:9-13; Luke 12:5

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Ok. Quickly on with our text.

Romans 10. I want to read five verses to you this morning, Romans 10 verse nine, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Romans chapter 10 verse nine.

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord.”¹

Now, remember. Christ says this. “What comes out of the mouth is an indication of what is in the heart.”

Now that is not to say that people can't just say the words, “Jesus is Lord.” That is not what confession is. Confession is saying Jesus is Lord, maybe even more so by your actions sometimes. Remember what Scripture says, “By their works...” This is found in Titus.

“By their works they deny him.”

You can say one thing and by your works deny what you say.

So this confessing Jesus as Lord doesn't save you. It is that belief from the heart that wells up in a confession through words, through life. It is when you are in the family and they are telling you to close your mouth. And they are telling you to close your mouth. We don't want to hear that.

But you are going to confess Christ as Lord.

It is in the work place where they say, “We don't want any of that. Away with your Christ. Away with your Christianity. Away with your religion. We don't want it.”

But you confess it there when it is hard.

¹ Romans 10:9.

Some of you have heard Paul Washer say it is when those Roman legions came down the street and they said, “Ok, offer up your little tax. Offer up your little worship to Caesar.”

The Christians would say, “Jesus is Lord, not Caesar, Jesus.”

It would cost them. That is the idea. It is confessing him. That is what Christ says. “If you confess me before men, I will confess you before my Father.” That is the idea right there. Confessing Christ.

And you know, worked into the very fabric of this is they will not be put to shame. You see, that is the temptation. That is what it says there in verse 11. They will not be put to shame because that is the temptation when you are before the family, the lost family, the world, the work place out there in the school, out there in the other places. That is the temptation. Keep your mouth shut and be ashamed.

But “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”²

Make no doubt about it. You will be saved.

Hey, I am not saying you just flippantly spatter off a little words and you say very flippantly, “Well, I believe Jesus Christ was a true historic.” That is not what I am talking about. I am saying if you believe truthfully in your heart a faith that is willing to bank all on Christ, all your trust is there. I am telling you this. You will be saved. Make no qualms about that, folks. No argument there. Scripture verifies it. You will be. It is not an exception. You will be. It is not maybe you might be. There is a certainty here.

“For with the heart one believes.”³

Not just with the head. You guys have to understand this. Anybody can rattle off historical facts.

Now, yes, our faith is based on historical facts, but you can say those facts and not really believe them. It is the person that is willing to cast all, all your money, all your life, all your time, all your family, all your children, your spouse, everything, all your material possessions. It is there.

“Lord, you are Lord. It is all yours. I have been bought with a price.”

That and that alone is the faith, the belief that justifies.

And with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says,
“Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

² Ibid.

³ Romans 10:10.

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”⁴

As you scan these five verses it ought to be apparent to you right off. This is no discourse about predestination. Nothing here about the Second Coming. This isn't about church order or gifts of the Spirit. Nothing here about the trinity.

Do you know what? If you just search the word “saved” in your New Testament, do you know what you will find? The word is not used anywhere in the Scriptures in a more condensed fashion than right here in these five verses. There is nowhere else in the Scriptures that the word “saved” shows up three times in five verses, except here.

Do you know what? Paul is dealing with one simple subject here. Do you know what it is? Being saved.

You can see it, right? Do you see the word right there at the end of verse nine? You see it again at the end of verse 10. You can see it again at the end of verse 13.

Ok, now everybody say, “All right. We see it. Ok, let's move on to something more interesting.”

Hold on just a second. Let me tell you something.

The word “saved,” there are few words associated with Christianity more than that word. We hear it all the time, right? I mean how many of you have not heard that quaint little expression? What? Jesus saves. You have seen it on the bumper stickers. You have probably seen it on billboards. You have seen it at the ball games. You don't see it so much anymore at the ball games. You don't see John 3:16 in the end zone anymore. What happened to that? I guess people going to football games are more pagan now than ever, right?

They probably got... well, the beer drinkers probably threw a few bottles and realized they weren't welcome.

Let me tell you something. People love to talk that way.

“Oh, I am saved. I got saved when I was three. I was baptized. I got saved.”

People love to throw that term around, saved, saved, saved. Well, we hear it a lot.

People walk in here, “Are you saved?”

“Oh, yeah, I am saved.”

⁴ Romans 10:11-13.

They are not saved, but they say they are because they haven't bowed the knee to Christ. There is no confession of his lordship in their life, not by their works. Oh, they might say, "Do you believe Jesus as Lord?"

"Yeah, I believe he is Lord."

And then they walk right out and they are slaves to sin. They are not obeying him.

Don't you realize what it says?

"Why call ye me Lord, Lord and then you don't do the will of my Father in heaven?"

It is not those who say, "Lord, Lord." It is those who do the will of the Father.

You say, "You have got to be doing something to get saved?"

I am saying this. If you are truly saved, if you truly have that faith that saves, you are going to submit to Christ because that is what happens. God says under the new covenant, "I am going to write my laws on their heart. I am going to break their heart. I am going to take that old stony thing out. I am going to put a heart of flesh in. My laws will not be grievous."

And if you say that you are a Christian, 1 John chapter two says, "But you don't keep his commandments, you are a liar. The truth isn't in you."

Oh, I hope that just rings in our heads. I am trying to lay down. True Christianity is that which submits to the Lordship of Christ. It is that one thing. People banter around this idea of being saved all the time.

"I am saved."

And some people come around, "Yeah, I have been saved five times, six times." That is not a salvation that I want. You can lose it. It is no good. It is not being saved.

What are you saved from? You are certainly not saved if you can lose it.

So here is what we are dealing with. Saved, Greek word, σωζω (sode'-zo). Of the 110 times it is found in our New Testaments, 93 times—that is about 85 percent of the time—it is translated "save" or some form of that: saves, saved.

In the English... Now listen. As I began studying this, you know, a lot of times I don't know where I am going. I sit down and I open up my Bible and I start reading the next section of Scripture. I don't often know how far I am going. I don't know what I am going to deal with. I just begin reading.

Sometimes I know ahead of time. Sometimes I can see out two or three weeks, but this week I guess I opened up and I began reading these five verses over and over and over. And this word “saved” and I just, I really began to think about: What does it mean?

And I will tell you something that really probably pushed me off in the direction that I want to go this morning. I have Bible software that allows me to look at other translations. Let me tell you something. There is an English word that is usually used to define the word saved. Linguistically in the English language it is almost spelled the same except one letter is swapped. And they are actually swapped for a letter that is very similar.

Do you what? It is the word “safe.”

William Tyndale, 16th century martyr, burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic Church.

Man, what did he do? It must have been some pretty terrible crimes, you take a man and burn him at the stake. I mean, what did he do, rape a bunch of little children? Was he a serial killer?

Roman Catholic Church—that is what God saved me out of.

[?] Where are you at? You got saved out of that.

What did the guy do? He translated and published the New Testament Scriptures.

Let me tell you something. In his translation of the New Testament published in 1525 he actually translated Romans 10:10 this way.

“For the belief of the heart justifieth and to knowledge with the mouth,” that is confession, “To knowledge with the mouth maketh a man safe.”

Romans 10:13 he translates.... This is... Now listen. Tyndale is largely the source from which the translators of all of the American or English, rather, translations come from. The King James was taken largely from Tyndale’s work. And all subsequent translations as well owe much to Tyndale work.

Listen to what he does with Romans 10:13.

“For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be safe.”

And as I got looking at that, I suddenly began to feel this fear rise up in me. [?] not safe.

When we start talking about saved, the gut level meaning of save, it carries the idea of making safe.

If men need to be saved, they are not safe. You don't talk about being saved unless there is peril, unless there is danger, unless people, the human race is not safe.

Think about that. The very concept demands a scary reality. It demands that there is something here. There is something around us. There is something out there that is constantly looming, that is constantly reaching that is constantly coming for man, that is endangering him with some type of harm, with some sort of death, with some sort of calamity. Something is out there. Something is there.

Now if somebody says, "Well, of course. Hell is out there." That makes us afraid. After all, hell could burn us. Hell can harm us. Hell can trap us. Hell, it is thirsty for the souls of wicked men and that makes us afraid because we are such men.

But what is it? I mean, what is hell? Hell is a place. That is all it is. It is just a place.

Yes, it may be a scary place, but it is nothing more than that. And do you know what? On top of that, it is a place none of you currently are.

So why do you fear?

You say, "Well, I fear it because I might go there one day."

And that is right. That is right. But listen to me. It is not like hell kind of comes and gets us where we are.

Look, folks. Hell is not the reason why men are not safe. There is something out there that is far more terrifying than hell that men need protection from.

Do you know what makes it so unsafe for us to walk about in this world, for sinful men to even walk down this sidewalk? What is it that makes us so unsafe? It certainly isn't hell. It certainly isn't the devil.

Folks, it is something far, far more dangerous than those things. It is man's worst nightmare.

You and I need to be saved. That thing in this world that is not safe is God himself.

Do you know what? Jesus knew this. When he came to the earth and he walked among us he warned us. He said, "Men, don't be foolish. Open your eyes. The thing that you have got to fear is not what you so typically fear. It is something else."

Men walk about, I will guarantee you. Go out on the streets. What do they fear? They fear the police. They fear finding out they got AIDS. Yes, they may fear hell, but you say, "Do you fear God?"

No, they don't fear God. Why? Because in their mind he is just this big old fat Santa Claus old man up in the sky sitting and smiling at them.

If they realized what God was. If they could see the way he is looking at them right now, they would be terrified beyond description. And Christ comes to this earth and he says, "I will warn."

He warned us.

"But I will warn you whom to fear."⁵ Luke 12:5.

You should "fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!"⁶

Not fear hell. Not fear death. Not fear the devil. Christ says fear him. Fear him who has that authority.

In Matthew 10:28. "Fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."⁷

So many people say, "My god is not like that. My god wouldn't do that."

Let me tell you something. Your god is not the God of the Scriptures.

One of the most terrifying texts in the Bible, Psalm 50 verse 22. Do you know what the Lord threatens to do to sinners? Our ESV says, "Tear them apart."

All other translations God is threatening to tear sinners to pieces. The Lord is the one who we looked at last week in Luke 19 says, "Bring my enemies before me and slaughter them before me."

This is the God of Scripture.

All of you guys turn back in your Bibles right now to Romans five. It is not far away. I want you to see this. Romans five verse nine. The apostle Paul. He is preaching the gospel, one of the most extended, intricate fashions that you can find in the Scripture, powerful.

And in Romans chapter five verse nine. You tell me. You guys read that. Let your eyes go through that verse right there. You tell me what that verse says we need to be saved from.

The wrath of God. The wrath of God.

⁵ Luke 12:5.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Matthew 10:28.

Now, listen. Wrath is not like this detached separate thing from God. It is God's wrath. It is God himself that has the wrath. It is not like wrath is some separated thing out there down the street away from him. It is God's wrath. He is saying, "You have got to be saved from God."

How easily and flippantly men talk of being saved. But they have no idea what it is that they truly need to be saved from.

My friend, God is not this pushover old man up in the sky somewhere. He is the Lord God almighty. The whole earth is full of his glory.

He is fearful. He is your greatest need of salvation. What you need to be saved from is from him. That is what men need to be saved from.

Sinners are not safe because God is out there, because God is not safe.

Oh, many should fear. And I am telling you, some of you sit in this room right now. You have got false professions. They aren't worth the money you have got in your pocket. You have never truly submitted to Christ. You walk around with this foggy deception about being saved. You like to calm your fears and tell yourself all is going to be well. This God is out there. He is coming for you. And I will tell you. All your false profession does is add to the wickedness and add to the wrath and add to what God is going to bring on your head very soon if you do not seek refuge in his Son.

There is only one place that saves you, folks. You are not safe where you are outside of Christ. You can have the greatest profession in the world, but if you are outside of Christ, If you are deceived, then you better [?].

Christ [?]

Fear him.

But do you know what? I know how this was. I lived in all sorts of sin. And you take... you go back 20 years. There I am, head over heels immersed in the muck and the filth of my sin. And do you know what I thought? I thought God is smiling.

Have you guys been there? I don't doubt we have got some lost people in this place right now. That is your perception. Wicked men typically think God is pleased with them, not really too concerned about their sin. Many have this concept in their mind that he just sort of winks at their sin, kicks it under the rug, not a big deal. Many people imagine God up there in heaven. You know, he is kind of weak. He is wringing his hands.

"Boy, I have done everything I can for those poor sinners down there. There is nothing left for me to do. It is all left in their hands now. Oh, I want them to be saved so bad. I

just have all these good purposes and I am smiling at them. I am crying for them and I just... everything in me I just wish there was more I could do.”

People have this idea that God is like that.

I will tell you what. That is a misguided notion, people running around with this idea. God never puts anybody in hell. Your own sins take you there.

Oh, you have misread your Bibles if you think that.

Christ says, “You better fear him who has the authority to cast into hell.”

Bank on it. It will be God.

If you go to hell in this room, it will be God who casts you there. And he will do it. And he will do it for certain. He is not safe.

You walking in your sins, you are not safe. You imagine there is any reluctance, there is any weakness with God to cast wicked men into hell this very moment. I will tell you this. When God rises up, who is going to resist him? Who is going to stand in his way?

He put men in hell. I will tell you what. They are going in there right now. Multitudes are going in there right now.

Do you think God has got any reluctance to throw sinners into hell? He does not. Hell is filling up even this very moment.

Just because some guys is off in India somewhere or Africa living in his wickedness beholding what he can of the glory of God in the creation and he refuses it, he denies it, he suppresses it. I am telling you what. There is no reluctance in God to take somebody like that and cast them into hell. They are going in there by the millions. Absolutely.

Listen to this. Nahum one verse six. “ Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him.”⁸

You say, “I don’t like this. This is not what I wanted to hear today.”

I tell you what. If you can get in front of a smooth mouthed, slipper fellows that will tell you and tickle your ears and tell you what you want to hear. I know a lot of people aren’t saying this, but this is what our Scriptures tell us.

Look. When the whole earth trembles at his voice and rocks break into pieces before him, do you think you will be able to stand before him? Can you feel it, sinner? You are not safe.

⁸ Nahum 1:6.

Let me ask you this. What do you think there is to keep God from coming upon you this very hour? Do you think there is something standing in the way?

Listen. You say, "Justice, justice."

I have heard people say, "All I want when I get there is what I deserve."

Justice does not stand in the way of God throwing you into hell right now. Scripture talks about "God so loved..."

Let me tell you this. Scripture says that every one who is not obeying the Son, John 3:36, the wrath of God is upon you already and you face... what is it? John 3:16, 17, 18? Yes, God so loved the world. But I will tell you this. It says that if you have not believed, God's condemnation is upon you.

It is amazing. Everybody wants to quote verse 16. What about verse 17? What about verse 18? What about verse 36? People don't like to go there. There is wrath, folks.

There is wrath. There is condemnation.

Do you know what? You say, "What about the law?"

Let me tell you this. The law says this. "Everyone who does not keep all things written in the book of the law to do them is cursed."

Do you know what? Don't make any appeal to justice. Don't make any appeal to Scripture. Don't make any appeal to God's law, because all three are standing against you. All three are urging God right now, "Cast them away." They demand your head. They demand your blood. Justice demands it. Scripture demands it. The law demands it.

I am telling you. You don't have a cheering section there with God egging him on.

As someone has said before, when man first sinned, those angels were reaching for the hilt of their sword. They were looking to execute judgment.

There is only one thing standing between the sin and hell flames right this second.

I will tell you what. Last night as I was out under that cloud, looking at the sky, I was looking at the horizon all the way around, the vastness of the sky. I was imagining all that I could see to be one massive floodgate.

A sinner stands underneath that. And that thing begins to bulge. The wrath of God held back. It bulges and creeks. It is about to give way. All the wrath of God stored up.

Listen to me. Scripture does not call the sinner a child of wrath for nothing. It means there is wrath against you right now.

People have this idea of God is fiercely angry with those people in hell. Let me tell you this. There are some of you sitting in this room right now. God is more fiercely angry with than some he is already tormenting in hell.

You say, "Well, why am I still here?"

Only because your time has not run out yet.

There is [?]. Some of you have committed much more grievous sins against God than some in hell. There are Africans, there are Indians in that fire right now that have not heard the truth some of you lost folks in this room have heard. God's wrath against you is storing up. That floodgate is bulging. It is creaking. It is ready to come in. There is only one thing holding it back right now.

It is not justice. It is not Scripture. It is not the law of God. It is God's sovereign pleasure to hold it back this moment. That is it.

Let me tell you something. There are a few scriptures that give us a glimpse. One of them is found back in Genesis. Let me tell you something. God comes along. He is speaking to Abraham.

He says, "Abraham, let me tell you something. I am going to take your offspring. I am going to take them into Egypt. I am going to leave them there for 400 years. Four generations I am going to leave them there."

Why? Why not two generations?

Do you know why? Because when they come out, they are going to kill the Amorites. When they come out they are going to subdue seven nations in Canaan. Do you know what God says to Abraham? The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."⁹

Do you know what Daniel the prophet says? He speaks about transgressors not yet reaching their limit.

Paul to the Thessalonians talks about the Jews filling up the measure of their sin.

Let me tell you something. Sinners only sin so far. You cannot hide beneath a false profession. That flood gate is going to bulge so far. That measure is going to come up. Your time is numbered.

You say, "Oh, I am healthy."

⁹ Genesis 15:16.

People have this idea, don't they?

"I will, you know, the sun is shining. I got sick. God healed me. I was in this car wreck. God spared me."

And they think because they have seen these little glimmers of God's mercy to preserve them from that pit of fire already, they suppose that must mean God's wrath does not hang over my head. That must mean everything is ok. I have made my peace with him upstairs.

Don't buy into that deception. That flood gate is ready to unleash on your heads if you have not a place of safety.

Man is not safe.

Let me tell you something. There is a time when those Israelites, they are out there and they began to complain and they began to grumble and it is like spontaneous combustion took place.

If you have never read about it, folks, it happened. Numbers 11 verse one, you read about it some time.

I will tell you what happened. There was sin in the camp, God dwelling in that camp. And it is like this sin. When people have sin that is seething and breeding in the heart, do you know what the natural course of things is? It is for God to break out in fury and fire and wrath, spontaneous combustion began to consume people in the outer vestiges of that camp.

Oh, we feel so secure. Our feet are planted.

Let me tell you something. You may feel like your feet are planted on the ground right now. You may feel like you are pretty healthy right now, but I am telling you. You are outside of Christ. You are on a very rotten foundation. That great big massive as far as the sky, the limits of it, who can measure the wrath of God? Who can measure the wrath against a lifetime of sin?

When God's wrath against one sin of Adam and Eve cost them paradise, cost them their life, one sin. Who can imagine the wrath?

When Scripture calls the lost children of wrath, you have got to understand the thunder clouds are black. It is ready to rain torrents of wrath. There is only that one thing that holds it back. God only forbears so long.

Let me tell you. I was at my step dad's side. He refused Christ. He went to church when he found out he had terminal cancer. But any time I talked to him about Christ he didn't

want to hear it. Any time I talked to him about sin, he didn't want to hear it. He rejected Christ to his dying day. I was at his bedside as I watched him pass off into eternity.

I will tell you this. It is not even possible for us to conceive the colossal ways of the floods of the fierceness and wrath of God that rushed upon him with inconceivable fury and omnipotent power that moment he passed off.

We don't see it happen so we can become blinded to it and we become senseless to it. We can just fall asleep.

Children of wrath.

I found this ridiculous quote on the internet yesterday. Somebody makes the claim, "God does not send anyone to hell. They send themselves."

One very well known televangelist, you would all know his name if I said it. He says this. This is his quote. "God doesn't send anyone to hell. Anyone who goes to hell will be there because of decisions they have made."

I am not going to deny that people end up in hell because of decisions they made. But he comes to this conclusion. You send yourself there.

Oh, don't be deceived. God casts men there.

I will tell you this. When a child of Adam, a son of Adam, a daughter of Adam, they walk around out in this world tainted with sin, they are not safe. They may feel it. They may feel young. They may feel healthy. They may feel good. They may feel happy. But they are not safe.

The very ground they walk on is made of such material. It is ready to cave in.

Let me tell you something. Can you imagine? Can you imagine if you guys were right now walking on this decaying, rotting, fabric out over some great chasm and you are walking upon it and every time you sin, bang, there is another weight on top of you. And you sin again, bang. There is another weight. And it is pressing you. It is pressing you down through that rotten fabric. There is a mouth gaping wide open for hell. And every time you sin God presses. That weight is coming down. That great big door of God's flood gate of wrath bulging, ready to come forth. And you tempt it, the very hand that holds it back. You kick against it. You kick against it. With every sin you hate God, hate his people, hate his Word.

You say, "That is not me. I don't hate it." You say, "You are talking awful graphic."

I am telling you this. If you have not bowed the knee to Jesus Christ, you can maybe have some concept of God in your mind. You can have some deception you are going to heaven, but you are not.

It is not those who call him Lord, Lord. It is those who do the will of the Father in heaven. You kick against his Lordship.

Listen. Why is it so important there in Romans 10:9 that Christ came out of the grave?

Let me tell you why it is important. In this epistle to the Romans the one thing that Paul wants us to see about the resurrection from the dead back in chapter one verse four is this. Christ coming out of the grave proving him to be the Son of God with power.

When Christ declared himself to be the Son, when he said, “God is my Father,” what did they do? They picked up stones. I will tell you why, because that title, “Son of God,” means deity. It means he is equal with God.

I will tell you this. That great flood gate that is just bending under the weight of the wrath towards sinners, you realize what it means when it says, “He who knew no sin became sin.” That is not safe to become sin. He willingly walked out underneath that flood gate and he said, “Father, I will stand in the place of my people.”

And, bang, that flood gate came open. Every bit of the wrath rolled across him. He drank it. It crushed him. It wasn't a day in the park. It crushed him, every bit of it. He drank it dry.

Him coming up out of that grave proved him to be the Son of God with power. That is what you need. That is the only place of safety. This isn't a mere man we are talking about. He is Lord. But he is more than Lord. He is the Son of God.

“My Lord and my God”¹⁰ is what Thomas proclaimed.

That is what you need. That is your only place of safety. There is no other place.

And I will tell you this. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord, as old Tyndale said, “Will be safe.”

Oh, we have got to find a place of safety. This is why in the Old Testament they came up under the priests when they were establishing the Mosaic covenant. They had these cities of refuge. What were they a picture of? Christ. You need refuge. You are not safe. You are out in the plain. Flee. The wrath of God is coming. You are out there in Sodom and Gomorrah. You are in the city of destruction. You have got to flee. You have got to run.

You say, “But does that include me?”

Everyone who calls. It includes you. If you call...

You say, “I don't know. You don't know my sin. You don't know how bad.”

¹⁰ John 20:28.

Everyone who calls. Christ says, "Him that comes to me I will in no way cast out."

Look. We are in a day. God has moved some. You have got your Jonathan Diaz holding to the kingdom. Lauren Griffin, pulled in. Stacy Bell, pulled in.

Why would you stay where it is not safe when others are coming in? Why stay there? Repent. Return from it all. Let it all go about in need of Christ. Come to him. I mean, he has proved himself worthy. He has proved himself to be the Son of God.

And I will tell you this. You come to him. Do you know what verse 12 says? He will bestow on you all the riches. Do you know how I have described this? If you go out to the very horizons all the way around you see this great big flood gate. It is just bulging under the wrath of God.

I will tell you what. You come to Christ and now all of the sudden you have got a flood gate. It is bulging. It is bulging with the riches of Christ, with the inheritance, with the love of God and in Christ it is ready to burst upon your head all for good.

Folks, if you are not safe or you have got a false profession and you know it, you know the thing is not solid, call, call fervently, call earnestly, call now, call upon him until your salvation is certain, call till you find Christ. Call.

Sinner, you are not safe. Amen.