

Romans (10:5-10)

Confess and Believe

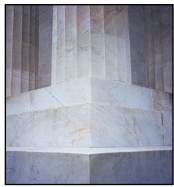
Part 45 – August 14, 2005

TEN-FOUR

We ended last week on a “good buddy” passage. Romans 10:4; get it? Ten-four good buddy!

Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.
- *Romans 10:4 NIV*

Jesus marks the *end* of the law the same way a finish line marks the *end* of a race. The Greek word Paul uses (Telos) means both completion and goal.



Paul and Jesus quote the OT to show that the Messiah was the initial cornerstone (the law being founded *on* him), and the final capstone (the law being finished *in* him). It was also prophesied that God’s chosen “builders” would reject both stones, cast them aside, and then stumble over them.

Today Paul further defines righteousness by faith. And this passage incorporates the “TNT” of the Bible. That’s chapter 10, verses nine & ten. Get it? Ten: Nine & Ten!

Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: “The man who does these things will live by them.” 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: 9 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. 10 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 10:5-13 NIV*

But here’s the thing: what about in James, where it says:

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.
- *James 2:19 NIV*

Or, when Luke tells us that in Galilee, just before Jesus cast out a demon, it screamed out:

“Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!” ... Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” - *Luke 4:34;41 NIV*

Do you see where I’m going with this? The demons believe, but are not justified. And the demons confess, but are not saved. So, how can we know if our *belief* and *confession* is leading to destruction (like the demons’) or to salvation (like Paul’s)?

FOUR O.T. QUOTES

Before we answer that, let's tackle Paul's four OT quotes:

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 NIV*

First, Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5 where Moses gives Israel specific instructions on moving into the Promised Land.

- "These things" refers to regulations for staying pure.
- "Live by them" means to remain acceptable to the Lord.

Moses goes on to say that if anyone fails to keep just one of God's decrees, they'll be defiled and cut off. (*Lev. 18:26-29*) Paul's point: "righteousness that is by the law" requires *perfect* faith with *no sin*. Yet, the Jews were very aware of another OT truth:

... there is no one who does not sin ... - *1 Kings 8:46 NIV*

Therefore, they employed inadequate sacrifices to demonstrate repentance (as an act of faith in God's *mercy*), until the Messiah would impart the sinlessness required by the law. Paul is still explaining how Christ is the "end of the law".

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). - *Romans 10:6-7 NIV*

Now, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 9:4: "Do not say in your heart"; this is where Moses warns the Israelites to remember that God's blessing is a result of *his* grace and not *their* righteousness. Then, Paul weaves this into Deuteronomy 30:12-13 - where Moses speaks of God having freely given his word to the Israelites.

It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" - *Deut. 30:12-13 NIV*

- It's not about works; but faith in what God has accomplished.
- Just as the Word was freely accessible so too is the Messiah.

Moses may be referring poetically to two of the great miraculous interventions that demonstrated the grace and mercy of God:

- A. His manifestation atop Mount Sinai - "ascend into heaven"
- B. Israel's redemption through the Red Sea - "cross the sea"

And Paul sees in this, the two great miraculous interventions that demonstrate the grace and mercy of God *through Christ*:

- A. His manifestation in human form - "to bring Christ down"
- B. Redemption through his resurrection - "to bring Christ up"

- Christ has come down from Heaven, and up from the grave!

God's consistent desire has always been to reveal himself, and to redeem his children. He wants to inhabit his people.

But what does [Moses go on to] 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 10:8 NIV & (Deut.30:14)*

Being mostly illiterate, the Israelites memorized God's Word and conveyed it verbally; so, it was literally "in your mouth". But also "in your heart"; they saw the heart as the most sacred part of mankind; the center of all thought, will, and desire.

TNT QUIZ

And this is the key to understanding the difference between how the demons believe, and how Paul wants us to believe.

Moses said God's word must be confessed and believed; and since Jesus is the "end of the law" *he* must be confessed and believed.

- And now, the dynamite of the Bible ... Ten: Nine & Ten

That [or "because"] 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. - *Romans 10:9 NIV*

Q: But, do you confess and believe like the demons, or Paul? Let's take a quiz!

1. I must "confess with my mouth" Jesus is:



- A. A Lord
- B. The Lord
- C. My Lord

Jesus gives us the simplest answer:

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only he who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven. - *Matthew 7:21 NIV*

It's one thing to claim Jesus as my "Savior" (he saved me). It's another to claim him as "Lord" (I serve him).

- To confess Christ as "Lord" is to submit to his Lordship.

To truly confess his Lordship is to declare an ongoing desire to seek after, and grow into God's will. God expects us to verbalize our faith. I must not be ashamed to proclaim that I live my life according to Christ.

- There's no such thing as a secret agent disciple!

2. To believe “in my heart” is to:



- A. Observe the truth
- B. Acknowledge the truth
- C. Depend on the truth

Heartfelt belief is more than agreement with the facts (this is what demons do). I must trust and rely on Christ as my Savior. The demons don't trust in Christ ... that's why they “shudder”. It's a trusting heart that provokes a true confession.

... to all who **received** him, to those who **believed** in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ... - *John 1:12 NIV*

- To believe is to receive God as Father and Christ as Lord.

It doesn't just say to “believe in your heart”, it says to “believe in your heart that God raised [Jesus] from the dead.”

3. To believe God “raised him from the dead” is to recognize:



- A. The metaphorical meaning of the cross
- B. The historical reality of the crucifixion
- C. The success of the sacrifice

The crucifixion is filled with symbolic significance, and it's certainly rooted in historical fact; but more than any of that, the resurrection of Christ validates:

- That our debts have been paid!
- That our sins can be forgiven!
- That righteousness is offered!
- And, that paradise is waiting!

If Jesus hadn't been a suitable sacrifice, God wouldn't have raised him from the dead.

- The resurrection confirms the success of the sacrifice

This is what gives me the confidence to trust him, which brings the conviction to claim him as *my* Lord.

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 10:10 NIV*

The reality of a Savior is as close as your own heart and mouth, and yet many won't allow him to get past their noggin.

- How sad to miss your Savior by only a few inches.