

Saved!

By Pastor Dan Schiel

Sermon Series, Sermon #: The Gospel, #88
Series Code: 08-02

Bible Text: Revelation 10:1-13
Preached on: Sunday, August 5., 2012

Key Words: gospel salvation saved righteousness law grace believe confess

Christ Church of Conroe, Texas
10087 League Line Rd.
Conroe, Texas 77304

Website: www.ChristChurchConroe.org
SermonAudio.com page: www.sermonaudio.com/christchurchtx

Open your Bibles to Romans, the 10th chapter. We're back to the book of Romans chapter 10. And were going to try to do chapters 10 and 11 before the summer is out. Do you think we can make it? I'm going to take a big bite today, if the Lord helps me. Were going to take the first 13 verses. And, I was reading some out of the sermons of Martyn Lloyd Jones who was pastor of Westminster Chapel in London for 30 years or so. And, I noticed in reading pieces of his sermon series that he preached 35 sermons on chapter 10. And that he preached 21 sermons on the first 13 verses. And that he preached 11 sermons on verses nine and 10. I'm going to do it in one! The Lord Willing! Because there is so much when you start looking in Scripture and it opens up a whole of the story. And this is why Lloyd Jones is so effectual when he was preaching as an expositor is because of his constant look at all the connections, and his ability to to preach the gospel as God anointed him to preach it. There are a lot of long series on the book of Romans. You can find them in various places.

We're going to look at this with an understanding of to try to see what Paul is saying following chapter 9. We will tie back into it in order to see who were talking about and what Paul is talking about as we open the chapter. Let me read the first 13 verses of Romans chapter 10. Here is what he wrote:

[10:1] Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them (I'll tell you who 'Them' is in a minute. You already know, but we'll mention that again) 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, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. [4] For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

[5] For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. [6] But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) [7] "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). [8] But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); [9] because, 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. [10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. [11] For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." [12] For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all,

bestowing his riches on all who call on him. [13] For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

(Romans 10:1-13 ESV)

How many of you in your lifetime, maybe growing up or even in your adult life, recognize the word “saved” as a very regular part of the preaching of the word of God where you worshiped? How many heard the word saved a lot? Or salvation? Which is the big word. The great place, marvelous salvation. Bigger than creation because ultimately in the work of salvation all of creation becomes new. New heavens, new Earth, all of that. In the redemption that Jesus Christ provides. Tied to the redemption of we who are the sons of God, having been brought in the kingdom and made the children of God, or the sons of God.

So, when we look at the word saved it sometimes makes people uncomfortable. Have you ever noticed that? People who are not church folk, or who haven't been raised with the word saved. I preached in a church one time and I used the word saved talking about my own relationship to God and the beginning of salvation. Now saved is an ongoing thing. Most of us around here know that. Once you begin your journey with God he continues to do in your life what he needs to do to bring you to maturity. And ultimately salvation leads us into the glory where we are made to be like Christ, ultimately. So, you've heard people say we have been saved, we are being saved, we will be saved, salvation being this huge piece of reality that we entered into in Christ Jesus. And I was preaching in this place and some lady came up to talk to me afterward and said, you're a Baptist, aren't you? I've been called Baptist a long time. Baptist is okay! If I need to be a Baptist, I'll be a Baptist today. That's okay. Because I like a lot of the things that Baptists say and do. But, she decided I was Baptist because I use the word saved. And I'm assuming that the church I preached in, a good-sized church, was not using the word saved. And so it was unusual for them to hear the word saved.

But, if you read the Bible very much you're going to have to deal with what the word saved means. You're going to have to deal with the reality of the fact that there is a salvation and that we are being saved. Or, you could just try this. When you go to a theater or something and somebody comes up beside you and say, is that seats saved? All you have to do is say no, but I am! And you kept your seat open most of time! They'll be across the aisle. So it's a way to save a seat. Just remember that the next time you're at the theater and need to keep the seat.

So, if we read Scripture we have to deal with the reality of being saved, or what that means. Because the fact is, according to Scripture, men and women apart from Christ, the whole human race, is lost. Apart from Jesus Christ, now this is a broad statement. I know it is. It's a bold statement, but it's a true statement. The whole human race is lost, a lost race. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I'm walking the Roman Road with the next one out of Romans 6: 23, that was 3:23. And this is it, the wages of sin are death. The good news is, Romans 5:8, is that Christ Jesus died for us while we were yet sinners. And then we come to the last of The Roman Road Scriptures in this 10th chapter of Romans, which we'll get to. The ones that Lloyd Jones spent 11 sermons preaching on, nine and 10. And we'll get there and just a little bit.

But, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The human race, as we are born into the world and grow up are lost and in need of a Savior. We need to be saved. That is why the statement, the familiar verse that everybody memorizes, “for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should, (and here is the key word) not perish but have eternal life, or everlasting life. Why does it say not perish? Because you are perishing without Jesus! And if God had not provided a Redeemer we all perish and come into judgment. If we don't see the reality of the sin and the reality that places us in, then we miss the salvation because what do we need? If we are not lost? If we are not in the Savior? And so we have to somehow always keep this tied in when we preach the gospel because people are not waiting until they die to be lost, they are lost while they are living. Or, as Paul put it one time, dead while they live in trespasses and sins.

Now, this is going to be a very positive sermon, but you've got to lay the background. There is a chaotic reality in the world. And that is, sin has contaminated the whole. And all of us need a Savior. And Paul, as he starts this chapter, understands and tries to show that some who have very little knowledge, or some that are not really seeking after God, in fact, are finding him. And some who had all the benefits and have all the knowledge of who they are and what it means as a people, are not finding him. And that is the balance basically between the Gentiles at Paul's time here and the Jews. The Jews with all the benefits are not being saved much of the moment that Paul is preaching this gospel. But, the Gentiles are coming in.

Part of the reality is this, you know we looked at Chapter 9. And let me take you back to it for a moment. In chapter 9 Paul makes it clear that behind the scenes where we can't see it, God is sovereignly calling men and women to himself. Do you remember chapter 9 that we just came out of? In chapter 9 you see the sovereign work of God, God choosing as he develops the people of Israel. And now God's calling men and women again, mostly Gentiles. And he is letting Israel, at least in the majority in this time that the gospel was being preached, he's letting them hear it ... but not hear it! They are rejecting it. They are not believing it. And we know according to the Scriptures that there is a blindness that's happened to them for a temporary period of time. There is a blindness. They hear it, but they don't hear it. Why? Because they cannot see their need of a savior, generally.

And so without seeing your need of a Savior, you simply are going to oppose that gospel message. Because you can't hear it as good news. What do you need it for? You are already his people! So, that's the deal.

And here we are in chapter 10 confronted with the other side of this thing. And that is human responsibility. So, when you start reading in Scripture about God's sovereign choice, you also read in Scripture about man's human response. And I've said to you before, and I'm going to say it again, I don't know perfectly how to mesh those things. I believe God is sovereign. I believe God reaches out and calls men and women to himself. But, I also believe that any of those called by him who are going to respond, are going to respond by the choice of their will, and respond to that call, however they get it worked in them! We are not robots. There is always the human responsibility that is expressed in response to the message preached. It is true, let's say it this way, that God calls people to himself. It is also true that no one comes to him unless they respond to that message in some kind of believing way. You're not going to be saved because God decided on you without some response to that message.

There ought to be some fear in this. There ought to be a little bit of warning. Because we all think, well if I am elect, I will be there. Well, don't think about it that way! Because when you're thinking about it that way, you're thinking wrong! It's not a matter of barely getting in, it's a matter of realizing your need and trusting in Jesus and being born from above. God calls by an elective decree. That is understood in Scripture, irresistibly there. In other words, irresistible as the grace of God as it works in sinners.

I try to think back when I began this journey. And some of you can think back when you began the journey at least in your understanding. You resisted as long as you could. But there came a time, and you thought it was you who made all the decision to leap into the arms of Jesus. But you were dealing with an irresistible grace that would not turn you loose. God keeps after us and calls us into himself. And we respond.

Now, here's where I want to start. Let's just let that lay, okay?

How many of you can deal with that without having all of it figured out perfectly? I know people who can't. But I know that you can. You can know that God is sovereign in his choice of the elect. You can know that the elect respond to God's call and believe. Now leave all the rest of the undecided stuff and stuff you don't know alone for a moment and let's see what Paul is saying. I want to show you something! Look at this!

Let me start with the first verse again, “Brothers, my heart’s desire,” this is Paul now, and he’s writing this brothers and sisters to the church in Rome. He’s not writing to his natural brethren, but to the church. “Brothers and sisters, my hearts desire and prayer to God for them” (that’s Israel, his kinsmen). Look back at chapter 9 beginning at verse 30:

[30] What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; [31] but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. [32] Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, [33] as it is written,

(and this is Isaiah 28:16)

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

(Romans 9:30-33 ESV)

But Israel was trying to attain a righteousness by their work. Trying to do the law in order to be declared righteous before God. And the Gentiles were coming in because they dared to believe that it had been already provided for them through what Jesus Christ has done. So, here’s the first thing I want to get into your head to think about for the week.

Paul prays for Israel. Despite his conviction that God saves whomever he will by his irresistible choice. And I have had people tell me, I don’t think there’s any need to pray for the lost. Because if they are elect, and they’re going to come in and God’s going to bring in and if they’re not he won’t. And, that may be true in truth in many ways. But, why do we not pray for the lost? Do you pray for your lost family members? I do! Do you pray for lost people on your block? In your workplace?

It is the heart of Jesus that becomes real in his people. The heart of Paul was there. It was the heart of Jesus in his heart. He wanted his kinsman to believe this gospel and be a part of it. So, to know that God was working on people with his irresistible grace does not stop Paul from praying and yearning over his kinsmen, the ones according to the flesh. And I don’t think prayer is inconsistent with God’s choice. I believe that God’s calls through the preaching of the word. Do you think God calls people when they hear the word preached? Yeah, he uses the preaching of the word. He uses your witness to somebody sometime. When you share the gospel with somebody else you never know what God might do to bring that so you are witnessing to right into the kingdom. He uses preaching. He uses witnessing. He uses our praying. So that our prayers are part of that work that God does all along. The praying of Christians yearning from their hearts over those that are not saved.

Now I noticed something when I was at Pearland three weeks ago, four weeks or whatever it was. When I walked into that congregation and got involved in the service, I noticed that when it was time to pray that they really spent no time praying for sick. Why? Because they didn’t have any sick. They have the normal little things that happen in life, but it was all a congregation of under 40s. And a jillion kids. They were there and they were worshipping and they were part of it.

But, there was no need to call names of people who are battling cancer. There is no need to do all that because in the context of that congregation, they are well. But they sent a man up who is head of their outreach type thing, And they sent him up during prayer time. He came up to pray and he spent 10 minutes praying for the lost, that they might have their eyes opened, their ears opened. That they might hear the gospel. That someone might bring it to them. That they might hear it. That they might receive it. That they might be born from above. That they might become his. I like that!

They were praying for the lost because they cared about the lost. And we have to realize that prayer for the lost is a very real part of our living and our praying and God’s working. It’s

important. We become part of God's plan when we preach and when we pray and when we witness and we live.

Turn with me to first Timothy if you will. First Timothy chapter 2. Here is Paul again writing to Timothy who is in Ephesus dealing with the church there in their struggles. And in chapter 2 he talks about prayer, listen to all this. Chapter 2, verse one:

[2:1] First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. [3] This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, [4] who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now I'm just going to read that like it says it, because there are no other explanations here. That's what it says.

[5] For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [6] who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. [7] For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

[8] I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

(1 Timothy 2:1-8 ESV)

And then he talks about the ladies, or women right after that. But, the prayer focus kind of stops right there. And the living focus is connected. Praying for everybody. Praying for leadership in the nation and world. Praying with hands uplifted. Holy hands. Let me read it one more time. This is from the message. And, I like what brother Peterson does with this. First Timothy two:

[1-3]The first thing I want you to do is pray. (this is Peterson translating now) Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.

[4-7]He wants not only us but everyone saved, you know, everyone to get to know the truth we've learned: that there's one God and only one, and one Priest-Mediator between God and us—Jesus, who offered himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free. Eventually the news is going to get out. This and this only has been my appointed work: getting this news to those who have never heard of God, and explaining how it works by simple faith and plain truth.

[8]Since prayer is at the bottom of all this, what I want mostly is for men to pray—not shaking angry fists at enemies but raising holy hands to God.

(1 Timothy 2:1-8 The Message)

That's Paul. Why? Because prayer is vital in God's working. He uses it. It becomes part and parcel of what he does.

Now, I want you to listen to CS Lewis. And I have just a short quote from him when he talks about prayer. Now you may like CS Lewis or not. Or you may not like what he says. Or you may like it, but I'm going to read it, so just enjoy. Here we go: *"When we are praying about the results, say of a battle or a medical consultation (we know about those things) the thought will often cross our minds that if we only knew it, the event is already decided one way or the other. I believe this to be no reason for ceasing our prayers. The event certainly has been decided. In a sense*

it was decided before all the worlds. But, one of the things taken into account in deciding it, and therefore one of the things that really causes it to happen, may be this very prayer that we are now offering. And he goes on to say this: *“Thus, shocking as it may sound, I can conclude, we can add noon become part cause of an event occurring at 10 o’clock.”*

Now he’s not the only one that’s ever said that. Because in the context of God at work, chronos, time is not how he works. But he uses the prayers in the process of accomplishing his purpose and God has all knowledge. All of it. So I think Lewis is reminding us that we need to look a little bit beyond our human understanding of things to comprehend maybe a little more. He said, *“there is no question whether an event has happened because of your prayer, when the event you prayed for occurs your prayer has always contributed to it. So, you give God praise and thanksgiving. When the opposite event occurs, your prayer has never been ignored. It has been considered and, for the ultimate good and the good of the whole universe, you didn’t get what you want.”*

We live in a world that is marking out time from evening time at six until the next evening time six. And we’re measuring out the time. And we think that if we don’t pray now we might not be a part of what’s happening. But God does not operate in time only. God hears and knows ahead of time and beyond time whatever’s happening and whatever is added in. So, it is something worth thinking about. Lewis makes some good points. There are mysteries here, but here is the clarity for me in this text. **Paul does not hesitate to pray for his kinsman, though he knows God is operating in his sovereign choice. And he prays for their salvation.**

And then he declares this, the second thing that Israel has a zeal for God. Israel has a zeal for God. He says it right here in the text pretty clearly. *“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.”* Here’s the problem. But they have a zeal for God! Especially Orthodox Jews. Don’t they have a zeal for God? I mean, when you think about it and really do a little study and research, they take God seriously, the Orthodox. Watch Fiddler on the Roof again and you see some seriousness about God and choices that are made regarding family, marriage and everything.

The Jewish way of life is built around God. God is at the center of it all. They take God seriously all the way along. God is the most important element in their thinking if they are truly Orthodox and looking at God at the center of everything. The Gentiles, on the other hand, let’s take it just in the days of Paul. They think of God, in fact they think usually a lot of gods. Because when you look at the nations in Paul’s day, gods were everywhere, mostly idols. And they didn’t believe in the one God, but they believed in God. They thought about God. But it was always on the periphery. **How do we think about God? Is he at the center of what we think and do. Is he the one we consult about our living and our life, or is he on the periphery?** That always keeps happening with human beings.

And Paul, recognizing what’s happening said, wow! It’s amazing. Those guys who have God on the periphery are finding Jesus! And, the people who have God at the center are still trying to get righteous before God. Do you see what I’m saying here? Because we want to say now I want to be like the Jews. I want to get God in the center! Well, God in the center without the heart, the failure to see and understand, just blows it all! And, the Gentiles who were wondering along doing their own deal thinking God is God, but what’s that, and you hear the gospel preached and all of a sudden there called out of darkness into light, and that they are getting in on it. And Paul is concerned about his kinsmen because they are not! And the reason they are not is because they are trying to produce a righteousness that God will accept. And they can’t!

The Jews sought to establish, Paul said, their own righteousness and missed, because of it, the gift of God. They were trying to become righteous so that God would accept them. They had righteousness that would be obtained by works, rather than one received by faith. Anyone who seeks to establish his own righteousness whether it is a Jew or Gentile, will be in the same boat. You won’t ever do it! What will happen is that you will try it and some little rebelliousness will show up that you didn’t even know was there. Some little thing.

Saul, who later became Paul, if there was anybody alive in his day who thought he was righteous enough for God to be accepting of him in his enthusiasm for the law and for tradition and the whole deal, it was him until somehow God, by his grace, who had picked that man out, showed him his covetous heart. And that tenth command, thou shalt not covet, it didn't matter what was, just covet the notoriety, to it whatever you want to covet, he said, it slew me. I saw my covetousness and I was a law breaker! Breaking the law of God.

Here is a part of a letter from a Rabbi to a young man in California who had decided to become a Christian. And, the Rabbi was concerned about that. A good Jewish boy who had now become a Christian. So he writes this letter. And this is part of it. *"He said the basic question about religion is how to elevate man."* He's already started out wrong, hasn't he? *"And bring him into a closer relationship with God. We believe that God revealed to us in the Torah how he wants us to live so that we can be in harmony with his divine purpose. Our role and religious purpose is to obey God's laws, to love him and obey him."* We have no problem with that. *"We exercise our free will by proper intention. And through having done the good deeds are elevated. So that it becomes progressively easier and more natural to continue to do good and to resist evil."* And of course, you do that until you are finally righteous.

It's a works idea. It's always been a works idea. And that's the idea that he presents regarding this young man. You have to work your way up to acceptance. You have to become righteous by your deeds. It's a works righteousness which doesn't work! And it will never save us.

Verse four, it says this: *"for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."* The end of the law, as far as righteousness is concerned to those who believe. That's Christ. The one we trust and believe. What's the purpose of the law again? To show us how bad we are! You can't say it much better than that. It is to make us aware that something is wrong with us before a holy God. That we are not as good as we might think we are. That we are in need of God's help. Otherwise we think everything we do is a natural thing! Isn't it amazing how many people without Christ live in our world, and they do awful things, they live in awful way, but they think it's just natural! That this is a human way!

No, it's not! Because some things that may feel natural are absolutely wrong! Just because it feels right, it doesn't make it right! The law was given to make us realize that there are things that are not right in our lives, that are wrong! That we are sinners before a holy God. And, at this point, unless we come to Christ when we realize this... hear the Gospel, come to Christ, we have no way out. Because the law cannot cure our sin! The law can only point out our sin. It can only show our sin to us, and make us aware that we are sinners. It is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. So, the only way out for one who realizes he's a sinner and a law breaker before a holy God is to put trust in Christ who has made possible that redemption.

The end of the law. it has been fulfilled in and through Christ Jesus. And we trust in him for the righteousness that is imputed to us. He can change us. You see, once you are in Christ Jesus he changes you. And he can change you from the inside out and make you what you never thought you could be, make you what your family never thought you could be, make you what your boss never thought you could, what your spouse ever thought you could be.

Now, you have to be careful with that sometimes because through the years, lots of years now, I've had wives come to me and say pray for my husband, that he'll be saved. And we pray for them over a period of time, sometimes a long time. Their husband gets saved. He gets zealous for the Lord. And they come back and say, I didn't want him that saved! I just wanted him to be ready to go to heaven. He doesn't even want to have any fun anymore. He doesn't want to go were used to go. He doesn't want to be what we used to be.— Well, he's not! When Jesus comes he challenges us!

So, next time when you pray, say change him, but only this far! And see how God does with that. It just disturbs everything when they get too holy. I mean, it just messes things up.

Now, this is the part I wanted us to get to. This is getting close now to the fourth text in the Roman Road when you are witnessing to somebody, this text on salvation that we come to and nine and 10. But, before we get to nine and 10 we've got five, six, seven, eight. Here: *"For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law."* Okay? *"That the person who does the Commandments shall live by them."* He said Moses writes on the righteousness that is by law.

Now, let me tell you where that statement is... Leviticus, you don't have to turn there, it's one short verse, just listen to it. Leviticus chapter 18, unless you want to do a sword drill to figure out where Leviticus is, and that will be fine. Leviticus chapter 18. Now, I can't find it... Here we go. I jumped over it. Here we go. Here's what he said, *"you shall therefore,"* this is Moses talking to the people by God's design, *"you shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules. If a person does them, he shall live by them. I am the Lord."*... If a person does them, he shall live by them. What we get in this text is Paul pulling out Moses' statement in saying that if the righteousness is based on the law, is that the person who does his commands shall live by them. In other words, if you do them completely, totally, perfectly, you have life. You live by them. You get life by them. Now, nobody's ever done it... Jesus only!

But, if you could do that... I mean, they are under the law as Moses says this, right? So, what would you expect Moses to say? God has given them the law. He hasn't given them an understanding of salvation by grace. He might point to a Messiah, but how much of that did Moses understand even? I mean, Hebrews says that it was the reproach of Christ that he took on himself. So he had some understanding of what was coming, undoubtedly. But this is law. And the righteousness that comes by law is this. And Moses said it was this, that the person who does the Commandments shall live by them. So, if you do the Commandments, you've got to live perfectly by the Commandments. So when you study them really hard you had just as well not start. Take the 10 Commandments. It's amazing how people think they can live that. Oh, I can do that. I could do that... No, you'll fail... Now you can try. You can say, "I'm not going to kill anybody." Yes, but are you going to hate anybody! Are you going to wish somebody else would kill them for you?! Are you going to watch that movie and lust one more time after that woman on the screen? No, you're not going to be with her... But you're in your heart with her... Well, we didn't get too many aliens there! All the men say Amen with me! Amen! So be it, now it's done. Buried. Gone.

Now are going to go on to something else and I'm not going to bother the women, or I will be in real trouble if I do that. So, we will move on. And then the next verses, 6, 7 and eight. Listen to these, *"for the righteousness based on faith,"* now we are getting a comparison here, *"the righteousness based on law is, do the Commandments and you will live."* What's this? *"But, the righteousness based on faith says, do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven."* Let me read this for you first from the old testament. Because once again it's coming right out of the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy chapter 30. And here's what's recorded there. And then we'll come right back and read it in Romans. Listen to this, *"for this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you,"* Moses says. God says to Moses. *"Neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that you should say who shall ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it. Neither is it beyond the sea for us. And who will go over the sea, that you should say who shall go over the sea for us and bring it to us. That we may hear it and do it."*

What's he talking about? He's talking about the law. He talking about the commands of God. You don't have to send to someone up to heaven now to figure out what God wants. You don't have to send someone across the sea to get what we need to hear. Why? Because you guys know the law. You've got it. It has been given to you. You been living under it for a while. And they were! So he says this next, *"but the word is very near you, it is in your mouth and in your heart so that you can,"* what?... *"do it!"* Do you see that? Now that's Moses communicating regarding the law. I mean, here it is. The commandment is right here. You don't have to send somebody after it. Don't have to send somebody across the sea, up into heaven. It's already here. You've heard it enough until you know it in your heart and you are even able to declare it. Paul takes that text and works on it.

Now, if you'll read the New Testament and watch Paul's writings, he does is the Old Testament texts sometimes. He brings an application to a New Testament reality of the gospel. And here's what he does. Let's look at. It puts the little parentheses in there every time to make his point. But, here's how he says it. Chapter 10 now the Romans, verse number six, "*but the righteousness based on faith says, do not say in your heart,*" and we're okay about where we were before in the Old Testament Deuteronomy, "*do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven (that is to bring Christ down).*" Now he's not talking about the law, he's talking about The Word. He's talking about the Christ. He's talking about the Messiah.

So you, if you're going to be righteous before God, you don't have to go looking for him in heaven. Why is he saying that? Because he has already come! Because he has already come! And he goes on to say it this way, "*for who will ascend into the abyss.*" Now he says abyss rather than over the sea, but it makes the same point. "*Who will ascend into the abyss?*" And he makes this the abyss because of what he says next, quotation now with this parenthesis "*(that is to bring Christ up from the dead).*"

Now, bringing Christ down from heaven would be incarnation. Messiah in flesh. Bringing Christ up from the abyss would be resurrection. They've already happened! Paul is the one communicating to the church at Rome. And he wants them to understand that you don't have to go looking for Christ in heaven. You don't have to go help him get out of the place of the dead. The incarnation has brought him here and he lived his life perfectly and died on your behalf. And he has been raised from the dead. That's it! And he goes on to say this, "*what does it say? The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart.*" That's Deuteronomy again. And here's another little parenthesis, your mouth and your heart. That is the word of faith that we proclaim. Now let me ask you what do you think the word faith that we proclaim is? The word of faith that we proclaim? What? It's the whole gospel story of Jesus!

What is Paul preaching? He's preaching Jesus Christ here as a man without sin. Came from heaven. God became flesh. He lived his life perfectly. He died on a cross, crucifixion. He was raised from the dead. He ascended to the father. He's coming back again. And he did everything you need to have a righteousness with God. That's what he's saying with it! He said it's in your mouth and in your heart. Why is he saying it that way? Well, Moses said it that way in Deuteronomy 30, for one thing. And now he's taking it to a testament application and he says this in verse number nine. "*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!*" How? By grace alone through faith alone. Because God, in his son prepared a redemption for you. How in the world do we come back to an understanding as Christians, even, that we're going to die one day. And all would have to do is make sure that our good outweighs our bad! That is not salvation! Salvation is a trust in Jesus Christ and an acknowledgment that he is, not Savior,... Lord!

Hang on! Were going to finish here in just a few minutes. The word faith that we preach, the clearest statement in God's word on how to be saved, when you understand what has gone before is verses nine and 10 in this chapter. It begins with a confession that Jesus Christ is Lord. This means a conscious acknowledgment to ourselves of what we believe about him. Now you see what we normally have done with this is take that confession, and make it "tell somebody." no, tell yourself first. Your heart has to agree with your confession! With the mouth confession is made unto salvation, but the heart has believed it already. **With the heart man believes unto a righteous standing and the confession that Jesus is Lord, my Lord, is salvation.**

Are you still here? Okay? Hold on to it. **What it means is that we've come to a place where we recognize Jesus has the right to rule our lives. The right to Lordship in our lives.** Up to this point we've been Lord. Up to this point we've run our own affairs, making our own decisions according to what we wanted. And then in time we realize Jesus is Lord and before it's over we recognize he's Lord of the past, the Lord of the present, and he's Lord of the future. He is Lord of life, Lord of death, Lord of all! That's who Jesus is.

When he was raised from the dead he made this statement, *“all powers given to me in heaven and in earth.”* No wonder it's the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. Because he is the Lord of all! If you want a mantra, something you can repeat to yourself a few times, do it quietly at first so you get it in your heart and in your mind, *“Jesus Christ is Lord! Lord of Me! Lord of all!”* The greatest question of our time has to do with what we are doing with Jesus. With the mouth we make confession. With the heart we believe unto righteousness. Confession unto salvation heart believes unto righteousness.

Let me give you something to search out. Because I didn't have enough time to do all I wanted to do all I wanted to with this search, but **I can't find anywhere in Scripture where we are asked to believe in Jesus as Savior. It is always to believe he is Lord!** He becomes our Savior. He is our Savior. But, when it comes to believing, we confess him as Lord. We believe him as Lord.

Do you remember Paul in Philippi and the jailer there? And the earthquake came and he thought all the prisoners had escaped and he was concerned about it. And the jailer was ready to kill himself? And Paul said hey, hey, Hey ... We're all here! Having church, in fact, probably. And the jailer said, when he saw what was happening, he wanted to know how to be saved. *“What would I have to do to be saved,”* he said. Here's what he was told *“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, and your household.”* It didn't say believe and be saved! It said believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

The believing is always to acknowledge who Jesus really is! Why is that? Because, and Stephen mentioned this yesterday and the elders meeting and it sparked something afresh in me again. Because I've read and studied a lot about the kingdom, God is establishing a kingdom where all is under the rule of the Lord. **Why would he not be recognized as Lord if the whole thing is a kingdom and he is the King?!** And it starts with our understanding that we are no longer lord our life, he is. So it always begins with an understanding of who Jesus is. Who is now in charge of all things.

Listen, I think we do a disservice when we make salvation just easy, just receive Jesus. Well, who is Jesus! What do you mean receive Jesus? Explain it! Make sure people understand that it's not just believing Jesus died for them. It's more than that! It's believing that Jesus, who died for you was raised from the dead and has ascended and sitting on the right-hand of God the father and he is The Lord! Of all, and now Lord of you! Once he becomes Lord and you begin to submit to his leading, your life begins to reveal some of it. You are paying attention to his rule. Attention to him.

So the question is, is he your Lord? Is he the Lord of your life?

When you get up in the morning are you living today, and are you going to get in trouble and call on him? Or do you start the day understanding that he is in charge? When you finish the day are you going to figure out if he was around, or did you acknowledge that he was around all day guiding, and you were willing to submit to him? You see, there are a lot of things to think about. He changes everything if he is Lord. He changes everything.

Now you know and I know many of you have read a lot of things, or studied and known that there is this ongoing debate about Lordship salvation, or salvation apart... you can make Jesus Lord later. I just can't find that in text. I can't find it. You become... you're saved by him. Yes he is your Savior. It starts with confession that Jesus is Lord. And it starts with confessing it to yourself because you know it's true for the first time. You know it's true for the first time. You know it's true the first time.

And he promised he'd never leave you, nor forsake you if you are his. And everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame, Paul says in verse 11. He who accepts what he's done for you and puts your trust in him alone. Peterson, in the message said, no one trusts God like this will ever regret it.

Moffett said no one who trusts God like this will ever be disappointed. He will see you through. **Faith is the way we lay hold of what God has given us. It is never gained by merit.** We don't try to be good. And we don't hope our good outweighs our bad. No, we trust in Jesus, acknowledging that Jesus Christ has done on our behalf all that needs to be done. And we submit to him as our Lord and our Savior. Our God coming again to receive us one of these days.

Amen.

Let us pray.

Father your word is such a marvelous, marvelous revelation. So many years we've looked at those Roman scriptures in sharing the gospel with people. And so many years sometimes we've overlooked the reality of that confession with the mouth and belief in the heart that acknowledged you as Lord. And we were born again. And we began our journey, you starting the work, calling us out of dark and into light. And we were able to live and we knew the difference. And some of us Lord stumbled around and staggered at times. But you never gave up on us. You never left us alone. And you kept bringing us into your presence and kept reminding us of your grace. You kept loving us in the hard place. And I'm thankful for that Lord. I pray Lord that as we continue this study in this inspired word of God that you gave to our brother Paul, that we will hear your voice accurately and truthfully. That we will truly be able to get up in the morning and say, Jesus you are Lord of my life. I will follow you today as you lead. And to go to bed at night and say, Lord I thank you for your watching over me. And I thank you that you have kept me today. And I sleep in preparation for serving you tomorrow as Lord of my life. Help us Lord to live that way. And if there are those who do not know you, have never truly surrendered their lives to you Lord, may they simply open their heart and say Lord, come in. I believe that you are Lord of all. I believe that you have redeemed me. I believe that you have paid the price for me. I believe that you are the Messiah, the Lord. I trust in you as my Lord and my Savior. Work in your people Lord. Let none be lost in this room. But let us all be saved. And use us, Lord in our praying and are witnessing, in our living using the gifts that you give us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

— ### —