

# Romans Part 34 – Chapter 10:8-10

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## Review

### Romans 10:8-10

Last week we concluded with the understanding that Paul was quoting Deuteronomy 30 which is why he tells the Jewish reader to “confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart...”

*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,*

Paul concludes his quote of Deuteronomy 30:11–14 with this verse. That passage describes God saying to Israel that they should not deceive themselves into believing that God's commands are hard to understand or obey. They shouldn't ask who will go up to heaven or down to the abyss to get the command for them. They already have God's command in their mouths and hearts. It is near them.

*9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

“If lips and life do not agree, the testimony will not amount to much.” —Harry Ironside

### Outline of Chapter 10 “Israel has willingly rejected the gospel”

Verses 1-4: Paul shows how the Jew is ignorant to God's righteousness because they have rejected Jesus.

Verses 6-7: Let Jesus be the judge of who is righteous not yourself. We may not judge another person's salvation.

Verses 8-13: This is what determines men's eternal salvation or lack of true salvation. Two steps; Believe and confess.

1. Believing makes us in right standing.
2. Confessing manifests the promise.

Verses 16-21: Paul quotes the Old Testament to prove that:

1. The message was preached to all the world.
2. Israel would be provoked because a godless nation would accept His righteousness, for which the Jew zealously tried to earn.
3. God reached out to the Jewish Nation “ALL DAY LONG”.

Paul will continue to quote the Old Testament throughout this chapter as he speaks concerning unbelieving Jews.

<sup>11</sup> *As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”* <sup>12</sup> *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,* <sup>13</sup> *for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

<sup>14</sup> *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?* <sup>15</sup> *And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”*

<sup>16</sup> *But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”* <sup>17</sup> *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.* <sup>18</sup> *But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did:*

*“Their voice has gone out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.”*

<sup>19</sup> *Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says,*

*“I will make you envious by those who are not a nation;  
I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding.”*

<sup>20</sup> *And Isaiah boldly says,*

*“I was found by those who did not seek me;  
I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.”*

<sup>21</sup> *But concerning Israel he says,*

*“All day long I have held out my hands  
to a disobedient and obstinate people.”*

### **Verse by verse dissection**

<sup>11</sup> *As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”*

Paul quotes from **Isaiah 28:16**:

*Therefore, this is what the Lord God says:*

*“Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a tested stone,*

*A precious cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed.*

*The one who believes in it will not be disturbed.*

Once again, he translates the verse to read that whomever believes in "Him" will not be put to shame. By Him, Paul means that Christ is the precious cornerstone God has laid in Zion. All who trust in this cornerstone, this sure foundation, will be vindicated. The foundation will hold. They will find themselves standing on the Rock.

In quoting this verse once more, Paul is supporting a crucial idea from verse four which began this train of thought: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Belief, not keeping the law, is the necessary ingredient to be declared righteous by God and welcomed into His family. In fact, as Paul will spell out in the following verses, there is no other criteria besides belief, including whether a person has been born physically into Israel or not.

*<sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,*

That is, all believers in Jesus will be vindicated in the end. Paul noted that the Scriptures clearly stated that everyone who believed would be so protected.

Now Paul clarifies that by "everyone," he truly does mean everyone. For Israelites, the world was ever and always divided into two categories: Jews and Gentiles. Those on the "inside" with God, and those on the "outside." Paul has expressed his profound grief that so many Israelites still cling to this false idea (Romans 9:1), applying it in ways which God never intended. Paul has declared his ongoing prayer that his own people the Jews will be saved (Romans 10:1).

Now he writes forcefully once more that there remains absolutely no distinction between Jews and Gentiles—using the term "Greeks" here—when it comes to being declared righteous by God through faith in Christ. After all, the same Lord is Lord of all people. By Lord, Paul is referring to Jesus, the Christ. He rules over all people, both Jews and Gentiles. In fact, the Lord gives His riches to all who call on Him. Paul wrote something similar in Romans 3:29–30.

Implied in Paul's statement is the idea that Christ is listening, that He will receive anyone who calls on Him in faith, no matter their nation or the circumstances of their birth. He is not reserving salvation only for those who are part of a certain heritage.

*<sup>13</sup> for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Paul quotes from the prophet Joel in this verse, declaring that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Joel 2:32). In doing so, Paul accomplishes two things. First, he connects this truth to His statement in the previous verse that Christ, the Lord of all, gives His riches to all who call on Him, both Jews and Gentiles.

The idea of "calling on the name of the Lord," in this context, means those who turn to Christ in faith seeking salvation. While not literally a description of a "sinner's prayer," Paul is referring to those who express the sentiment that a "sinner's prayer" contains. This is the act of placing one's faith in Christ. This is crucially different from those Jesus described in Matthew 7:21–23, as those who use His name, but have no actual faith in Him.

Paul makes a second connection, as well, showing that Christ the Lord is in fact Israel's Yahweh from the Old Testament. They are one in the same. All who call on Him in faith, both Jew and Gentile, will be saved from God's wrath against sin and will share in God's glory forever.

*<sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

Now, though, Paul begins a series of questions aimed at what is required to bring someone to the point of calling on Jesus' name to be saved. He seems to have the people of his own nation, Israel, in mind.

First, Paul asks how anyone can call on Christ if they don't believe in Him. Again, Paul insists that it is belief in Christ that initiates salvation and leads someone to call on Him. But how can anyone come to belief in Christ if they have never heard of Him, if they don't know who He is? This leads to Paul's next question: How will anyone hear about Christ unless someone preaches about Christ to them?

In asking this series of questions, Paul is showing, in part, how necessary his work in preaching about Jesus really is.

*15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*

Paul has been asking a series of leading questions. How will anyone call on Jesus—express saving faith in Him—unless they first believe in Him? And how will they believe in Him if they never hear about Him? And how will they hear about Him if nobody preaches the gospel to them?

Now Paul continues with the next logical question: How will anyone preach the gospel of Jesus unless they are sent by someone to do so? Paul's question shows that preaching is not the first step in the chain that leads to faith in Christ and calling on His name. Instead, sending is that first step.

Who does the sending? In the case of Paul and the other apostles who had been preaching the gospel around the world, it was Christ Himself who had sent them out. They had been commissioned by Jesus to preach the good news to the world (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 9:15).

Paul next quotes from Isaiah 52:7 to make the case that this sending of the preachers with this specific good news about Jesus was prophesied long ago: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

*16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"*

Now Paul seems to say that everything needed has been given to Israel to bring them to salvation. Each required step from the previous two verses has been fulfilled. Christ sent preachers. The apostles preached. The Jewish people heard. The problem, Paul now insists, is that the Jewish people did not believe. More specifically, Paul writes that they did not "obey" the gospel.

For Paul, failure to believe in Christ amounts to more than just an inability to accept the truth of the gospel. Paul calls it disobedience, a stubborn refusal to receive the Messiah and believe in Jesus. This is consistent with the Bible's general teaching, which is that a person's willingness to believe—or not—is always more influential than knowledge or arguments (John 5:39–40; 7:17).

This time, Paul quotes from Isaiah 53:1 to support his case to his Jewish readers. In that verse, the prophet asks the Lord, "Who has believed what he has heard from us?" Paul is showing that Israel's tendency to disobey, specifically by refusing to believe, goes all the way back to the days of the prophets.

*17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.*

This famous verse builds on Paul's quote of Isaiah in the previous verse. There Isaiah asks the Lord "who has believed what he has heard from us?" (Isaiah 53:1). Paul was showing that a refusal to believe what God says amounts to disobedience. That, according to Scripture, is the root problem when people hear the gospel and do not accept it (John 5:39–40; 7:17). Those who disbelieve do so because, on some level, they do not want to believe.

Now, though, Paul writes that when believing happens, it is through hearing what the Lord says "through the word of Christ." Paul seems to be referring to his prior chain of steps which must occur to bring a person to the point of calling on the Lord. Christ sends out His representatives to preach the gospel. Those who hear it have the opportunity to believe. Those who believe call on Christ. And all who call on the name of Christ will be saved (Romans 10:13).

*18 But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did:  
"Their voice has gone out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world."*

Now Paul asks if the reason they did not believe is because they did not hear about Jesus. Did they not hear the gospel? Paul says no, that's not it. The Jewish people, people in general, have indeed heard the good news about Jesus. Paul borrows language of Psalm 19:4 to assert that the voice, the words, of the teachers of the gospel has gone out to all the earth, to the ends of the world.

Psalm 19 is describing not the revelation of the gospel of Christ, but the revelation of God's glory and creative power in nature. Paul began this letter by echoing Psalm 19 in declaring that God has made Himself knowable to humanity by what He has made (Romans 1:19–20). Here, though, Paul insists that God is making Christ Himself known to the world through the preaching of the gospel.

Does Paul mean that, by this point in history, literally every person on earth has heard the good news of Jesus? That's clearly not his intent. He seems to mean, more generally, that the gospel is in the act of being communicated to the known world. This is not an obscure message, so there is no reason Israel can claim to be ignorant of it. Paul likely also means that the people of Israel, specifically, have heard the gospel of Jesus from Christ Himself. Also, His followers had been preaching the message in Jerusalem and around Israel for more than 20 years by time this letter was written.

*19 Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says,  
"I will make you envious by those who are not a nation;  
I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding."*

Now Paul asks if maybe Israel heard the gospel but did not understand it. Maybe they misunderstood the truth that God is accepting all who come to Him by faith in Jesus. Paul rejects this idea, as well. He quotes from the second half of Deuteronomy 32:21. The first half of that verse describes God's words about Israel way back in the days of Moses: "They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols." In other words, God says symbolically that Israel's worship of non-existent gods caused Him to become angry and jealous.

He declares what His response will be in the second half of the verse, quoted by Paul here: God will make Israel jealous and angry through her relationships with non-existent, foolish nations. Paul points to this passage from Deuteronomy as evidence that Israel has understood since her earliest days that God would eventually welcome the non-Jewish nations. In fact, Paul insists, that's exactly what God has done in saving the Gentiles who trust in Christ.

*20 And Isaiah boldly says,*

*“I was found by those who did not seek me;*

*I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.”*

Now Paul quotes Isaiah's bold statement as he God's own words. Paul claims them out of the context of Isaiah 65:1 and applies them as an analogy of how God has rescued the Gentiles. He has been found by those who didn't look for Him. He has shown Himself to those who didn't ask.

This circles back to Paul's question at the end of the previous chapter: "What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness failed in reaching that law" (Romans 9:30–31).

God had declared believing Gentiles righteous based only on their faith in Christ. He did this even though they had never tried to become righteous through their own good deeds or by following the law. At the same time, God had rejected Israel's attempt to become righteous on their own without faith in Christ. (Romans 3:20).

*21 But concerning Israel he says,*

*“All day long I have held out my hands*

*to a disobedient and obstinate people.”*

Paul's quotation of Isaiah 65:2 here follows his reference to Isaiah 65:1 in the previous verse. God describes Himself as patiently holding out His hands to welcome His people Israel once they turn around and come back to Him. God describes Israel as a disobedient and contrary people.

Their disobedience at this moment in history was not like the disobedience described in Isaiah 65. That disobedience included directly breaking God's commands in the law. The disobedience Paul describes now, though, is a refusal to obey the gospel of Jesus (Romans 10:16).

Faith in Christ is more than an opportunity to be declared righteous by God. It is His command. Israel said no. This, in fact, is the root cause of all unbelief: a deliberate choice to disobey, reject, or ignore what God has told us (Romans 1:18–20; John 5:39–40; John 7:17).

### **John MacArthur:**

“You come into the New Testament and that blindness is mentioned again and again and again. And so this hard-hearted, stiff-necked, stubborn, callous, blindness, reaches its zenith in the rejection of Jesus Christ. As centuries and centuries and centuries of stiff-necked, stubborn, hard resistance to God culminates in an inability to discern the Messiah and a rejection of Him. And Jesus on the cross looks out over them and says, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." That's right. They didn't know what they were doing. They didn't know it was the Messiah, they didn't know. They couldn't know. They were blind, so ignorant, so unbelieving, so in love with their sin. And that's why Jesus said to them so often, "I would have gathered but you would not." Self-imposed ignorance.”