

ROMANS

LAYING A SOLID FOUNDATION



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Importance of Sharing the Gospel

Romans 10:1-15

Romans 10

Not by works
but by faith

From passages like Romans 10, we obtain a deeper understanding of the various aspects of salvation (i.e. soteriology - study of salvation). In particular, we will study the relationship between the sovereignty of God and evangelism.

* Apostle Paul's Responses Regarding Salvation

There are many responses to God's sovereign hand in salvation. Some think it is unfair. Others simply deny it by putting their confidence in their own good works. The apostle, well shaped by the scriptures, reveals his own personal responses in chapter ten. By observing Paul's responses, we can guard against unbiblical conclusions regarding God's sovereignty and salvation. This is important because many denominations and sectors of Christianity have gone astray from scriptural teaching and practice by focusing only on one aspect. Check out this book: *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer. Note six responses of Paul below.

- **Sympathetic (Romans 10:1)**
Paul cares for the Israelites (Compare earlier Ro 9:1-2). Do you care for those around you?
- **Intercessor (Romans 10:1)**
Paul prays for the Jews. Do you pray for the lost? How often?
- **Conclusive (Romans 10:2-3)**
Paul recognizes that religious people who try to establish their own righteousness are lost. Do you dare admit the lostness of those religious people about you?
- **Discerning (Romans 10:4-5)**
Salvation is only for all who believe in Christ. Those who trust in their good works or feelings are as lost as the pagan who totally rejects it all.
- **Selective (Romans 10:6-9)**
Salvation is for only for those who believe certain things about Christ. We need to be careful not to just accept "Oh, I believe in Christ" but investigate a bit further as to what they believe about Christ.
- **Inclusive (Romans 10:10-11)**
Salvation is for all kinds of people - whoever calls upon Him. No matter what we conclude about God's sovereign hand in salvation, we must make an open proclamation to all people of all lands and languages that they too can believe in Christ.

Careful now!

We need to be careful as to how we draw our theological conclusions. If we do not, we will end up making wrong conclusions and usually spending our time defending them! For example, not a few expect that since the all powerful God does the saving, then all would be saved. This is not what happens.

Others conclude that God is not faithful saving the Jews. The teaching of election presented in these chapters not only comforts our souls but also establishes the faithfulness of God. Just because some are not saved, it does not mean that God has failed. He saves all He wills.

But then others will conclude that if God sovereignly saves, then man does not need to do anything to procure salvation (i.e. just waits for it to happen) or that we do not need to take a strong initiative in reaching the lost (missions).

This is the main question before us in this chapter. "How do we relate the sovereignty of God to the salvation process? Is evangelism or missions really necessary? This chapter provides so much insight into these matters. He helps us to draw right conclusions from strong theological teachings.



Has the teaching of election stifled the gospel? What should our proper response be to sharing the gospel? How did Paul respond to this? How does prayer relate to this teaching of election and grace?

FAITH DEMANDED {Romans 10:6-7}

“But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, “DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, ‘WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), or ‘WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).” (Romans 10:6-7).

Interestingly, these verses are loosely translated from the Old Testament (De 30:12-14). The OT word used for abyss is the sea. But Paul insightfully uses ‘abyss’ which can also mean the very depths of the sea and in this way reminds us of Christ’s death and ascent from Hades, the place of the dead. So what do these esoteric verses mean?

Paul is demanding that we move from ‘what can be’ to ‘what is’. Salvation is not about what God can do but what He has done in Christ. Do we need a sign from heaven? A special prophet? No. We have Christ. Do we need some necromancer, or some psychologist who studied those people who have died and come back to life? No indeed for Christ has died and come alive. We need not climb our way into heaven nor find the secrets of the future life. This is okay because Jesus has been in heaven and has ascended from the very grasp of death.

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.” (Romans 1:17).

* FAITH DISCOVERED {Romans 10:8}

“But what does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART”--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,” (Romans 10:8).

“But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.” (Deuteronomy 30:14).

Deuteronomy 30 is speaking about how God has specially revealed Himself to the Israelites. He was near to them because they had the word near to them (De 30:14). They had the Word of God. No other people was like this. Paul equivocates the word of God with Christ Himself (who is the Word of God - John 1:1-3, 14).

We know God specially dealt with the Israelites because God revealed His Word to them, but now that Christ has come to earth, salvation’s door has opened to all. God in Christ has visited the whole earth. Jesus came into the world! Since God has drawn near to us (the world), we all, not just the Jews, should respond in faith.

These verses are ‘faith’ verses. We cannot scientifically prove Christ’s resurrection but He has risen! This is the truth. Our salvation is not based on our works, that which we do to earn God’s favor, (e.g. I fast two times a week and have devotions 3 times a week). Our faith rests in what God has done for us in Christ. This is the message they and we hear. It is also the message of faith which we proclaim to others so they can believe.

* FAITH DELIVERED {Romans 10:9-10}

“That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.” (Romans 10:9-10).

Confession of Jesus as Lord

What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord?

- Jesus as **master** (focusing on our servanthood)
- Jesus as **lord** over our lives (He is master and owner of all)
- Jesus as **chief of deities** (other gods were called lord)
- Jesus as **king** rather than Caesar (Christians died for their allegiance)
- Jesus is **Yahweh** (the Name of God revealed in OT)

Support for Yahweh (cf. Cranfield, pp. 258-259):

- ✓ *Kurios* (the Greek for Lord) is translated for YHWH in the Septuagint (Greek OT translation) 6000+ times.
- ✓ OT uses in NT refer to Jesus Ro 10:13, 1 Th 5:2; 2 Th 2:2).
- ✓ Jesus is so entitled, “Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name ... that Jesus Christ is Lord...” (Philippians 2:9-11).
- ✓ Romans 10:13 instructs all people to call out to Jesus Christ in prayer which would be heinous to a Jew who would only pray to God and call to Him for salvation (e.g. God warned the Israelites not to worship idols).
- ✓ Christ’s common association with God, His power and source of grace (Ro 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3)



Summary: Our belief that God came close through Christ and now reigns on high is an essential part of our belief as a Christian. Christ is God. Notice how Paul also adds the important doctrine of the resurrection here. We also are to believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead. Salvation, then, is not based on works of righteousness but on our confession about who Christ is and our personal response to God by our faith in Christ. Since the instrument of salvation is focused on faith Christ instead of works of the Law, then the Gentiles (non-Jews) can also be saved.

* FAITH DEVELOPED {Ro 10:11-15}

¹¹ For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED;" ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; ¹³ for "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

¹⁴ How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:11-15).

God makes His glory known by saving people in time and space. The process outlined here is critical to understand. It helps us keep things in balance. Paul presents the process by starting with the individual who believes. This is the way most of us understand things, that is, from our own perspective. But much has gone on behind the scenes to actually bring us to salvation. Let us discuss those things as Paul presents them and later come back to the whole process.

✦ Personal Belief (10:11-12)

This is one of the most open and wonderful promises offered to us. "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." I find it is true not only for salvation but also our own personal growth. Faith (same as belief) helps the person and ways of God become integrated with our lives. The most basic faith that counts is salvation belief. This faith is open to all the peoples on the earth, described by the phrase 'Jew and Greek.' God not only tolerates, He saves. But we need to be careful not to underestimate the power of what 'believe in' actually means.

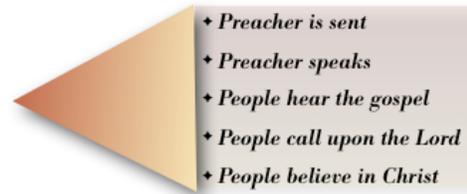
In verse 13 Paul quotes a similar phrase, "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." The first phrase from verse 11 is from Isaiah 28:16 while this later one is from Joel 2:32. Here one is to call upon rather than simply believe in. We are not speaking of just an assertion of head knowledge. This is a big problem in popular religions.

Salvation is looked upon as an acknowledgement of some doctrine, but Paul demonstrates through this verse that sincerity must accompany it. What does 'call upon' refer to? It points out that the seeker has discovered his problem (compare Jesus' words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those that mourn" (Mat 5:3-4). He has found himself to be in some desperate problem in which he needs salvation. He is not aware of his goodness or entitlement to some good thing but on the contrary to his need of any real help and his undeserving state. But despite this and because of it, he calls out to a Savior who might help him. Christ excels in coming to rescue those in need.

✦ Process of Belief (10:13-15)

This paragraph then begins a series of four questions followed by a declaration. The power of this section's instruction is in how it connects one to another and so the whole process is brought before our eyes much as Paul did in Romans 8:28-30.

¹⁴ How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?	call > believe
And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?	hear > believe
And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵	preach > hear



Sent → Preach → Hear → Believe → Call

And how shall they preach unless they are sent?	sent > preach
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Do note that a sovereign God works through the instruments of His people and because of this commitment, we should acknowledge several truths.

- (1) It would be a horrendous conclusion to say that because of election man does not need to take initiative in spreading the gospel or in actively seeking salvation.
- (2) God is seeking to empower those that take their part in this mission process seriously.
- (3) We the church are responsible to increase the quantity and quality of these preachers.
- (4) The message and work of Christ and His resurrection stands at the heart of this proclamation.
- (5) Regardless to the issue of election, our mission should be all comprehensive - proclaiming the gospel to all people now.

✦ Summary

Paul is not only shaping our conclusion to the powerful teachings of election as to whether we have any part in salvation, he is also shaping our mission policies. Will the church prioritize reaching out to the Gentiles, i.e. all people?

Missions is essential to genuine growth and salvation. Unfortunately, the short-sighted churches often starve missions (strategic evangelism) for the sake of preserving what growth one has. The Lord in Isaiah sent the preacher and so did Jesus. The white of harvest still exists. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send workers into the harvest.

In what way are you actively taking part in the spreading of God's truth to those locally and around the world?