

## Romans 10:1-12

- 1. Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.**
- 2. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.**
- 3. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.**
- 4. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**
- 5. For Moses writes of the righteousness that is based on the Law, that the person who performs them will live by them.**
- 6. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will go up 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 which we are preaching,**
- 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.**
- 11. For the Scripture says, "Whoever 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, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;**

## Paul's Writing Style

Almost anyone who has read the Bible has read the Apostle Paul. Here are four things you might not know about Paul's letters:

1. The average private letter in the Greco-Roman world was 90 words long, and the average literary letter was 200 words long. Typically, a letter would fit on one papyrus sheet—or roughly the size of a piece of paper in a modern notebook. By comparison, Paul's letters average around 1,300 words. Paul's shortest letter (to Philemon) is 335 words long, and his longest letter (to the Romans) is 7,114 words long.
2. Although many of Paul's letters were written for communal audiences, a few of his letters were written only to individuals: one to Philemon, two to Timothy, one to Titus. Because these letters are written to provide counsel to leaders in the church, they are usually referred to as the Pastoral Epistles.
3. Paul didn't write his own letters. Since it was difficult to write on papyrus, authors usually dictated their letters to a scribe. Sometimes authors left oral instructions, a

rough draft, or notes for the scribe to follow. Other times, the author dictated directly. We don't know Paul's process, but it was typical for Paul to sign a letter to prove its authenticity: [1 Corinthians 16:21](#): "I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand." [Galatians 6:11](#): "See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!" [Colossians 4:18](#): "I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you." [2 Thessalonians 3:17](#): "I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write." [Philemon 19](#): "I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand."

4. Ancient letters opened with a **greeting**, which included the name of the sender and of the recipient. The **main body** of the letter followed, and finally the **farewell** and sometimes a **signature**. Many times the farewell included greetings from others besides the author and further good wishes. Paul closes several of his letters with a section containing **ethical instructions**.
5. Ancient letters opened with a greeting, which included the name of the sender and of the recipient. The main body of the letter followed, and finally the farewell and sometimes a signature. Many times the farewell included greetings from others besides the author and further good wishes. Paul closes several of his letters with a section containing ethical instructions.
6. The complexity of Paul's writing causes the casual reader to read without comprehending this complexity. This is called PLURAL IGNORANCE. An example of PLURAL IGNORANCE is when a question is asked and others reading and listening do not ask questions because of the seeming acceptance by all others who are not answering in fear of being seen as less knowledgeable. The same semi-fear is also expressed by a reader of complex material and the mind says I should know this already.

## Paul writing to Rome

Paul's a controversial figure throughout his life. It started when he was back in Antioch. It continues throughout his Aegean ministry, where he moves from Antioch to Corinth. The conflicts and controversies that Paul precipitates by virtue of his personality and his preaching really will follow him throughout his career.

By around the year 58 or 60, though, Paul seems to have felt that he had done as much as he could do in the Greek East and was preparing to move on. When Paul wrote the Roman letter, it's the longest of all of his letters and the last one that he wrote, he was preparing to go to Rome.

He was writing to Rome but he himself had never been there. We know who was carrying the letter. It's his house church patroness in Corinth, Phoebe who had gone ahead to Rome to prepare the way for his next great trip of faith. Paul is going to Rome to get the Christian communities at Rome to support him in a new endeavor to go to Spain. He was going to start a new gentile mission in Spain that had never heard the preaching of Jesus.

Before he does this planned trip he wants to fulfill the promise that he had made to Peter and James back in the Jerusalem conference. For these ten years that he's been in the Aegean he's

had his congregations collecting offerings to take back to Jerusalem. Paul would take all the offerings for the Jewish Church back to James and Peter. While there he was arrested by the Roman hierarchy and sent to Rome.

Paul saw this arrest as a paid journey to Rome in which he could minister there. He was confident that his Roman citizenship would free him after the Roman judicial system acquitted him of any charges. Rome was to be a stopping over place on his way to another missionary journey. Paul never made it to Spain.

<b>Acts</b>	<b>Epistles</b>
First visit to Jerusalem Acts 9:26-27 "after many days" of Damascus conversion preaches openly in Jerusalem with Barnabas meets apostles	First visit to Jerusalem Galatians 1:18–20 three years after Damascus conversion Galatians 1:17-18 sees only Cephas (Simon Peter) and James
Second visit to Jerusalem Acts 11:29-30 Acts 12:25 for famine relief	There is debate over whether Paul's visit in Galatians 2 refers to the visit for famine relief[159] or the Jerusalem Council. Acts 15 If it refers to the former, then this was the trip made "after an interval of fourteen years". Galatians 2:1
Third visit to Jerusalem Acts 15:1-19 with Barnabas "Council of Jerusalem" followed by confrontation with Barnabas in Antioch	Another visit to Jerusalem Galatians 5:22-24] 14 years later (after Damascus conversion?) with Barnabas and Titus possibly the "Council of Jerusalem" Paul agrees to "remember the poor" followed by confrontation with Peter and Barnabas in Antioch
Fourth visit to Jerusalem Acts 18:21-22 to "greet the church"	Apparently unmentioned.
Fifth visit to Jerusalem Acts 21:17 after an absence of several years Acts 24:17 to bring gifts for the poor and to present offerings Paul arrested	Another visit to Jerusalem. Romans 15:25, 2 Corinthians 8-9, I Corinthians 16:1-3 to deliver the collection for the poor

A note for clarity:

At the time of Paul there were two cities named Antioch. One was a seaport on the western coast of Syria and the other in the interior of what is now Turkey.

### Continuity

When this letter was written there were no chapters or verse notes. In Greek the only separation was between what we would call paragraphs. These paragraphs were changes in

thought or idea. But even the oldest manuscripts these paragraph sections were not always the same.

It is difficult to see the paragraph lines which were drawn on our modern Bibles. This is especially true between the chapters of 9, 10, and 11. They all are about the Jews.

## Commentary

### Contextual note

We are well acquainted with the writer of the Book of Romans. Yet it is often difficult to recognize to whom he is addressing at any one time. Every time he uses pronouns we have to stop and identify the group or groups to which Paul is writing.

Romans 10:1-4

***Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.***

### Verse 1

**1. Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.**

### Who is Paul writing to?

1. Brothers and Sisters. This group must be those in the church who have believed in Jesus Christ for their salvation by faith. It is those who are saved in the church. These brothers and sisters could have been in any of the previously pointed out groups of Saved and faithful, saved intellectual Greeks, saved woke Romans, saved High Jews, saved slave Jews. Paul included any of the groups that had forsaken their ways and were justified by the blood of Jesus Christ.

It is very important to know who Paul was writing to and about. The whole letter was for the believers in Jesus living in Rome. They went by many names:

- a. Christian – First in Antioch
  - b. Believers
  - c. Disciples
  - d. Messianic Jews
  - e. In the WAY.
  - f. Followers
2. But who is “them” and “their”? It is entirely possible and most likely true there were ones who attended the services which were not saved yet. Attending but not saved. Paul seems to be pointing out that the majority of these attending and not saved group were primarily Jews.
    - a. They may have thought of themselves as justified by their ethnic distinctiveness.

- b. They may have thought of themselves as justified by the law.
- c. They may have thought of themselves as justified by their zeal for God.
- d. They may have thought of themselves as justified by the knowledge of God.
- e. They may have thought of themselves as justified by their acceptance of the Messiah.
- f. They may have thought of themselves as without acknowledgment of the Messiahship of the Jews but accepted Jesus as a Great Rabbi.
- g. They may have thought of themselves as justified by their adopted method of devotion.

As I read this verse I am struck with one question. Why the seeming apologetic tone?

1. Paul had just pulled the theological rug from under the feet of these self-righteous Jews. Paul wanted them to know there were no discrimination notions. He was one of them. He could relate. He had a burden for his people.
2. To the Jewish hierarchy back in Jerusalem, Paul was an outcast. He had taken everything sacred and told them that all these so-called holy things did not mean anything outside of tradition.

Paul knew of the condemnation that awaited them if they did not repent. This portion of Romans was not to display hellfire and brimstone but to show them a better way. It was empowerment for his family to seek the truth.

#### ZEAL for God

**2. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.**

His people were commended for their Zeal for God. He was not making this attitude of passion a negative. Paul's comments were that this passion, this zeal was based on a false premise. This premise was the difference between works and faith. They were zealous for God but it was based upon the idea of "doing" and not "believing".

"Them" and "their" were trying to justify themselves with a thousand different actions. It was all about doing. Each was holding on to their own self-awareness. THIS IS WHO I AM, TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT. They wanted the title of redeemed but wanted to attain or receive that label through their own meritorious works. They had outward zeal. Everything they did was done with gusto and perfect confidence. They saw themselves as justified but they were not. They saw themselves as being superior to the Gentiles.

Josephus a first-century historian wrote:

*"They had a zeal for God. They knew the Law better than their own name. They knew all the rules and kept them all from the biggest to the smallest. When any teacher would rise up among the people, that teacher would start a new exercise, a new ceremony."*

*In their attempts to understand, to accumulate knowledge, to know the will of God they created so many laws that many contradicted others.*

*“When Caligula used Jews as slaves and were burnt alive in the Colosseum, they would rather die than sin against their law.*

*“When Pilate heard of the mandate for the emblems of Rome were to be placed throughout Jerusalem, he knew of the hatred of the Jews for any ungodly image to be put into a place of honor. When the mandate for a statue to be raised in the Temple he petitioned Caesar for a reprieve. Pilate knew the inevitable conflict that would happen.*

*“Masada was the last great stand against Rome. 960 men, women, and children chose to die by their own hand lest the Romans might take them.”*

### **Above all else the Jews were full of zeal.**

Their failure was the substitution of their own zealous religious devices and ceremonies for FAITH. Like trying to pass off vegetable burgers for beef.

#### Hypothetical

Today if a Jewish man were to come to me saying, “I am a very religious man”, “I observe the Sabbath better than you”, “I go to synagogue”, “But you are telling me if I don’t believe Jesus is my messiah that I am going to hell.”

It would be a difficult question. The answer would be, “It sounds like you do love God, that you have a zeal for God, but what are you doing about sin?” Jewish ceremony and custom by covenant established offerings. It included bringing animals for sacrifice. It included death of that offering so that your sins would be transferred to the beast. Are you still offering sacrifices? What are you doing about your sin?

The most likely answer, “But my good work outweighs my bad.”

But that is works. You are trying to substitute works for faith.

The cross offends people. The cross points to the only way. If a man could be saved in any other way the cross would not be necessary.

#### Verse 3

**For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.**

The text here points out this mindset was ongoing. It was in the perpetual present. It was not completed but continuing. It is about an ongoing state of being ignorant. Ignorant about what you already know. The Jews still living in their works based ignorance did not seem to need grace. Being ignorant about what you know. **People are not always blamable for what they do not see, but what they are blamed for what they do not look for.**

The seeking for one thing and substituting for another is what is being conveyed here. Substituting God’s righteousness for their own.

Is God righteous? If God can bestow upon his creation righteousness then He must be righteous. There seems to be stages of man's claim to God's righteousness:

1. Pardon. The forgiveness by God for your sins
2. Salvation. The act of redemption from the past.
3. Justification. The straightening of man's will to God's will.
4. Sanctification. The setting apart for a divine purpose.
5. Glorification. The final redemption in preparation for heaven.

#### Verse 4

In verse 4 Paul simply and succinctly said those who had accepted Jesus as savior have now come to the end of the law. Moses' law still existed, but the goal, the end, the fulfillment of the law's purpose was to glorify God, and not self.

The law ended with the cross in the believer's life. The cross did what the law could not do. Justification was not about compliance but about God's righteousness. To a believer in Christ, righteousness was a marker and a burned brand for all to see, but more importantly to be seen by God. To everyone who believes there is no longer a remedy for sin in the Law.

1. It must be noted that this verse does not eliminate the law. It is eternal as part of God's revealed will. The law is good. It is a factor in how society functions.
2. The law keeps us in Plurality ignorance, or simply accept it because everyone else does. We never question the law because no one questions it. It has become the societal norm. It is just to be obeyed. It is not to be questioned but just kept.
3. The law only justifies things done. The law is about deeds, actions, and conformity.
4. The law can justify only if completely, totally, and perfectly kept.
5. If the path of the law is not absolutely adhered to, if we take one step off the path, there is no way back. The slightest insignificant act of the law and you are done.
6. The law cannot justify the person if broken. There is never a place for forgiveness or grace.

#### Verses 5-7

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. For Moses writes of the righteousness that is based on the Law, that the person who performs them will live by them.</li><li>6. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will go up into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down),</li><li>7. or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."</li></ol> |
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#### Verse 5

Paul here in verse 5 was that righteousness which is based upon the Law will still work if you are perfect in all aspects of that law. But it is a righteousness of self and not of God

Back to Moses. If you try to keep the law for righteousness the righteousness of Moses that effort even filled with zeal would not be sufficient if you sinned once. You had to keep the law perfectly for your whole life.

God requires righteousness. Perfect, unrelenting, without blemish, without error. If you can do that then the Law is your path. But if you error in any of the 613 laws of the Mitzvah or any of the thousands of interpretations developed throughout time, then you will have righteousness. But one slip, one error in judgment, you have failed. It is all or nothing.

The people of Israel were always in deficit. Once the temple was destroyed there would be no more sacrifice. What to do with sin?

We are righteous by faith and faith alone. It is not works that saves. If God is to provide salvation to all then it must be by something more than works. Work requires action, attitudes, and performance. Each of these requirements needs judgment. If the law requires the killing of a ram for blood sacrifice, there is just not enough for everyone. Not everyone could do that. But all can have faith. A faith as small as a mustard seed was all that was needed. A faith that I can have and you can have.

Verse 6-7

Justification is a gift offered and received by faith. My works can never call God down from heaven or raise one from the grave. Jesus came down at God's pleasure and planning. Jesus was raised out of God's pleasure and planning. Jesus will come again at God's pleasure and planning.

When Jesus was teaching, healing, feeding, and doing miracles it was great! But they were all temporary. The healed would die, the fed would become hungry again, and the water turned to wine was gone. The people wanted more action. The Jews were disappointed at the obscurity of Jesus' birth. They misunderstood the meekness of Jesus. They were aghast at the requirement to confess their sins. The big thing that turned the Jews against Jesus was when He started talking about the temple. The temple was the center of their belief structure. The temple was the apex of their actions and works. And when Jesus threatened to tear it down. It was just too much. At the highest of holy days in Jerusalem, the day of Passover symbolizing the favor of God over the Egyptians, Jesus was found wanting.

Romans 10:8-10

- 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,**
- 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.**
- 11. For the Scripture says, "Whoever 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, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;**

The distinctive belief of the Jew is Monotheism. To love, worship, sacrifice, and hold dear only one God, was the gift to the Israelites. But they were stiff-necked people prone to idolatry prior to the Babylonian Exile. But when the earnest few returned there were no idols to be brought home. But in the years under the Babylonians, the Promised people had metamorphosed into keepers of a strict law. There was no sacrifice in captivity. The Law was the thing. Keep the Law and you will please God. From the worship of one God to a malignant, worthless keeping of the Law. There was no place for grace.

The zeal for the truth became the driving force of their spiritual lives. It was in captivity they developed the offices of scribe and rabbi. These new rabbi classes were not of the temple but were of the knowledge keepers. The people needed this new class to see the path they must tread to be right with God. There had to be this new class of people because no one could do it part-time. There were alms given to the Rabbis to support them full-time. They would become the Pharisees of Jesus' time.

This new class of teachers and writers were the only ones with the time and inclination to study, interpret, and add. But in the adding they needed to add to the additions. They would pile high new places of guilt, for conformance to these new rules and regulations. They added to the ethnic distinctiveness, new customs, new rituals, new feasts, new ceremonies, new dress codes, new lifestyle demands, and no place for grace. There was no place for forgiveness, no place for love, no place for faith. They became uncaring of the plight of the whole people. The search for the truth becomes more important than the truth itself.

Verse 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,**

*The first step to being right with God is to hear the truth.*

There is no need to seek high or low for the saving power of God. The announcement of reconciliation is now and near. The way of salvation is freely available and easy.

The law is magnified and made honorable by the death of Christ, and the doctrine of faith in his death and resurrection is fully proclaimed, and amply proved to be effectual to the purpose for which it was revealed.

It is available by the preaching given in the church for all to hear and accept. By the preaching of the Gospel, the doctrine of salvation now and its saving influence is at hand. It is both in our mouths and it is a simple truth. It is easy to be proclaimed and placed deep into ones life. If you would be right with God you must be saved on His terms not your own. It is not striving to your own laws but striving to establish your own methods of justification through the accepted laws. God's plan is justified by faith and not by personal works.

Verse 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;**

*The second step to being right with God is to believe.*

Believe in your heart that he who died for your offences has been raised for your justification and depend solely on him for that justification, and you will be saved.

Verse 10

**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.**

*Third step to being right with God is to confess*

Any person who hears, believes and now confesses will result in salvation. Any person who believes in Christ Jesus will receive such a full conviction of the truth, that his mouth will boldly confess his obligation to his Redeemer, and the blessed persuasion he has of the remission of all his sins through the blood of the cross.

One grand object of the apostle is to show the simplicity of the Gospel scheme of salvation. Along with this simplicity comes a great effect. It is simple, and very unlike the law, which was full of rites, ordinances, ceremonies, each of which required to be perfectly fulfilled. The issue again was even those who had the utmost zeal for God, and, as conscientiously as possible, observed all the precepts of the law, had not attained justification nor peace of conscience.

Jews and Gentiles who had believed according to the simple declarations of the Gospel, were freely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses: and they had the witness in themselves that they were passed from death to life.

Verse 11

**For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame."**

Whosoever hears, believes, or confesses shall never be put to condemnation because of the past. The repentant believer will never be disappointed by his hope, nor ashamed of his confidence. Because by that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, the subsistence of things hoped for, Hebrews 11:1. Romans 1:16; Romans 1:16.

Verse 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 on Him;**

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek — All are equally welcome to this salvation. Here the Jew has no exclusive privilege, and from this the Greek there is no rejection. One simple way of being saved is proposed to all. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; because he is the same Lord who has made all and governs all, and is rich in mercy to all that call upon him.