



## Sermon

### ***Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be Saved***

**Romans 10:1-13; Deuteronomy 30:11-14**

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Through this portion of Romans, Paul refers to Jesus fourteen times. As Jesus, referring to his humanity and destiny as Saviour; as Lord, referring to his eternal and divine nature; and as Christ, referring to his sovereignty as Son of David, King of Israel, King of the Jews. Error comes when we fail to hold these three in balance.

The English evangelist, J. John, says, "Take Christ of Christian and all you are left with 'ian,' and Ian can't save you." Speaking as an 'Ian', I agree with him, I cannot save you but Christ can.

Paul is teaching here that righteousness before God does not come from keeping the Law of Moses rather it comes by grace through faith in Jesus. The context is his concern for the Jews who did not accept Christ. His heart longed for them to know their Messiah and be saved. He had been one of the strictest of the Pharisees, but now he totally discounted his former lifestyle for the righteousness he had found in Christ. He wrote to the Philippians (of his former status and accomplishments):

I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. [Philippians 3:8-9]

Just last week I said that while the Law of God has tells us what is good and bad, guides us and restrains us, Paul tells us that its purpose is to show us that we need a saviour.

It was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet." But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! [Romans 7:7-8 NLT]

You may know that Psalm 119 is the longest psalm with the persistent theme of the psalmist's love and praise of the Law of God all through it. But having repeatedly declared how he follows and obeys the Law, he ends by saying:

I long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight. Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me. I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands. [Psalm 119:174-176]

"I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant..." He knew he needed a saviour. That is what the Law of God is designed to do. It defines righteousness and because we are all infected with sin, it reveals that to us.

Jesus Christ, however, lived a sinless life and so fulfilled the Law. Now the penalty for sin is death – not because God is being vindictive but because sin separates us from God who is the source of life. When Jesus died on the cross an innocent man, he had no legal penalty to pay. So he could pay our legal debt and set us free from the judgement of sin in our lives.

Righteousness is about right standing and relationship with God. Paul refers back to Moses to explain that the righteousness that comes from the Law has to be earned. "The man who does these things will live by them." Then he explains the faith route to righteousness drawing on Deuteronomy 30 (our Old Testament passage):

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). [Romans 8:6-7]

The righteousness that comes by faith does not require great striving. John Stott put it like this:

There is no need to ask who will ascend to heaven to bring Christ down or descend to Hades to bring Christ up. Storming the ramparts of heaven and potholing Hades to bring Christ up are equally unnecessary. For Christ has come and died, and been raised, and is therefore immediately accessible to faith.

Now, Paul says, "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart." This word is the message of the gospel:

**Verse 9: 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 the last three weeks, I have spoken about the resurrection. We started that with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead on the third day after the crucifixion. Here again, Paul tells us that is crucial to saving faith.

He promises here that as we believe in our hearts that Jesus died and rose again from the dead and name Jesus Christ as Lord, then we are saved.

We are to believe in our hearts – the centre of the intellect and will. Not a passing agreement in the mind, but a settled decision of belief and will. Not just an intellectual assent but putting our trust in him.

When we say, "Jesus is Lord," we are acknowledging he is the one we must obey. In around 250BC the Septuagint was produced – it is the translation of the Old Testament into Greek. It used the Greek word, Kurios for the Hebrew Adonai. And Adonai was used as a title for God Almighty to avoid using the holy name of God Yahweh. So to say Jesus is Lord, is to acknowledge he is God.

### **Praying in Kondo**

On our second trip to Kondo we were at a village church. It was 6pm, we had just finished teaching and they asked us to pray for the sick. The sun was already setting and it would be dark by 6:30pm. There was no lighting. We hadn't yet had lunch which was still waiting for us and we had a long drive back to the bishop's house. And I was aware that the driver got lost driving out to this place in the daylight so I wasn't confident that he could find his way back!

There were fifty people asking for prayer! Helen was praying for a young woman who had had an appendectomy but still had the pain. As she prayed for relief from the pain, it moved to her hip. Then Helen knew it was not a natural pain but caused by a spirit. So she switched to commanding it to leave. She told the woman that she needed to help by repeatedly proclaiming "Yesu ni Bwana!" (Jesus is Lord!). And so the pain moved from the hip to the knee, to the foot and out. With the spirit gone and the woman free of pain, they were rejoicing. Then the translator whispered to Helen, "Do you know this woman is a Muslim?" Helen was non-plussed at this and apologised to the woman for asking her to say, "Yesu ni Bwana." To this, she replied, "Why do you think I came?"

When we believe in our innermost being that Jesus rose from the dead, Paul says we are justified. Unger's Bible Dictionary defines Justification as "a divine act where the infinitely holy God judicially declares a

believing sinner to be righteous and acceptable before him because Christ has borne the sinner's sin on the cross."

It is not by what we have done, that we are justified. No - when we are "in Christ," his righteousness is reckoned to our account. We could illustrate this by thinking of someone who had a huge debt marrying someone with greater wealth. As soon as they are married the debt of the poor spouse is covered by the other's wealth.

Paul goes on to say that when we confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord you are saved. 'Confess' translates a word which means to say the same thing. So it is heartfelt belief and declaration of our faith which connects us to God's salvation.

Then in verse 11, he assures us that God is faithful and will not put those who trust in him to shame. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And that everyone includes Jews and Gentiles – all of humanity. And that includes you – if you put your trust in Him.

Have you confessed with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believed in your heart that God raised him from the dead? If you have, you can have confidence that you are forgiven, justified and saved. If you haven't, what stops you? ...

If you do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will want others to know about him too. We have an outreach opportunity coming up. It is time for the Hope Project booklets to be delivered for Easter. This is a volunteer delivery scheme for the nation. Many of us have taken part for the last couple of years. Let's do it again this year.

And now, we have the opportunity to confess our faith with our mouths as we stand to say the Apostles Creed.