Submission to the Righteousness of God

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For **Christ** is the end of the law for righteousness **to everyone that believeth.**

* They being ignorant of God's righteousness
* They going about to establish their own righteousness
* They have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God

The Jews tried to keep the law of God on their own.

They sin more and more through ignorance, until their malice is turned against the right.

Today they try to remake the laws of God, sin a little bit, or terminate the law.

They sought God in an external way by rules and rites and missed Him.

They became zealous for the letter and the form instead of for God Himself.

Ps 48:1 **Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised** in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

2Sa 22:3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

Ps 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

46:7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

59:9 Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.

16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Ps 62:2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.

4 They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; **I shall not be moved.**

94:22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

144:2 My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

“My” is used like a flowing river, loyal obedience, submission

Ps 76:1 In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel.

His Holiness revealed in Christ (situation) and Joy go together

You won’t find Joy anywhere but in His Holiness, Righteousness of Christ

Ps 48:1 **Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised** in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

John 11:40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

2:11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Ro 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Romans 9:30 What shall we say then? That **the Gentiles**, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and **whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

Men have great zeal in religion, and yet are blinded and hardened in sin. Right zeal will be according to the truth as a responsibility; holy in character, kind in spirit, useful in disposition an out flowing of love. Jn.13:35; 15:8

Zeal without knowledge, knowledge without zeal, zeal without the knowledge of the truth.

Zeal with the knowledge of the truth without properly understanding our responsibility is a sin.

Mistaken zeal misunderstandings, poor application or indifference

Zeal with ignorance or knowledge with apathy.

* Not according to knowledge or the Spirit.
* Lacking spiritual insight Jn.4:24

Ignorance always has pride associated with it.

1Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

* Pride must always be guarded against in everything we do.

Ho 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

5:5 And **the pride of Israel doth testify to his face**: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

7:10 And **the pride of Israel testifieth to his face**: and they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this.

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant **of God's righteousness**, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

1. God's Method of saving the sinner from their sin.

Mat. 1:21,Rom.1:17; I Cor. 1:30, 5:21; Heb.12:10; II Pt. 1:3-4; I Jn, 1:9; 3:7

“**of God's righteousness**” of the personal holiness of God, God's plan begins at justifying whosoever will come unto Him declaring them righteous by faith in his Son.

1. Always through a Divine Revelation to the heart

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

1Cor. 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Job 33:26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.

Ps 132:9 Let thy priests be clothed with (His) righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

Isaiah 45:24 Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

61:3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

10:6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

Mt 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

1. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

Ho 14:2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

10:12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Isa 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

Nu 10:13 And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

Gal. 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Col 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

1Pe 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

2Pe 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

1. Always through Christ.

Joh 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Ac 15:11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Ro 1:8 ¶ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Ro 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Ro 5:1 ¶ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Ro 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. {atonement: or, reconciliation}

Ro 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

Ro 5:21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ro 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ro 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Ro 15:17 ¶ I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

Ro 15:19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Ro 16:27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. <<Written to the Romans from Corinthus, [and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.]>>

1Co 1:1 ¶ Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

1Co 4:15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

1Co 8:11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

1Co 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2Co 3:4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

2Co 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

2Co 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Ga 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Ga 4:7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Php 1:19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Php 3:9 ¶ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. {rudiments: or, elements} {make a prey: or, seduce you, or, lead you astray}

2Th 2:16 ¶ Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

2Ti 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

2Ti 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Tit 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. {working: or, doing}

1Pe 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1Pe 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

2Pe 1:1 ¶ Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2Pe 2:20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

1. Man’s ignorance to God’s method of salvation
2. Have not submitted themselves.
3. Have not believed
4. Have not confessed
5. Have not given their heart to God by faith in Jesus Christ.

Confident in their own righteousness, they have not yielded their hearts to a plan which requires them to come confessing that they have no merit, and to be saved by the merit of Christ. No obstacle to salvation by grace is so great as the self-righteousness of the sinner.

* They refused to submit to God's righteousness through faith

Ro 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Submit to God in humble faith

Jas 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For **Christ** is the end of the law for righteousness **to everyone that believeth.**

1. The Believer submitting to the Righteousness of God.
2. **Everyone that believeth that Jesus Christ the Lord is our Righteousness.**
3. **Everyone that confesses that Jesus Christ the Lord is our Righteousness.**

We must come near to God by faith in Jesus Christ in purity and sincerity of life.

We must set the positive virtues against those vices, and therefore whereas we obeyed the suggestions of the devil, we must submit our minds to God and resist the devil with a certain and assured hope of victory.

2Pe 1:5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isa 59:19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

Re 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Mt 3:3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Lu 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Joh 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

I Cor. 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

Visions of the Restored Church

Eze 47:1 Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

Zec 14:8 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

Truth will flow like a river - vs. 8

(1) Its Nature - “Living Waters”

Grace like water seeks the lowest level.

(2) Its Source - “Out from Jerusalem”

(3) Its Course - “former sea...hinder sea”

East to the West - Isa. 11:9

(4) Its Constancy - “In summer and in winter”

The heat does not effect the waters

Neither the cold of winter.

(5) Its Effects - vs. 10 “All the land shall be turned”

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

The knowledge it gives - Truth

The consolation it yields - Peace

The devotion it inspires - Love

The changes it makes - Righteousness

God's sovereignty:

Ro 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

It is God who carries out His purpose (9:11); who elects, who calls 9:11

Ro 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

It is God who shows mercy and has compassion (9:15-16)

Ro 9:18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

It is God who hardens (9:18)

Ro 9:23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

It is God who prepares the vessels of mercy unto glory (9:23)

Ro 9:24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

It is God who has called Jews and Gentiles in one body (9:24).

Romans chapter 10 emphasizes **mans responsibility**: It is man who must pray (10:1); it is man who must submit (10:3); it is man who must believe (10:4); it is man who must believe in his heart and confess with his mouth (10:9-10); it is man who must call upon the name of the Lord (10:12-13); it is man who must hear and obey the gospel (10:14-17). **God does the saving but man must do the believing** (see Acts 16:31; 1 Cor.1:21).

Romans 10:1 (compare with 9:1-4)

"**Desire**" means "longing" (the verb means "to be well pleased"; hence Paul was saying, "I'm longing for their salvation, and their salvation would bring great delight and pleasure to my heart!").

"**Prayer**" indicates a specific request in light of a need. It was a specific prayer for a specific need: that they might be saved. In the future, Israel as a nation will be saved (see Rom.11:26). In the present Paul was praying that individual Jews would believe on Christ and be saved. Paul himself was a Jew who trusted Christ for salvation (Acts chapter 9). We, like Paul, need to have the compassion of Christ for those who are lost (Matthew 9:36-38).

There is an extreme and erroneous teaching which falsely says that God’s sovereignty negates human responsibility. It goes something like this: "Why should I bother to pray? A person is either elect or he is not elect. God is either going to save him or not. If it has been determined by God that this person will be saved, then he will be saved whether I pray or not, so why should I pray?" Paul prayed!

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God, if correctly understood, is never a hindrance to prayer. The sovereignty of God ought to be a great incentive and encouragement to pray. The God we pray to is the God who controls all things and who works "all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph.1:11). Also prayer gets us in tune and in harmony with the mind and heart and will of our sovereign God, It is our responsibility to pray. so that He will work in and through us to accomplish His purpose (Phil. 2:13).

When a person is really saved he will have a concern and desire and burden for the salvation of others.

He will see others as lost men and women who desperately need Christ. He shares the desire of His God and Saviour .

1Timothy 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Romans 10:2

Paul is saying here: "I'm a witness! I know all about their zeal (their ardor, their eagerness) because I’m a Jew and I was just like this myself

* Gal. 1:14; Phil. 3:6 zeal without knowledge
* 3:9-10 zeal with knowledge

A zeal that is not according to knowledge is like a football player who gets the ball and runs with all his might but who runs the wrong way! "**Zeal of God**" means zeal **for** God (God is the object of my zeal). Some have zeal without knowledge; others have knowledge without zeal (a dead orthodoxy).

Zeal in religion is a burning desire to please God, to do His will, and to see His glory in the world in every possible way. A zealous man is a man of one thing. It is not enough to say that he is earnest, hearty, uncompromising, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent in spirit. He only sees one thing, he cares for one thing, he lives for one thing, he is swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to please God. whether he is rich or whether he is poor--whether he is thought wise, or whether he is thought foolish--whether he gets blame, or whether he gets praise--whether he gets honour, or whether he gets shame--for all this the zealous man cares nothing at all. He burns for one thing; and that one thing is to please God, and to see God’s glory. Like a lamp, we are made to burn; and in burning we submit to the Righteousness of God in Christ, doing the work for which God has appointed.

Romans 10:3

The word "ignorant" connects with the phrase "not according to knowledge" in verse 2. They were ignorant of God’s method of justification based on grace and they were trying their own method of justification based on works/law/flesh.

The emphasis is upon the words "THEIR OWN." The phrase "going about" means "seeking."

Here’s the choice:

Should I try to obtain righteousness by my own efforts or by God’s grace?

Should I establish my own righteousness or should I submit to His righteousness?

Is it ME BRINGING MYSELF TO GOD or is it CHRIST BRINGING ME TO GOD (1 Pet. 3:18)?

Do I find righteousness at Mt. Sinai (by trying to keep the law) or do I find righteousness at Mt. Calvary (by trusting the Saviour who was crucified for me)?

Unto the Mountain of His Holiness

***Illustration***: Those seeking to establish their own righteousness by keeping the law are like people trying to swim from New York to London by their own efforts. It’s impossible! Some will do better than others. Some might even swim many miles. But they will all drown and perish in the ocean. Not one will make it. "Those submitting" are like those who simply get into the ship and let the ship take them from New York to London. The ship does all the work. They don’t get themselves there, the ship gets them there. Christ is the One who gets us to God (1 Pet. 3:18; John 14:6).

Our own works, our own effort, no matter how sincere and diligent we are, will never get us to God (see Eph.2:8-9).

Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

When I come to Christ for salvation, this puts an end to my seeking to find and obtain righteousness by keeping the law on my own. All the righteousness revealed in the law is found in Jesus Christ. The law can show me of His Righteousness and my UNRIGHTEOUSNESS but it cannot give me righteousness: "for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

The righteousness of God is obtained at Mt. Calvary, not at Mt. Sinai. Using the ship illustration again: getting onto the ship represents faith in Christ ("everyone that believeth"). Everyone who has come aboard the ship can say: "I have no use for swimming anymore! I have found a much better way! I’m trusting this ship to get me to the place where I could never get by swimming! My swimming days have come to an end because I’m on the ship!" My days of seeking to obtain righteousness by the law without Christ and the Holy Ghost have been terminated!

Php 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

That faith which has Christ for its object, the righteousness which is of God He is the source of our righteousness by faith. The unbelieving Jews were under God’s wrath because they did not live up to His law and they would not submit to His grace.

The qualification is :  "to every one that believeth."

Only for the believer is Christ the fullfilment of the law for righteousness.

**[Unbelievers, as seen in verse 3, are still very busy pursuing the law for righteousness, even though this method will never work. For them the law has not terminated because they are still trusting in it for their righteousness.]**  It is, Paul says, for every one who believes that Christ is the end of the law, and his whole statement is simply to the effect that **every believer is done with the law** as a way of attaining to righteousness

The law demands perfect righteousness which of our self could never achieve or obtain. When I received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, His righteousness was imputed to my account. As we obey Him and submit to Him His righteousness is imparted to our heart. In Christ is all the righteousness that God requires of me.  I have found what I have needed, not by the law, but in Jesus Christ.  He is my righteousness!

Romans 10:5

"Describeth" means "writes about, describes." The quotation is from Leviticus 18:5 and the emphasis is upon the word "DOETH." Literally, "the man who has done those things shall live." If a person has kept the law then he will live! This is the "gospel" according to law, but really it is not good news at all when we realize that the opposite is also true: "If you have failed to keep the law you will die!" The penalty of a broken law is death. But if a man keeps the law he will live.

Using the swimming/ship illustration again: If you keep on swimming you will get to London! This is very true but it is also very impossible! If you keep the law (perfectly) you will live! This is also very true but very impossible. The total impossibility of a sinful person earning salvation by keeping the law is illustrated in Matthew 19:16-17; Luke 10:25-28 and Galatians 3:10-13.

The legal formula for salvation is this: DO AND LIVE!  (Keep all the commandments and keep them perfectly and keep them continually and you will live!)

The grace/cross formula for salvation is this: BELIEVE AND LIVE! Believe and rest upon what Christ has already done (His finished work) and you shall have eternal life (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:47 etc.).

Man can never say, "IT’S DONE! I have done it! I’ve made it! I have kept the law and have kept it perfectly! (I have reached London by swimming!)" Utterly impossible! But what man could not do by law, God can do and does do by grace .

Ro 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: {for sin: or, by a sacrifice for sin}

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

What could not be done by swimming is accomplished by getting on the ship!

Romans 10:6-7

The language Paul uses here is taken from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Who shall bring Christ down from heaven? Who shall bring Christ up from among the dead ones? "Man could do neither but God in grace meets man. It was the Father who sent His Son into the world. It was by the glory of the Father that He was raised from the dead. ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son’ and ‘God hath raised Him from the dead’"

You do not need to bring Christ down from heaven. The Father sent the Son! He has already come! It has already happened! "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). It is a glorious, accomplished fact (which must be believed).

Christ does not need to be raised from the dead. It has already been done. It is a fact that must be believed (v.9). There is nothing man needs to do. God, not man, brought about the incarnation and God, not man, brought about the resurrection. Christ Jesus has accomplished all that is necessary for man’s salvation. He has descended to earth, died on the cross and has risen from the dead. These great facts need to be preached and believed.

There is a wide difference between true Christianity and all the other religions of the world.

Joh 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

(Who can tell the relief to the swimmer-sinner who realizes that he does not need to swim to London but that he can simply get on the ship and let the ship do all the work!)

Romans 10:8-9

"Christ is given and preached. It is for man to name Him with his mouth and to believe with his heart).

"Nigh" means "near." The glorious proclamation about Christ is NEAR. It’s not far away. It is accessible to all and available for all! The good news of salvation is within reach of all. (Swimming/ship illustration: The ship is right there! Just get on it!) How near is it? It is in your mouth and in your heart! But you must do something with it! With your heart believe it! With your mouth confess it! (It is near and close to people in America today, so near that it is in their mouths--they use the Lord’s Name all the time, but in the wrong way, not to confess but to curse!)

Verses 8-9 can be illustrated by the robber on the cross (see Mark 15:32 and Luke 23:39-43). The crucified Christ was very near him! The word was in the robber's mouth but in the wrong way (he reviled Him at first). But this man repented and he believed in his heart that God would raise Him from the dead (Lk.23:42) and with his mouth he confessed Him as Lord and King (Lk.23:42). May we believe and confess as this man did!

Christ has done the work of salvation; man is responsible to believe and confess. (The ship is fully able to get you to London but you must get on the ship!) What is this word of faith which we preach (see v.8)? Verse 9 gives the answer ("that" means "namely"). CONFESS is the Greek word "homologeo (homo=same; logeo=from a verb which means to say, to speak") and thus it means "to say the same thing as another, to agree with another person." The believer is to confess Christ before men (Matt. 10:32) which means that he is to vocally and publicly agree with what God has said concerning His Son (1 John 5:9-12). God has said, "This is My beloved Son" (Matt. 17:5) and the believer who confesses Christ is in agreement with that statement (see 1 John 4:15). God the Son came into the world and took upon Himself human flesh (John 1:14) so that He could die for sinful men (1 Tim. 1:15), and the believer who confesses Christ is in agreement with this fact (read 1 John 4:2-3).

To confess that Jesus is the Christ means that a person agrees that Jesus is indeed the Messiah (John 1:41; 4:25-26,42). According to the Old Testament Scriptures, the Messiah was portrayed as 1) the God-man (Isa.7:14); 2) the mighty God (Isa.9:6); 3) the sinner’s Substitute and Saviour (Isaiah 53: 4); the eternal King (Micah5:2) and 5) THE LORD (JEHOVAH) OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jer.23:5-6). There is a cost involved in confessing that Jesus is the Messiah (John 9:22) and because of this cost many fail to confess Him (John 12:42). But those who do confess Him before men have Christ's own promise that He will confess them before the angels and before His heavenly Father (Matt.10:32; Luke 12:8).

The word that means the opposite of "confess" is the word "deny" (John 1:20; 1 John 2:22-23). To confess is to say "YES"; to deny is to say "NO." In Luke 22:57-60 Peter should have said, "**Yes**, I know Him (v.57)!" "**Yes**, I am one of them (v.58)!" "**Yes**, I was with Him (verses 59-60)!" But Peter denied Christ (although his denial was only temporary because later, on the day of Pentecost, he boldly confessed Christ and preached Christ before thousands--Acts chapter 2). Thus, when asked this question, "Do you own Jesus as your Saviour and Lord? Do you claim Him as your own?" the believer can respond: "**Yes** I do! I acknowledge that He is mine! I belong to the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me!" During the great Christian persecutions of the second and third centuries, those believers who would not deny the Lord even at the risk of great suffering were known as CONFESSORS. May we never be ashamed of the God who was unashamed to die for us (2 Tim. 1:8; Rom.1:16; 1 Pet. 4:16)!

Finally, the confession of our mouth must be matched with the conduct of our life. In Titus 1:16 Paul describes a group of people who confess that they know God! But do they really know the living God? Their lips say, "**Yes**, we know God!" But their lives says, "**No**, we don’t know God." Their walk is in conflict with their talk and this is an abomination to the Lord. These people name the name of Christ but they do not belong to God (2 Tim. 2:19). Though they claim to know God, they are liars and the truth is not in them (1 John 2:3-4). As believers in Christ, may we like Timothy confess a good confession before all men (1 Tim. 6:12). May the world see that the Christ we name with our lips is the God we serve with our lives! Just as a label on a can is there to confess its contents, so believers ought to confess their Lord and Saviour clearly, without being ashamed.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the **Lord** Jesus"—the emphasis is upon the word "Lord." The phrase actually should be translated, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord." It is the same construction as Philippians 2:11 ("that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord") where it is translated correctly in the KJV (compare also Romans 10:9 in the NASB, NIV, Amplified, etc.). Jesus is Lord! This is the truth that must be confessed out of the mouth of the believer. The word "Lord" is the Greek word "kurios" which is the word consistently used in the O.T. for JEHOVAH (in the Septuagint). We must confess that Jesus is JEHOVAH, which means that He is GOD (the only Saviour and the only God--see Isaiah 43:11; 44:6,8; 45:21-22 where JEHOVAH declares Himself to be the only God and the only Saviour. There is none else!). Jesus Christ is God. He is the sovereign Lord! He is Jehovah Jesus! Believers gladly confess this truth now (Rom.10:9). All men will someday confess this truth (Phil. 2:11). In the early centuries the Christian believers refused to bow down to Caesar and they refused to call him Lord. Instead they confessed that Jesus was Lord!

If Jesus Christ is really MY Lord, then He demands and deserves my glad submission and wholehearted obedience. I humbly bow before His authority and I gladly do those things that please Him. How can I do anything less? Jesus said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:45). On a tombstone in Germany are found these words:

**Thus Speaketh Christ Our Lord to us:**You call me Master, and obey me not;  
You call me Light, and see me not;  
You call me Way, and walk me not;  
You call me Wise, and follow me not;  
You call me Fair, and love me not;  
You call me Rich, and ask me not;  
You call me Eternal, and seek me not;  
You call me Gracious, and trust me not;  
You call me Noble, and serve me not;  
You call me Mighty, and honor me not;  
You call me Just, and fear me not;  
**IF I CONDEMN YOU, BLAME ME NOT!!!**

The Lordship of Christ

There is a great debate going on today concerning the Lordship of Christ. Often the question is asked, "Can a person receive Christ as Saviour and not as Lord?" On the one extreme are those who teach that 1) People can receive Christ as Saviour but reject His Lordship, and thus they can live any way they please;  2) Believers will go to heaven because they are saved, but many of them will live immoral and wicked lives during their time on earth so that you cannot even distinguish them from unbelievers; however, these carnal ones will not receive any rewards; 3) Believers can live in total rebellion against the authority of Christ over their lives and yet still be saved. On the other extreme are those who teach that every saved person will inevitably bow before the authority of Christ and will fully submit to His Lordship in every area of his life and be His faithful disciple. They would say that there is no such thing as a carnal Christian and that any significant evidence of carnality would indicate that the person is not saved at all. As is often the case, Biblical teaching on this subject is found somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. God’s truth must ever be kept in careful balance. **"The pendulum swings, ridiculous extreme, bypassing the truth which lieth between."** Consider the following:

The term "Lord" (kurios) is used of a master who is lord over his slave or slaves (Col. 3:22). The believer can say, "Jesus Christ is my Master and I am His love-slave!"

The term "Lord" is used of an emperor or king who is lord over his subjects. It was used of the Roman emperor: "Caesar is Lord!" Compare Acts 25:26; Matthew 27:63 (of Pilate) and Rev. 17:14. The believer can say, "Jesus Christ is my King and I am His subject!"

The term "Lord" is used of a husband who is lord over his wife (1 Peter 3:6). The overcoming believer is to be married to the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.7:4; Eph.5:22ff.).

The term is used of an employer who is lord over his employee (Luke 16:3,5). The believer can say, "The Lord Jesus is my Master and my Boss."

The term is used, of a father who is lord over his son (Matthew 21:30). The believer submits to God as his heavenly Father.

To the Jew the term "kurios" was a Greek word which was used to translate two important names of God: 1) Adonai (meaning Master and Lord and Sovereign One; and 2) Jehovah (the most sacred Name for God as far as the Jews were concerned; it referred to absolute deity). See Psalm 110:1—""The LORD (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Adonai)." In the Greek translation both of these Names are translated by KURIOS (Lord).

Hence when Thomas saw the risen Lord he said, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28) and this included such meanings as "my Lord, my Master, my Sovereign, my Owner, My Authority, etc."

The Saviour whom we preach is Jesus Christ the Lord! "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord" (2 Cor.4:5). He cannot be other than who He is! Christ cannot be divided (one part of Him is Saviour and the other part is Lord).

When a person receives Christ as Saviour he also receives Him as Lord because that is exactly who He is! Note carefully Colossians 2:6--"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus THE LORD." Who is this Saviour that I have believed on? See Luke 2:11--"a Saviour who is Christ the Lord!" We must never divorce the Lordship of Christ from His Saviourhood (or vice versa). A person must not say, "I receive Him as Saviour but I reject Him as Lord!" This is impossible because the Person you received (if you really did receive Him) is Lord of all (Acts 10:36). He is the Lord Jesus Christ and He is Lord of all.  He is Lord right now whether you believe it or not, whether you live like it or not, whether you acknowledge it or not or whether you surrender to Him or not. He is just what He is and He is all that God says He is! When a person receives the Lord he receives Him for all that He is.

See Acts 9:6 and Acts 22:10. The apostle Paul surrendered to the Lordship of Christ right from the start. May the heart cry of every true believer be, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (compare Isaiah 6:8--Here am I Lord!)

See Acts 16:31. The One we are to believe on is LORD! cf. John 9:38.

**IS JESUS CHRIST YOUR LORD?** Every true believer without any hesitation should say "YES" and "AMEN!" If a person can’t say that, we would have to question whether or not he is really saved (1 Cor.12:3).

**ARE YOU LIVING CONSISTENTLY WITH THE FACT OF HIS LORDSHIP?** This is a different question, and the honest believer would confess that often he is inconsistent. In shame but in honesty he might say, "Many times I have failed to obey my Lord and to submit to Him, and I have failed to allow Him to be the complete authority over my life. In and of myself I am very prone to rebel . But I know that He is Lord and my desire is to obey Him in all things."

Such inconsistencies are found frequently on the pages of the Bible. Examples: If Jesus is really Lord, then how could Peter say, "Not so, Lord" (Acts 10:14)? If Jesus is really Lord, then how could Peter contradict His Word and say, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee" (Matthew 16:22)? If Jesus is really Lord how could Peter say what he said in John 13:6,8? Every act of disobedience, every sin committed by a believer is an affront to the Lordship of Christ. But God does not disown us for these things. How gracious He is! This is why we have an Advocate (1 John 2:1-2)!

The more we grow in the Lord the more we will understand the many implications of the Lordship of Christ and how this truth affects every area of our lives. This happens gradually, not all at once (2 Cor.3:18).

"**And shalt believe in thine heart**"—. The believing actually precedes the confessing (as in v.10). Confession is the outward and audible expression of one's inward faith. "**With the heart**"--many have an intellectual, head-knowledge concerning Christ, but this is not enough (see Acts 8:37--"with all your heart"). When a person is saved God does a wonderful work in the heart (Acts 16:14). The gospel must be "obeyed from the heart" (Romans 6:17). The heart is involved in serving the Lord as well, "doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph.6:5-6).

"**Believe...that God hath raised Him from the dead**". Belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ is essential for salvation. Our faith is in a living Saviour (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor.15:14-19). The substitutionary death of Christ is not mentioned here but it is implied here (to be raised He must have died), and the importance of His death has been taught by Paul repeatedly in this book of Romans. "**Thou shalt be saved**" is God’s sure salvation promise! If man does the believing God will do the saving. Have you claimed this glorious salvation promise and made it your very own? Is your heart believing on Him? Is your mouth speaking of Him?

Romans 10:10

This verse explains verse 9 ("**for**") and gives the proper order or sequence of events: first belief and then confession. "**With the heart man believes unto righteousness**"--compare Romans 4:3,5 (a person believes God and it is counted unto him for righteousness). Believing is inward; confession is outward (just as the heart and the mouth—the heart is inward and not visible; the mouth is outward and visible).

**CONFESSION IS FAITH MADE AUDIBLE!** (just as good works are faith made visible--see James 2:14-26). How can I know whether you really are saved until you confess? "**Confession is made unto salvation**." This does not mean that confession is a condition of salvation (you must confess Christ in order to be saved) but it means that confession is a result or evidence of salvation (you confess Christ to show that you are saved). Confession is not something that a person does to be saved; confession is something that a saved person does! Faith must be expressed OUTWARDLY and PUBLICLY. Believing is the root; confession is the fruit. Everyone who truly believes will confess Christ (Matthew 10:32; Rom.10:9 and cf. Rev. 3:5). However not everyone who confesses Christ is a true believer (see Matthew 7:23; Titus1:16 and 2 Timothy 2:19). In God’s army there is no place for "secret believers." May we never be ashamed of our Commander-in-Chief (2 Timothy 2:3-4)!

Just as a label on a can proclaims its contents, so it is that by confession the believer proclaims who lives within (2 Cor.13:5 "....Jesus Christ is in you").

Romans 10:11

This verse explains verse 10 ("for"). If we truly believe on Christ then we will not be ashamed of Him, and therefore we will gladly confess Him!   "Whosoever believeth" literally means "everyone who believes" (compare Romans 1:16 where you have the same Greek construction:  "everyone that believeth").  If we really understand what our Saviour did for us, How can we not gladly speak of what He did for us?  "The LORD hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad!" (Psalm 126:3).

"Jesus, and shall it ever be, A mortal man ashamed of Thee?  
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise, Whose glories shine through endless days?  
Ashamed of Jesus! That dear Friend On whom my hopes of heaven depend!  
No, when I blush, be this my shame, That I no more revere His Name!  
Ashamed of Jesus! Yes, I may, When I’ve no guilt to wash away;  
No tear to wipe, no good to crave, No fears to quell, no soul to save.  
Till then, nor is my boasting vain, Till then I boast a Saviour slain;  
And O, may this my glory be, That Christ is not ashamed of me!"

Romans 10:12

The expression "for there is no difference" was also found in Romans 3:22-23. In that passage there is no difference because all have sinned and all are under condemnation (all men partake in the same condemnation). In Romans chapter 10 there is no difference because the same Lord will pour out His riches to all who call upon Him (all men are invited to partake in the same salvation). All have sinned but there is a Saviour who has been provided for all!  All men without distinction are condemned; all men without distinction are invited to be saved!

He is Lord over the Jews and He is Lord over the Greeks (Gentiles)! See Romans 3:29 and Acts 10:34-36 (the first time the gospel was preached to the Gentiles). God is RICH unto every person who calls upon Him. He pours out His wealth on those who call upon His Name. Only those who receive the gift of God (Romans 6:23; 5:17; Eph.2:8-9; etc.) know how valuable and precious this gift is. The goodness of God is only known by those who "taste and see" (Psalm 34:8 and 1 Pet. 2:3). Only believers can begin to know "the riches of His grace" (Eph.1:7) and the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8). How rich are you? (See the paper published by the Middletown Bible Church entitled, Romans 10:13

Here we find a wonderful salvation promise. Man must do the CALLING; God will do the SAVING. This verse is a quotation of Joel 2:32 which has reference to the Name of JEHOVAH. The New Testament quotes this Joel passage in Acts 2:21 and here in Romans 10:13, both having reference to the Name of JESUS (thus Jesus is equated with Jehovah, a solid argument for the deity of Christ,

The richest people in all the world are those who are saved! The unsaved billionaires of this world are rich for a second but poor for all eternity! Notice the important invitational words in this passage: Verse 11--"WHOSOEVER"; Verse 12-- "ALL"; Verse 13--"WHOSOEVER".

There are two clear Biblical examples of men who called upon the Name of the Lord: 1) **The publican or tax-collector** of Luke 18:10-14--"GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER." 2) **The malefactor on the cross** of Luke 23:39-43 "LORD, REMEMBER ME WHEN THOU COMEST INTO THY KINGDOM."  Knowing their desperate need they cried out in faith to the only One who could meet their need. The publican was "justified" and the malefactor was soon to be in "paradise." The Pharisee and the other malefactor both refused to call upon the Lord and refused to cry out for salvation, and they both remained in their sins.  They would face a Christ-less eternity in hell.

Romans 10:14-15

These are great missionary verses showing the importance of preaching the gospel to those who have not heard. Paul gives the ORDER in the **exact reverse** of the chronological order: Call on Him, Believe on Him, Hear the gospel, Preach the gospel, Be sent. The chronological order is the opposite: First God sends the preacher who preaches the gospel, the sinner hears, believes in his heart and calls upon the Name of the Lord. We who are saved can thank God for sending someone with the message of good news our way. We who are saved "owe" the gospel to others who have not heard (see Romans 1:15-16 where we learn that Paul was a debtor!).

Before a person calls on Christ, he must first believe on Christ in his heart. Before the malefactor cried out, "Lord, remember me!" he first believed in his heart. His words merely expressed the faith which he already had.

Before a person believes on Christ he must HEAR (compare John 9:35-38). A person cannot believe on Christ if he has never heard of Christ. Faith fixes itself upon the facts concerning WHO CHRIST IS and WHAT HE HAS DONE. The facts are found in the Word of God and those facts must be HEARD (compare Rom.10:17).

Before a person can hear, he must have the gospel preached unto him (or have the gospel delivered to him in some way such as a tract or Gospel of John, etc.). Without a preacher there is no gospel message and thus there can be no faith and no salvation. Believers have an awesome responsibility in this because WE ARE THE PREACHERS GOD USES (neither angels nor anyone else).

Before a person can preach (v.15), he must be SENT (BY GOD)! God is the One who does the sending! God, not man, sends forth His servants and His missionaries. We do the PRAYING (Matthew 9:38) and God will do the SENDING. How beautiful are the feet of those whom God has sent who are faithfully proclaiming the good news! How ugly are the feet of those who have gone forth preaching the false message having never been sent by God (see Jeremiah 14:14,15; 23:21,32 and also Gal. 1:8-9).

A missionary was preaching in the village market, and some of the people were laughing at him because he was not a very handsome man. He took it for a time, and then he said to the crowd, "It is true that I do not have beautiful hair, for I am almost bald. Nor do I have beautiful teeth, for they are really not mine; they were made by the dentist. I do not have a beautiful face, nor can I afford to wear beautiful clothes. But this I know: **I HAVE BEAUTIFUL FEET!** GOD TELLS ME SO!" He then quoted the verses found in Isaiah 52:7 and Romans 10:15.

It would be wonderful if everyone who heard the good news would believe the good news and be saved. The tragedy is that the great majority of those who hear the gospel reject it, and this brings us to verse 16.

Romans 10:16

How tragic! God has good news, and men don't want it! They reject God’s offer of peace (v.15). They reject God's invitation to be saved (v.13). They reject God's riches (v.12). They reject God's so-great salvation (v.9). They reject God's righteousness (v.3). It is the tragedy of man's foolish unbelief! They have not all obeyed the gospel. Indeed, the great majority of people have DISOBEYED the gospel. How does a person disobey the gospel? By refusing to believe it! God's commandment is clearly seen in 1 John 3:23 (the first part of the verse), and those who disobey this command are disobedient to the gospel. Isaiah the prophet anticipated this terrible unbelief in the first verse of that important 53rd chapter which speaks of the Messiah dying for our sins. "Who hath believed our report?" Not many! How sad that the vast majority of Jews reject the great message of Isaiah 53 even to this day (and the majority of Gentiles do as well!).  "And to whom is the arm (symbol of strength and power) of the LORD revealed (uncovered, discovered)?" The gospel is hidden to those who are lost (2 Cor. 4:3) and the message of the cross is "foolishness" to them (1 Cor.1:18) but unto us who are saved it is the POWER of God (1 Cor.1:18,24; Rom.1:16). Isaiah 53:1 found its fulfillment in John 12:37-38, and it is still being fulfilled today as men and women reject the gospel of God's grace and refuse to trust the Son of God, the only Saviour.

Romans 10:17

The word "hearing" (two times in v.17) is the same Greek word as the word "report" in v.16. For a person to be saved there must be a report and a message that is heard, and this report or message must be believed. How can I obtain saving faith? How can saving faith come my way? I must hear the message of God's Word and respond to it in a positive way. God's Word is POWERFUL (Heb.4:12). God's Word is EFFECTUAL (1 Thess.2:13). God's Word is ALIVE (John 6:63,68; Heb. 4:12). God's Word is PENETRATING (Heb.4:12; Eph.6:17). God's Word is able to make a person WISE UNTO SALVATION (2 Tim. 3:15). Man's faith must fix itself upon God's facts and God's facts are found in the Word of God. This does not mean that everyone who hears the gospel facts from the Bible will be saved (as we have seen in Rom.10:16). But it does mean that no one will be saved without hearing the gospel facts from the Bible.

Trying to pierce a sinner's heart without the Bible is like a soldier trying to pierce the enemy's heart without a sword. Believers do not need to defend the Bible nor do they need to try to prove that its true. They simply need to USE THE BIBLE, trusting a great God to honor His Word and do the work in the hearts of men and women. God's Word will go forth and accomplish its purpose (see Isaiah 55:11). God's preachers must be men of the Book! May we never substitute our own ideas, opinions or philosophies for the pure, unadulterated truth of God's Word! Compare Ephesians 1:13 (faith comes by hearing the gospel!).

Romans 10:18

Why don't people obey the gospel (v.16)? Why don't people come to faith in Christ (v.17)? Why have so many of the Jews failed to obey the gospel and come to Christ in faith? IS IT BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT HEARD? No, **they have heard!** They got the message! They heard the message! The problem was that they did not respond to the message in faith. God has no problem getting His message to men. Paul quotes from Psalm 19:4, a passage which sets forth the truth that the knowledge of God and the glory of God have been made known to all men in every part of the world by way of CREATION. We studied this in detail in Romans [**chapter 1**](http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/romans/romans1.htm). As a result, all men are WITHOUT EXCUSE because God has made Himself known. Often people will ask, "What about those people in far off lands who have never heard the gospel?" On the one hand it is certainly true that they cannot hear the gospel message (of Christ and the cross) without a preacher (Rom.10:14), and the church of Jesus Christ has been given the responsibility and the command to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15) and to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). We should also note that God is the One who SENDS THE PREACHERS (Rom.10:15 and Matthew 9:38) and in His wisdom God sends the right person to the right place at the right time with the right message. On the other hand, it is true that all men on the face of the earth have HEARD the message of God as revealed in CREATION. Because of sin men rejected and suppressed and cast out the knowledge of God which they had (Romans chapter 1, see especially verses 21-23,28).

Not only have all men heard God's revelation in nature, but there is another message which during this church age is being proclaimed far and wide, namely the gospel message:

"Preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15)  
"And they went forth and preached everywhere" (Mark 16:20)  
"The truth of the gospel which has come unto you, as it is in all the world" (Col. 1:5-6)  
"The gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature under heaven" (Col. 1:23)  
My gospel...made known to all nations for the obedience of faith (Rom.16:26)

Romans 10:19

Did Israel know about God's message going into all the earth, to the ends of the inhabited earth, even to the despised Gentiles? They should have known because their own Scriptures indicated this. First Paul quotes from MOSES (see Deut.32:21, and notice that the Bible clearly teaches that Moses was the human author of Deuteronomy, a fact that is denied by unbelievers today). In Deuteronomy 32:21 the people provoked God to jealousy by that which is not God, and so God would provoke them to jealousy by those who are "no people." They chose another god; He would choose another people! "Foolish" means without understanding. Here is a people with no understanding (see Titus 3:3), and yet they believe the gospel. The Jews, who had the Scriptures and who should have had understanding, reject Christ and His gospel. See Romans 11:11.

Romans 10:20-21

Paul's second quote is from Isaiah 65:1-2. "Made manifest" means "revealed." The Gentiles did not seek God (Rom.9:30), but God sought and found them (cf. Luke 19:10). God is the Seeker and He is now seeking "those that asked not of Him" and He has been found by those who "sought Him not." They simply heard the good news and believed! May we praise His matchless grace!

Note verse 21. What yearning, what love, what pleading! "Gainsaying" means "in opposition to God, rebellious, refusing to have anything to do with God." What words could better express God's tender invitation to sinful men as He extends His arms wide (compare Prov.1:24; Isa.65:2). "The arms outstretched all the day long are the symbol of that incessant pleading love which Israel through all its history has consistently despised" (*Expositor’s Greek New Testament*). See Matthew 23:37. God was so willing! Man was so rebellious! Those who are lost have only themselves to blame. To reject the remedy which God has so graciously provided and offered is to be without a cure.

GOD’S WILLINGNESS and MAN’S UNWILLINGNESS

Introduction

In no uncertain terms the Bible declares that God is a sovereign God who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" and who has "done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Eph. 1:11; Psalm 115:3). God’s purpose and plan will be accomplished without fail: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:10-11).

We must, however, be careful to distinguish between what God purposes to accomplish directly by His own actions and what God permits His creatures to do, both of which will ultimately bring glory to His holy Name. Examples of God purposing to accomplish something directly by Himself would be creating the world, sending the Genesis Flood, bringing judgment upon Babel and Sodom, causing the miracle of the virgin birth, etc. Man has nothing to do with these things. God’s direct will and activity brings them about. The sovereign God also accomplishes His overall purpose of bringing glory to Himself by allowing His creatures to perform in certain ways, even ways that are contrary to His revealed will. His creatures are allowed to act in ways that are contrary to the desire and wish of the Creator. This we call sin, and God is not the Author of sin. God, for example, did not want or wish Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit as indicated in His command to the contrary (Gen. 2:16-17), but God allowed Adam to partake of the fruit and this terrible sin and momentous fall was part of God’s overall plan whereby He would ultimately bring glory to Himself by revealing the riches of His grace and the depths of His mercy.

Extreme Calvinists seem to have difficulty in understanding how a sovereign God can "desire" something that will never come to pass. They believe that whatever God wills and desires must come to pass. If God desires to save certain men then these men must be saved. If God so loved the world, then the world must be saved (the "world" referring to the world of God’s elect). If Christ died for all men, then all men must be saved. This is how they would reason. Of course, they believe that Christ did not die for all men but that He died only for the elect. They believe that all who Christ died for will be saved (but they say He only died for some and not for all).

In 1 Timothy 2:4 we learn of God’s compassionate desire for the salvation of all men. One Calvinistic writer made the following comment in light of 1 Timothy 2:4—"What God ***desires*** that He will do" (thus he believes that the phrase "all men" in this verse refers only to the elect). They feel that if God wants men to repent, then they will repent (God will work in their hearts and bring about repentance). They reason that if God wants men to believe, then they will believe. The logic of this implies that God does not want the majority of men to believe, and hence, does not want these people to be saved, 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9 to the contrary.

Extreme Calvinists have difficulty understanding how God could love someone and not save that person. For example, the Scripture says that Christ loved the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21), a man who "went away" and as far as we can tell never followed Christ. A.W. Pink did not believe that Christ could love a man who would never be saved. He said, "We fully believe that he (the rich young ruler) was one of God’s elect, and was saved sometime after his interview with the Lord" [*The Sovereignty of God*, p. 125, footnote]. This is Pink’s theory, but the Scripture provides no support for this view. It is a view based on Pink’s theology, not based on Pink’s Bible.

Every honest believer knows that what God desires is not always fulfilled. In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 we learn what God desires for every believer. His revealed will ("this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you") is that believers rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing and give thanks in everything; yet how many times do we fail to fulfill God’s will in these areas?

If God is willing, then the extreme Calvinist believes that man must be willing also, because God will make him so. If man is unwilling, then it must be because God was unwilling to make the person willing. The Scripture, however, teaches that even though God is willing and desirous that men should turn from sin and go in His direction, ***He often allows men to have their own way and go their own way according to the stubbornness of their own sin-hardened hearts***. God was willing, but they were not. God would, but they would not.

Thus our purpose in this study is to examine certain key words (especially in the Old Testament) which demonstrate that God’s compassion and desire and invitation does indeed reach out to all men, even to those who refuse to repent and believe and come to Him. We shall see the wonderful willingness of God in sharp contrast to the stubborn unwillingness of man. We will gain a better appreciation for our Lord’s words in Matthew 23:37 which cannot be fully understood apart from certain Old Testament passages which we shall study. May the Lord open our eyes to these truths.

The Hebrew Verb **‛abah** [Strong’s #14]

            This verb means “**to be willing**, to consent, to desire, to wish.” It is an interesting verb because it is always used with a negative particle except for two places (Isa. 1:19 and Job 39:9). With the negative it means “to be unwilling, to refuse.” For example, in Exodus 10:27 it is used of Pharaoh’s stubborn refusal to let the children of Israel go (“he would not,” he refused!). This word is also illustrated in 2 Samuel 23:16 where David refused to drink the water (“he would not”) even though he was terribly thirsty. This word is also used in Isaiah 42:24 (Israel’s refusal to walk in God’s ways) and in Ezekiel 3:7 (used twice) and 20:8 (Israel’s refusal to listen to God). The following passages which contain this verb especially relate to our study:

1) Psalm 81:11—“But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel **would have none** of me.” God wanted them to open their mouth wide (v.10). God wanted to bless them and fill them (v.10). God earnestly desired that they should hearken unto Him and walk in His ways. How could God’s willingness and desire be stated any clearer than in verse 13? “Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!” (Psalm 81:13). God was willing! God would have done so much for them (verses 14-16), but they would not. They refused! God had a heart for them; they had no heart for God.

2) Proverbs 1:25,30—“But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and **would have none** of my reproof . . . They **would have none** of my counsel; they despised all my reproof.” Is God willing that men should love simplicity and hate knowledge (v.22)? Wisdom cries out (v.20) and invites men (v.23) and promises great things to those who come to her (v.23). God was willing; man was unwilling (v.25,30).

3) Isaiah 28:12—“This is the rest by which ye may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing; yet they **would not** hear.” God graciously offered rest (compare Matthew 11:28) and refreshment, but they refused (compare Jer. 6:16). God was willing to give them rest but they were unwilling to receive it.

4) Isaiah 30:15—“For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and **ye would not**.” God graciously offered rest and deliverance, but the rebellious ones (v.1,9) refused. They said NO (v.16) to God’s kind offer.

5) Isaiah 1:19—“If ye be **willing** and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. This is one of those rare places where the verb is used without the negative. God’s desire was that they would be clean (v.16). God wanted them to learn to do well (v.17). God was willing to reason with them and to offer them the forgiveness of sins (v.18). God was willing. Would they be willing (v.19) or would they refuse (v.20)?

The Hebrew Verb **ma’en** [Strong’s #3985]

            This verb means the opposite of the last verb. It means “to refuse, to be unwilling, to refuse with a resolved mind.” Thus it means the very same thing as **‛abah** [Strong’s #14] with the negative. Pharaoh is a good illustration of this verb also. In Exodus 7:14 he refused to let the people go. Let us now examine some of the passages where this verb is used:

1) Jeremiah 5:3—“O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have **refused** to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than a rock; they have **refused** to return.” God wanted Israel to return to Himself (Jer. 4:1) but they refused! God was willing, they were not.

2) Jeremiah 11:10—“They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who **refused** to hear my words.” God earnestly protested to their fathers (v.7) because He wanted them to obey His voice (v.7), but they refused (v.8). God wanted them to obey, but He allowed them to walk in the imagination of their evil heart (v.8).

3) 1 Samuel 8:19—“Nevertheless, the people **refused** to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us.” God was willing to be their King and the Lord was grieved that they had rejected Him (v.7).

4) Nehemiah 9:16-17—“But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, and **refused** to obey.” God was ready, willing and eager to pardon and to be merciful and to hold back His anger (verse 17), but the people who lived in the days of Moses refused to obey.

5) Proverbs 1:24—“Because I have called, and ye **refused**; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded.” God (personified by wisdom-v.20) called but man refused! God was willing to pour out His spirit unto them and make known His words to them, but they were unwilling (verses 23-24). God stretched out His hand (v.24) but they could care less.

6) Isaiah 1:20—“But if ye **refuse** and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword.” God was willing and able to PARDON and WASH His people from their sins (verses 16,18). He was willing to pour out His blessing and give them the good of the land (v.19). God was willing, but were they?

7) Zechariah 7:11—“But they **refused** to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.” God’s will and desire was clearly revealed in His commands. He wanted them to turn from their evil ways (verses 9-10), but they refused to hearken. Their hearts were as hard as stone (v.12).

8) Jeremiah 13:10—“This evil people, who **refuse** to hear my words, who walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be like this belt, which is good for nothing.” God wanted the whole house of Israel and Judah to be unto Him for a people and.for a name and for a praise and for a glory (v.11). This was His desire, but THEY WOULD NOT HEAR (v.11). THEY REFUSED TO HEAR (v.10).

The Hebrew Verb **bachar** [Strong’s #977]

            This is the common Hebrew verb which means “**to choose**, to select, to elect.” This word has been made famous by Joshua in Joshua 24:15—“**Choose** you this day whom ye will serve.” Let us now consider some of the other passages that use this word:

1) Deuteronomy 30:19—“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, **choose** life, that both thou and thy seed may live.” A choice must be made between life and death, good and evil (v.15). God wanted them to live and be blessed by loving Him and keeping His commandments (v.16). God, through Moses, warns them about making the wrong choice (verses 17-18). Finally Moses said, CHOOSE LIFE (v.19). Doubtless Moses was reflecting the desire of the living God that He might be their choice. God was willing for them to have life, but they must choose (compare John 5:40—God was willing for them to have life, but they must come).

2) Proverbs 1:29—“Because they hated knowledge, and did not **choose** the fear of the Lord.” God was willing (verses 20-23) but man was not (verses 24-25; 29-30).

3) Isaiah 65:12—“When I called, ye did not answer; when I spoke, ye did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes, and did **choose** that in which I delighted not.” God was not delighted by their choice. It’s obvious that their choice did not please the Lord. It was not God’s wish or desire that they should choose in such a way. Notice God’s gracious appeal to these people. He “called” (v.12). He spread out His hands (v.2). He was willing, but they were not.

4) Isaiah 66:3-4—“Yea, they have **chosen** their own ways and their soul delighteth in their abominations . . . when I called, none did answer; when I spoke, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.” God allowed these people to go their own sinful ways. The people made a choice and the people were delighted in the choice that they made! God, however, was not delighted in their choice. He was grieved. God wanted the people to choose His ways not their own ways. Their choice was contrary to God’s desire.

Hebrew Verbs Meaning “To Stretch Out the Hands”

God’s willingness is seen by the way He earnestly and urgently calls to His people and pleads with them and entreats them. How can the Bible writers describe this divine entreaty in terms that we can understand? One of the ways is by picturing God as stretching forth His hands as He invites and urges His people to come unto Himself. In Proverbs 1:24 the verb **natah** [Strong’s #5186] means “to stretch or extend the hand.” In Isaiah 65:2 the verb **paras** [Strong’s #6566] is used with a similar meaning (“to spread out or extend the hands”). Consider the following passages:

1) Proverbs 1:24—“’Because I have called, and ye refused; I have **stretched out my hand**, and no man regarded.” Here we have wisdom making her wonderful appeal and invitation which man foolishly rejects.

2) Isaiah 65:2—“I have **spread out my hands** all the day unto a rebellious people, that walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.” Notice that God was not pleased in the way that they were walking. God stretched out His hands and wanted to draw them unto Himself, but they wanted to go their own way. And God allowed it to be so! God let them have what they wanted even though it was not what He wanted. This verse is quoted by the Apostle Paul in Romans 10:21 (see below).

3) Romans 10:21—“But to Israel he saith, All day long I have **stretched forth my hands** unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” The word “gainsaying” means “rebellious, contrary, refusing to have anything to do with God.” What words could better express God’s tender invitation to sinful men as He extends wide His arms. As Hodge remarks, “God has extended wide His arms, and urged men frequently and long to return to His love.” What yearning, what love, what pleading, what patience! As Barnes has said, “This denotes an attitude of entreaty; a willingness and earnest desire to receive them to favour, to invite and entreat.” “The arms outstretched all the day long are the symbol of that incessant pleading love which Israel through all its history has consistently despised” (*Expositor’s Greek New Testament*). God was so willing; man was so rebellious!

The New Testament Verb **thelo** [Strong’s #2309]

            This common verb means “to wish, desire, be willing, take delight, have pleasure.” In the Septuagint it is used frequently and often it corresponds to some of the Hebrew verbs we have already studied. For example, it occurs in Isaiah 1:19-20; Isaiah 28:12; Jeremiah 5:3; 8:5; Ezekiel 3:7; 18:23,32. Let us now consider a few New Testament examples of the usage of this word:

1) Matthew 23:37—“Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them who are sent unto thee, how often **would I** have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chicken under her wings, and **ye would not**.” The verb is used twice in this verse. Jesus was saying: “I would . . . ye would not.” “I was willing . . . you were not willing!” God was willing to gather these murderers unto Himself but they were not willing! God wanted to gather them, but they did not want to be gathered! God’s willingness and man’s stubborn refusal are so clearly expressed in this passage! We will say more about this verse later.

2) Luke 13:34—parallel to Matthew 23:37.

3) John 5:40—“And **ye will not** come to Me, that ye might have life.” A literal translation: “And ye do not desire to come to Me, that ye might have life.” Again we see man’s wicked refusal to come to the living God. Why do people not have eternal life? They refuse to come to the One who is LIFE and who desires to give LIFE (John 10:27-28). Is God willing that men should come to Him and have life? Consider the next verse:

4) 1 Timothy 2:4—“Who **will have** (desires) all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” This is God’s desire for all men. God is willing (1 Tim. 2:4) but man is unwilling (John 5:40). God does not desire that any should perish.

**Note**:  This verb, **thelo** [Strong’s #2309], in its noun form, is often used in relationship to God’s will for the believer (1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18; Eph. 5:17-18; etc.). God’s will and desire for every believer is that we should be holy, constantly filled with the Spirit and constantly filled with thanksgiving, etc. Yet often we fall short of these things and our God is grieved. God is willing to fill us with Himself, but often we hinder and quench His working in our lives even though He is willing to do so much in and through us (compare Psalm 81:10). So even when it comes to practical sanctification, God is willing but His believers are unwilling at times.

The Hebrew Verb **chaphets** [Strong’s #2654]

            This verb means “to delight in, take pleasure in.” Here are some of the places it is used:

1) Isaiah 65:12—“When I called, ye did not answer, when I spoke, ye did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that in which I **delighted not**.” God was not pleased by their choice. He wanted them to choose differently.

2) Isaiah 66:4—“When I called, none did answer; when I spoke, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which **I delighted not**.” God is not delighted when men choose their own ways (v.3), but He allows them to make such a tragic choice. God desires something else, but often He gives men up to their own desires.

3) Ezekiel 18:23—“Have I any **pleasure** at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD, and not that he should return from his ways, and live?” God is not delighted when the wicked continue in their wicked ways. God is delighted and pleased when the wicked turn from their wicked ways. God’s will and wish for every wicked person is this: Turn from your evil ways and live!

4) Ezekiel 18:32—“For I have no **pleasure** in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD; wherefore, turn yourselves, and live.” In this verse God answers the question raised in verse 23. God is not willing that sinners should continue in their sin. God is willing that they should turn in the direction of the living God. Question for the extreme Calvinists: *If God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, then why do the wicked die?*

5) Ezekiel 33:11—“Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no **pleasure** in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Nothing could be more clear. God desires that the wicked should turn from their evil ways. God pleads with these sinners and urges them to repent and be converted. “Why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Certainly not because God wanted you to die!

The Hebrew Verb **shakam** [Strong’s #7925]

            This interesting verb means “to rise up early in the morning.” Figuratively it came to mean “speaking early and often, to speak earnestly, eagerly and urgently, to urge earnestly.” Let the following verses speak for themselves:

1) 2 Chronicles 36:15-16—“And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, **rising up early** and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words.”

2) Jeremiah 7:13—“I spoke unto you, **rising up early** and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not.”

3) Jeremiah 7:25-26—Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants, the prophets, daily **rising up early** and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck.”

4) Jeremiah 11:7-8—“For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, **rising early** and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart.”

5) Jeremiah 25:3-4—“I have spoken unto you, **rising early** and speaking, but ye have not hearkened. And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants, the prophets, **rising early** and sending them, but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear” (see also verse 5).

6) Jeremiah 26:4-5—“If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants, the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both **rising up early**, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened.”

7) Jeremiah 29:19—“Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants, the prophets, **rising up early** and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.”

8) Jeremiah 32:33—“And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face; though I have taught them, **rising up early** and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.”

9) Jeremiah 35:14-15—“I have spoken to you, **rising early** and speaking, but ye harkened not unto me. I have sent also unto you all my servants, the prophets, **rising up early** and sending them, saying, Return now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings . . . but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.”

10) Jeremiah 44:4-5—“I sent unto you all my servants, the prophets, **rising early** and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness.”

[See also Neh. 9:29-30 and Zech. 1:4 where this word is not used but the same idea is there.]

Conclusion

            Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet, but his tears were but a mere reflection of a grieved and weeping God. When this God became a man these tears could again be seen as He wept over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37; compare Luke 19:41) and said, “HOW OFTEN would I have gathered you.” These words can only be understood in light of the verses cited above: “How often have I sent my prophets unto you, rising up early! How often have I stretched forth my hands unto you! How often have I pleaded and entreated and invited! How often have I called unto you and spoken unto you! How often have I offered you REST and REFRESHMENT! How often would I have filled your mouth if you had but opened it! How often would I have reasoned together with you about your sins! Oh Israel, WHY WILL YOU DIE? Why do you choose the way that I do not delight in? Why do you go your own way? HOW OFTEN WAS I WILLING TO GATHER YOU UNTO MYSELF BUT YE WERE NOT WILLING!!!

            I trust that this study has taught you something about the terrible depravity of man and the compassionate and tender heart of the Saviour who desires all men to be saved and who has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. God is willing, but tragically man is often unwilling.

"I WOULD--BUT YE WOULD NOT."

(Matthew 23:37; Luke 19:41).

Romans 10:9,10 is used commonly to prove if we once confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead, we will go to Heaven. This is the point at which we are given our ticket to Heaven. How we behave after that is important but not critical.

ROMANS 10:9,10

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (Romans 10:9,10)

The above passage, isolated from its context, gives us a simple formula for salvation. We confess that Jesus is Lord; we believe God raised Him from the dead; and we are saved. We then defined "saved" as "go to Heaven when we die." We could conclude that no matter how we behave after taking this step of confession and belief, we will go to Heaven when we die.

The problem here, is, these two verses were not meant to be a formula for salvation Rather, they are part of an epistle titled "The Book of Romans." By all the laws of biblical interpretation, we must interpret a passage in terms of the entire context. We must attempt to get the sense of the author.

Given Paul’s comments in Chapter Six through Eight, one could never be satisfied with interpreting Romans 10:9,10 to mean all there is to being saved is to confess that Jesus is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead. One has to consider the preceding passages if he is to get the sense of these two verses.

Before we examine the statements in the verses that precede Romans 10:9,10, let us explain what we mean by saying prior chapters in Romans prevent the current use of the two verses as a ticket to Heaven.

Consider the following.

For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, (Romans 8:13)

If we, as a Christian, obey the lusts of our sinful nature, we will die spiritually. We will lose the resurrection life mentioned in Romans 8:11. Now, here is the question. Let us say a person confesses with his mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believes in his heart that God raised Him from the dead. Then the individual continues to follow the compulsions of his sinful nature. Will he or won’t he die spiritually?

Because the current teaching insists he will not die spiritually in that Romans 10:9,10 says he will be saved, the Christian churches of today are in a deplorable moral condition.

Now stop and think. If Romans 10:9,10 is Divinely inspired, why wouldn’t Romans 8:13, two chapters earlier, also be Divinely inspired?

Are they contradictory? Of course not. Romans 8:13 is absolutely true; so is Romans 10:9,10. Does one supplant the other? Not at all!

We might think of Romans 10:9,10 as being the entrance to the path of salvation. The only entrance into the Divine plan of redemption is the confession of Jesus as Lord and the belief that God has raised Him from the dead. Because God raised Jesus from the dead we are confident that Jesus is able to save us.

Now we have gone through the correct door, the door that leads to salvation. It is what comes after this that presents the problem.

By using Romans 10:9,10 as a ticket to Heaven, we are saying the entrance to salvation is the entire program of redemption. It is not. It is merely the entrance. Most of the New Testament is written about what we are to do after we go through the entrance.

One would think this would be obvious. It is not obvious at all! Most Christian people, as far as I can tell, are not aware what they do after their initial confession has genuine significance. May I say that as important as the initial step is, if the subsequent steps are not taken, the initial step will avail us nothing. We have died in the wilderness, so to speak.

Today we are placing far too much emphasis on the initial step of salvation. In the Pentecostal movement we say that the next step after salvation is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. In actuality, the baptism with the Holy Spirit is part of initial salvation. We should believe, repent, be baptized in water, receive the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, be healed if we need healing, and go on our way rejoicing that we have taken the beginning step of salvation.

But the salvation we have just entered must be worked out patiently and in the fear of the Lord.

Have we been saved at this point? Yes, and no. Actually, we are not finally saved until we endure to the end. "He who endures to the end shall be saved." Isn’t this what Jesus, who is God in the flesh, informed us? Yet some today are challenging the statement made by the Lord Jesus, saying we do not need to endure to the end because we are saved by a sovereign grace. Thus they make God a liar! Sorry to be so blunt, but it is time we return to the Bible and believe what it states. Do you agree?

For myself, I would tremble to disagree with what Jesus said. Wouldn’t you?

The problem lies in our definition of salvation, as I have written so many times in the past. Salvation has little to do with going to Heaven. Salvation is not a change in where we are but in what we are. Salvation moves us from Satan to God, not from earth to Heaven.

All of us are on a continuum of salvation. Probably most of us are not entirely in Satan or entirely in God. Each day, if we are following the Holy Spirit, we are moving from Satan to God.

Romans 10:9,10 is the entrance to the continuum.

Can I be saved yesterday or tomorrow? Not really. Salvation is today. Right now you either are moving forward in the program of salvation, or the powers of darkness are moving you back toward Satan. The prevailing spiritual pressures do not permit us to stand still.

Remember, Ezekiel told us if a righteous person starts behaving wickedly, his righteousness will not be remembered. Conversely, if a wicked person starts behaving righteously, his wickedness will not be remembered.

Do you know what the above means? It means salvation operates only in the present. It is what you are doing now that is of interest to both God and Satan.

I know the unscriptural philosophy of Dispensationalism maintains that such Old Testament do not apply to Christians. But they do! The words of the Prophets are still true. They still are the Words of God. They will remain true when the present earth and sky flee from the face of Jesus Christ. That’s what Jesus said, and He is the Word of God, isn’t He?

So there is no such thing as a ticket to Heaven. It doesn’t exist. What there is, is a program of redemption that saves us from the bondages of Satan and brings us into the image of Christ and into untroubled rest in the Center of the Person of God and His will. How utterly marvelous!

When we tell people that Romans 10:9,10 is all there is in the plan of salvation we are shortchanging them to an incredible extent. We are dooming them to an eternal babyhood.

Now let’s see if we can grasp the mind of the Apostle as he wrote Romans 10:9,10.

Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. (Romans 10:1)

We see right away that Paul is concerned about the salvation of the Jews. In both Romans and Galatians we notice that Paul is attempting to convince Jewish people that they no longer are under the Law of Moses. It is this emphasis, this argument, that reveals the meaning of Romans 10:9,10.

For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. (Romans 10:2)

Paul is seeking to bring knowledge to zealous people, people who were seeking to honor Moses and the law. They hoped to obtain righteousness by observing the Law of Moses and the accompanying traditions. Remember, this is what was in Paul’s mind when he wrote Romans 10:9,10. To remove the two verses from this context and apply them to Gentiles who are seeking a ticket to eternal residence in Heaven is quite inappropriate.

Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Romans 10:3)

We would be in a much better position to understand the Apostle Paul if we had been taught from childhood that God wants us to keep all the statutes found in the Law of Moses. Righteousness is obtained by obeying the Law. This conviction was deeply ingrained in Paul’s readers in Rome. Try to put yourself in their frame of mind.

The issue is, can we obtain righteousness if we let go of Moses? Do we dare just believe God will esteem us as righteous if we are not observing the Law? Is there actually another source of righteousness of which we have been ignorant, while we desperately endeavor to keep all aspect of the Law?

Christ is the end of the law so there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (Romans 10:4)

I don’t think the idea here is only that faith in Christ takes the place of the Law, although that is true. Also the Book of Hebrews tells us that the old covenant is passing away.

I believe it is true rather that Christ is the fulfillment of the Law. All of the Law is fulfilled in Christ so when we follow the Spirit of God we receive the righteousness that would have been ours had we kept the Law perfectly.

So it is not a case that the Law is imperfect; rather it is true that we cannot receive the righteousness of the Law except through Christ. And, I might add, not merely by believing in Christ or identifying with Christ but by receiving Christ into ourselves so He becomes our Life and directs our behavior.

Paul told us the Law is as a slave who bring us to the school where Christ teaches us. So the Law is good, but we can keep it only through Jesus Christ.

Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them." (Romans 10:5)

The Law provides commandments which a person could observe and thus obtain righteousness. But the Law did not fulfill God’s desires for a righteous people, because our sinful nature causes us to disobey the Law—even when we desire to keep all of its parts.

However, I think it is important to note that the eleventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews, which is a record of people who lived under prior covenants, is our best definition of "the righteous shall live by faith." No one has ever pleased God except by faith. There were times, as described in the Old Testament, when God did not accept the offerings of the Israelites because they were not presented in faith, only as a dead ritual.

But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’" (that is, to bring Christ down)" or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: (Romans 10:6-8)

The above three verses really get at the root of faith, don’t they. We don’t have to ascend into Heaven to obtain righteousness. We don’t have to descend into the deep to obtain righteousness. The righteousness we want is right there in our mouth and in our heart, as we speak and believe the word of faith.

The righteousness that Paul longed for; the righteousness the Jews longed for; was right there in their mouth and in their heart.

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (Romans 10:9,10)

Now we can see what the passage means. It is not a formula that Gentiles can accept so we can go to Heaven; it is Paul’s instruction addressed to Jews who were attempting to gain righteousness through the works of the Law.

Paul is not emphasizing that all you have to do to be saved is to make the correct confession and believe the correct belief. Rather, Paul is moving the Jews away from seeking righteousness by the Law toward placing their faith in Jesus Christ.

In fact, the two verses are not really suited to Gentiles. The Jew would understand confessing Christ as Lord and believing in His resurrection was not an excuse to behave unrighteously. We Gentiles do not understand this. We think Romans 10:9,10 is just that—an excuse to live unrighteously and yet be accepted into Heaven when we die. We do not love the truth; therefore God Himself has deceived us.

Why has God deceived us? Because we should know better than to believe we have found a way to please God without repenting and living righteously. We are attempting to make God a partner in our evil ways.

The remainder of the Book of Romans proves beyond doubt that Romans 10:9,10 is not an alternative to righteous behavior.

As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, (Romans 10:11,12)

God blesses everyone who calls on Him. Those who trust in Jesus Christ will never be put to shame. This statement might be difficult for the Jews in Rome to swallow. Paul is telling them that the playing field has been leveled. There is only one path to righteousness, and it is through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the same for the Jew and the Gentile.

For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)

Here is another aspect of this "ticket" problem. We don’t confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, on only one occasion. We keep confessing the Lordship of Christ every moment of every day in our thoughts, in our words, and in our behavior.

We don’t believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead, on only one occasion. We keep believing in our heart that God has raised Christ from the dead, every moment of every day.

We don’t call on the name of the Lord only one time. We call on the name of the Lord at all times in all that we do. This is what it means to live by faith.

Denominations are identified by their Statements of Faith. Such theological facts may have their use, but they tend to be counterproductive. They leave people with the idea they can assent to correct doctrine and then their eternal residence in Heaven is assured. This is not faith, it is nothing more than a dead mental assent to facts—facts that the demons know only too well.

When we really know the Lord and love the Lord, we know how entirely inappropriate it is to present Romans 10:9,10 as a formula that saves us once it is adopted. We understand Paul was reasoning with the Jews concerning their zeal for the Law of Moses, not giving us an alternative to enduring to the end.

We soon learn, as we follow the Lord each day, that the program of redemption operates as each smallest area of our personality is brought to our attention by the Holy Spirit so we can turn away from our sinful nature and receive the Virtue and Substance of Christ.

To be fully saved is, as I have stated, to be formed in the image of Christ and to be dwelling in untroubled rest in God’s Person and will. Anything short of this must be viewed as our coming short of the rest of God. It does not mean we are doomed to Hell, only that there is more ground for us to cover; more enemies to overcome.

The Apostle Paul toward the end of his life, after he had been saved and filled with the Spirit of God for many years, and had had an exceedingly fruitful ministry, claimed that he had not as yet arrived at the mark set before him. The old, experienced saint was pressing on! pressing on! pressing on!

Paul was pressing toward that for which Christ had called him.

Until we have attained to that for which Christ has called us, we are to press on! press on! press on! To not do so is to displease the Lord.

Romans 10:9,10 is the small gate. Now we are to be pressing forward on that pressured way that leads to eternal life.