

ROMANS

Chapter 10

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

10:1 In chs 9–11, Paul is not writing an abstract treatise, but a letter to the Church communicating a deep concern for the Israelites. (TLSB)

prayer to God for the them. Paul often prayed for the churches (see Eph 1:15–23; Col 1:3; 1Th 1:2–3; 2Th 1:3). Here he prays for the salvation of his fellow countrymen. (CSB)

10:2 *zeal for God.* The Jews' zeal for God (see Ac 21:20; 22:3; Gal 1:14) was commendable in that God was its object, but it was flawed because it was not based on right knowledge about God's way of salvation. Paul, before his conversion, was an example of such zeal (see Gal 1:14). (CSB)

Before his conversion, Paul was also a zealot for God, known esp for “opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth” and all who bore that name (Ac 26:9–11; cf Ac 22:3; Gal 1:14). (TLSB)

knowledge. A personal recognition of God's revelation of Himself and His saving mercy in the person of His Son, Jesus. (TLSB)

10:3 *righteousness of God.* Righteous standing based on faith (see 1:17), which comes from God as a gift and cannot be earned by man's works. (CSB)

He is the giver of righteousness, the righteousness imputed to us for Christ's sake. (TLSB)

their own.† Righteous standing based on human effort. (CSB)

Righteousness based on their works. (TLSB)

did not submit. Failed to admit guilt before God and receive His righteousness as a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ (Php 3:9). (TLSB)

10:4 Cf 3:21. “To those who believe the Gospel, God forgives all their sins through Christ, adopts them as children for His sake, and out of pure grace—without any merit on their part—justifies and saves them. However, He does not do this in such a way that they may abuse God's grace and may sin hoping for grace [Romans 6:1]. Paul thoroughly and forcefully shows this in the distinction between the Law and the Gospel (2 Corinthians 3:6–9)” (FC SD V 25–26). (TLSB)

Christ is the end of the law.† Although the Greek word for “end” (*telos*) can mean either (1) “termination,” “cessation,” or (2) “goal,” “culmination,” “fulfillment,” it here has the latter sense. Christ is the fulfillment of the law (see Mt 5:17) in the sense that he brought it to completion by obeying perfectly its demands and by fulfilling its types and prophecies. The Christian is no

longer “under the law” (6:15), since Christ has freed him from its condemnation, but the law still plays a role in his life. He is liberated by the Holy Spirit to fulfill its moral demands (see 8:4). (CSB)

righteousness.† The righteous standing before God that Christ gives to everyone who believes (see notes on 1:17; 3:24). (CSB)

Paul previously contrasted two opposing and mutually exclusive kinds of righteousness: “righteousness that is by faith” (9:30) and a righteousness “based on works,” which one cannot succeed in attaining (9:31–32). (TLSB)

9:30–10:4 Paul looks backward to God’s sovereign choice in Israel’s history (9:1–29) and forward to the necessity of faith and the guilt of unbelief (10:5–21). Every effort to get right with God by works of the Law, however sincere, is doomed to failure. God is the giver of righteousness to everyone who believes. • “O my God, in You I trust; let me not be put to shame” (Ps 25:2). Amen. (TLSB)

The Message of Salvation to All

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. 18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” 19 But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.” 20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.” 21 But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

10:5 *The man who does these things will live by them.*† Lev 18:5 speaks of the righteousness to which Israel was called under the Sinai covenant. Some understand Paul’s purpose in quoting it here as describing the way of obtaining righteousness (“will live”) by keeping the law (see 2:6–10). Others think that the reference is to Christ, who perfectly fulfilled the law’s demands and thus gives salvation to all who believe (see Heb 5:9). (CSB)

10:6–7† The purpose of the OT quotation is to explain the nature of the righteousness that is through faith. It does not require heroic feats such as bringing Christ down from heaven or up

from the grave. Dt 30:12–13 in its original context refers to the law, and Paul here applies the basic principle to Christ. (CSB)

righteousness ... says. Paul personifies “righteousness,” having it speak in the language of Dt 30:11–14. Righteousness based on Law is unattainable. But Christ is not unreachable or distantly remote. He does not require us to search for Him in inaccessible regions high or low. For He has become one of us, has died, and has risen from the dead for our justification (4:25; 6:4; 8:3). (TLSB)

10:7 *ascend...descend* – These two phrases seem to have become proverbial for attempting the impossible. (Franzmann)

10:8 *The word is near you.*† In the OT passage the “word” is God’s word as found in the law. Paul takes the passage and applies it to the gospel, “the word of faith”—the main point being the accessibility of the gospel. Righteousness is gained through faith, not by deeds, and is readily available to anyone who will receive it freely from God through Christ. (CSB)

Main point of comparison with what is said of the Law in Dt 30. Christ has already accomplished everything for us, and now He is easily accessible (5:1–2). (TLSB)

God’s Word ushers the very God Himself into our beings. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and His father make their abode in us. Not only the Word is in our mouth and in our heart – God is! (Concordia Journal – January 1992)

word of faith – Gospel not Law. Something that you need only accept with its content of faith. (Stoekhardt)

The Gospel is the source of faith because it both invites and creates faith. (TLSB)

The voice of righteousness by faith says not “Do!” but “It is done!” (Franzmann)

The substance of the Gospel is simple and near at hand. It is easily grasped by those who willing to receive it. (IB)

Since the medium, the uttered word, was the same, it should have been as easy for the Jews to receive the Gospel as to receive the Law. Easier, in fact, because the Gospel is a pure gift. But they received even the law only outwardly and not in the heart and closed their hearts against the Gospel. (Lenski)

Deuteronomy 11:18-21 ¹⁸ Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ¹⁹ Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.”

10:9 *confess with your mouth* – True faith is never silent, it always confesses. (Lenski)

Two aspects of a single reality. See note, v 10. Following Dt 30:14, Paul says there is an inseparable link between faith as expressed outwardly and possessed inwardly. (TLSB)

If a man confesses with his lips that Jesus is Lord, then he has Jesus as his Lord and he has peace with God. If he believes that God raised Christ from the dead, he shares the resurrection life and glory with his Lord. (Concordia Journal – September, 1983)

Faith and confession are two aspects of one reality; they constitute one life before God under the lordship of Jesus Christ. No man who has the Lord Jesus for his Lord remains a silent servant of his Lord, ashamed to acknowledge Him before me (Mark 8:38) (Franzmann)

Matthew 10:32, “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.”

Philippians 2:11, “and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

James 2:14-17 “What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well, keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

Jesus is Lord. The earliest Christian confession of faith (cf. 1Co 12:3), probably used at baptisms. In view of the fact that “Lord” (Greek *kyrios*) is used over 6,000 times in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT) to translate the name of Israel’s God (Yahweh), it is clear that Paul, when using this word of Jesus, is ascribing deity to him. (CSB)

Early Christian confession and clear testimony to Christ’s deity (the Gk word for “Lord” was used over 6,000 times in the LXX to translate God’s name Yahweh, and to identify the risen Christ; cf Php 2:9). It may have been a confession from the baptismal liturgy. (TLSB)

in your heart. In Biblical terms the heart is not merely the seat of the emotions and affections, but also of the intellect and will. (CSB)

These words emphasize two aspects of our Christian faith. First, it is something internal, inside, deep down within us, going to the core of our being, permeating every nook and cranny; it is not superficial, not merely external. Second, faith is more than intellectual assent. More than the mind is involved – the heart is also. We don’t merely agree to a proposition about God, but we also trust Him with everything we’ve got. (Concordia Journal – January 1992)

Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

God raised him from the dead. A bedrock truth of Christian doctrine (see 1Co 15:4, 14, 17) and the central thrust of apostolic preaching (see, e.g., Ac 2:31–32; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40). Christians believe not only that Jesus lived but also that he still lives. (CSB)

will be saved – We are freed from the evils in whose grip we were helpless and enter into the experience of abundant life and discover that in Christ we have the secret of a power which enables us to rise above daily problems. (IB)

This connotes the fact that we have sinned and are thus doomed as being dead in sins and then God declares that the confessing and believing sinner shall be rescued and put into permanent safety by Jesus. (Lenski)

10:10† Faith involves inward belief (“with your heart”) as well as outward confession (“with your mouth”). (CSB)

Reverse order from v 9 reinforces the oneness of faith and confession in the Christian experience, as well as the blessings received. “We think that the adversaries admit that confession justifies or saves, not by the outward act, but only because of the faith of the heart. Paul says that confession saves in order to show what sort of faith receives eternal life, namely, that which is firm and active. That faith, however, that does not present itself in confession is not firm” (Ap V 263–64). (TLSB)

The confession of the mouth is a fruit and work of faith and has nothing to do with apprehending Christ. And so the confession of the mouth is proof that faith lives in the heart, proof of a true and living faith. (Stoekhardt)

A genuine belief cannot be suppressed, and the inward conviction will find outward expression. (IB)

The double result if “righteousness and salvation.” One who believes and thereby justified confesses and shows that his faith is genuine, and the result is salvation, he is saved already now. (Lenski)

10:11 *everyone who believes* – Paul’s wording of Is 28:16, which has already been quoted in 9:33, stresses that Christ’s salvation is available to all. (TLSB)

will not be put to shame – Believers in Christ await a forgiving Father, not a stern, condemning Judge. (TLSB)

Shame, confusion, fleeing in terror from the face of the great judge shall not be the lot of him who rests his trust on Christ. (Lenski)

Paul cites Is 28:16 again, as in 9:33. However, there are two slight but significant differences here. One is this: in the OT the object of faith is the Lord, the covenant God of Israel. The other difference is this: Paul emphasizes the universality of the promise made in Isaiah; “he who becomes ‘every one who’” (rendered as “no one who” by the RSV in the interest of style). This universality is suggested in the original, though it is not stated explicitly; for if access to the Lord and His salvation is by faith, then the Lord is accessible to all, both those under the Law and those without the Law (cf. 3:22-24; 28-30) (Franzmann)

2 Timothy 1:12 “That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.”

10:12 *no distinction between Jew and Greek*. In the sense that both are on the same footing as far as salvation is concerned (see v. 13). (CSB)

As all Jews and Gentiles are equally sinners (3:23), so the gates of God’s mercy are open to all. (TLSB)

Ezekiel 18:23 “Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?”

1 Timothy 2:4 “Who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

John 10:16, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.”

Acts 10:34, “Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism.”

Lord of all – In Christ, distinctions between Jews and Gentiles are finally irrelevant. (TLSB)

bestowing his riches – God is inexhaustibly generous with His gifts (Eph 3:8) to all who embrace Him in faith, a theme especially evident in Eph (1:7–8 [grace]; 1:18 [glory]; 2:4 [mercy]; 2:7 [grace, kindness]). (TLSB)

10:13 Peter cited this same passage (Joel 2:32) on the day of Pentecost (Ac 2:21). (CSB)

God promises deliverance to all who call on Him in faith, in the face of “the great and awesome day” of judgment (Jl 2:31). (TLSB)

name of the Lord – This is more than a combination of letters that spell a name of Jesus. It is more than a label by which we address Him. The “name” of the Lord is His whole being, His nature. It is He Himself. (“I am that I am”) It is everything He has done for us. (“Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.”) To “call upon” His name, therefore, means to call upon Him, to want Him, yearn for Him, trust Him, love Him – and all that He has done for us. (Concordia Journal – January 1992)

Paul cites Joel to give the exalted Christ the name “Lord,” reaffirming Christ’s deity and announcing salvation in His name (v 9). (TLSB)

10:14–15 Since it might be argued that Jews had never had a fair opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel, Paul, by means of a series of rhetorical questions, states (in reverse order) the conditions necessary to call on Christ and be saved: (1) a preacher sent from God, (2) proclamation of the message, (3) hearing the message, (4) believing the message. (CSB)

A person needs only to call on the name of the Lord and the Lord is found. But to call upon Him is an act of faith, and faith is created by the Word of God. God’s way of salvation is not discovered by the individual, by his own thinking and willing. Man comes to faith when he hears the Word, the Gospel; he does not have the Good News of God within himself. Before you call upon God, you will believe in Him; before you believe you must have knowledge; to have knowledge you must have someone tell you about the Lord; the telling persons must be sent. (Concordia Journal – September, 1983)

10:14 *how are they believe...heard...someone preaching* – Man needs only to call upon the name of the Lord, this Savior of men, and the Lord is to be found. But to call upon His name is an act of faith, and faith is created only by the Word of God. (Franzmann)

With mounting rhetorical force, Paul's questions are designed to teach that by God's design, faith is created only through the Word proclaimed. (TLSB)

10:15–16 Paul quotes Is 52:7, where people rejoiced at the heralds who brought good news of release from the Babylonian captivity, saying "Your God reigns!" But then he quotes Is 53:1 to tell how quickly Israel rejected the Good News and to indicate that Israel's reception of God's Suffering Servant (cf Is 53:3; Mk 9:12) was not unexpected. (TLSB)

10:15 *unless they are sent?* Preachers proclaim as divinely authorized representatives (cf Lk 10:16). God speaks through them (cf Rm 1:16). (TLSB)

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news! The quotation is from Is. 52:7, which refers to those who bring the exiles the good news of their imminent release from captivity in Babylon. Here it is applied to gospel preachers, who bring the good news of release from captivity to sin. (CSB)

Proclaimers of the Gospel are a beautiful sight to behold! (TLSB)

10:16 *not all obeyed* – Isaiah spoke of the Servant of the Lord who was to be a light to the nations, suffering and dying to bear the sins of all. This Lord in a servant's form seemed unlovely and undesirable as the Man of sorrows. So the proclamation of the Gospel receives a mixed response. We also need to ask, "Who has believed what he has heard from us?" (Concordia Journal – September, 1983)

10:17 *faith comes from hearing* – NT meanings include the act of hearing, the ear, or the message heard. The message is the meaning here. "Although the work is done and the forgiveness of sins is secured by the cross [John 19:30], it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word" (LC V 31). "It is God's will that His Word should be heard and that a person's ears should not be closed (Psalm 95:8). With this Word the Holy Spirit is present and opens hearts, so that people (like Lydia in Acts 16:14) pay attention to it and are converted only through the Holy Spirit's grace and power, who alone does the work of converting a person" (FC Ep II 5). (TLSB)

word of Christ. Either (1) the gospel concerning Christ, or (2) Christ speaking his message through his messengers. (CSB)

The spoken word of the Gospel—the content being Christ—is a means by which God creates faith. "Repentance consists of two parts. One part is contrition, that is, terrors striking the conscience through the knowledge of sin. The other part is faith, which is born of the Gospel [Romans 10:17] or the Absolution and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven. It comforts the conscience and delivers it from terror. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruit of repentance" (AC XII 3–6). (TLSB)

10:18 *Their voice.* The quotation is from Ps 19:4, which refers to the testimony of the heavens to the glory of God. Here "their voice" is applied to gospel preachers and is used to show that Israel cannot offer the excuse that she did not have opportunity to hear, since preachers went everywhere. These words (originally used to describe God's revelation in nature) aptly describe the widespread preaching of the gospel, and Paul uses them to show that Jews had ample opportunity to hear the message of redemption. (CSB)

With this rhetorical question, Paul replies to an implied objection: the Israelites rejected the Gospel because not all had heard. Paul dismisses this excuse with a quotation from Ps 19:4. (TLSB)

all the earth ... world. As God makes known His presence and power in all creation, so the Gospel has been widely preached in the inhabited world. (TLSB)

10:19 *Did Israel not understand?* The quotation that follows (from Dt 32:21) answers this question by suggesting that the Gentiles, whom the Jews considered to be spiritually unenlightened, understood. Surely if they understood the message, the Jews could have. (CSB)

A second objection: Israel does not understand the Word concerning Christ. Paul cites the Law and the Prophets to prove that this excuse will not hold up, for God will provoke Israel to jealousy and anger when He reveals Himself to the Gentiles. If even the Gentiles understand, Israel cannot plead ignorance. His quotes were originally written in the contexts of God's judgment of Israel. (TLSB)

those who are not a nation. The Gentiles, those who are not a nation of God's forming in the sense that Israel was. (CSB)

10:21† The responsibility for Israel's rejection as a nation rested with Israel herself. She had failed to respond through faith. (CSB)

held out My hands. Gesture of welcome. Israel's problem is much worse than ignorance. They have responded to God's tender and gracious invitation with blatant disobedience and obstinacy. (TLSB)

10:5–21 Like a loving father waiting for his children to come home, God yearns to show mercy on all (cf Lk 15:11–32). Those who refuse to accept God's gracious invitation to share in the riches of His grace are accountable to Him for their unbelief. However, Christ Jesus is always near to us in His Word. He stands ready to forgive and renew us. • We praise You, O Lord, for welcoming us through the words of all those who bring to us the Good News of Your love. Place that faith-creating Word on our lips, that we may speak to those who have not yet heard or believed. Amen. (TLSB)