

## God's Righteousness and God's Salvation

### Romans 10:1-13

Well, today we will continue our study of Romans. Romans 10, the first 13 verses. We will read those verses first. I am reading from Darby Translation, verses 1 through 13.

Paul is saying, "Brethren, the delight of my own heart and my supplication which I address to God for them is for salvation. For I bear them witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of law for righteousness to every one that believes. For Moses lays down in writing the righteousness which is of the law, The man who has practiced those things shall live by them. But the righteousness of faith speaks thus: Do not say in thine heart, Who shall ascend to the heavens? that is, to bring Christ down; or, Who shall descend into the abyss? that is, to bring up Christ from among the dead. But what says it? The word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from among the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart is believed to righteousness; and with the mouth confession made to salvation. For the scripture says, No one believing on him shall be ashamed. For there is no difference of Jew and Greek; for the same Lord of all is rich towards all that call upon him. For every one whosoever, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved."

Shall we pray?

*Lord, we are always grateful for Your words. We are so grateful that we have this Bible. Where would we be without the treasured word of God? We bow in Your presence and ask You once again, as we consider these 13 verses, that You would grant us light in revelation; and that Your words, that are alone spirit and life, will be made alive to us this morning. We ask all these things in that wonderful, that precious, that only name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

### Introduction

Well, I think you know we have been spending some time together in Romans. I hope Romans is precious to you. It is probably the most fundamental and foundational book in the entire New Testament. Without Romans, we cannot live the Christian life. As I have referred to it before, Romans is a masterpiece. And Paul has given us this masterpiece to understand God's ways, God's works, and God's will. So, I think this is a very precious book that we should all love and treasure. We should know it, think about it often, and meditate on it.

## **The Ways of God**

Today we are going to look at Romans 10:1-13. And I am not going to repeat all you have heard, but I am hoping it will stick. You know, one thing they told me, my professors in school, is if you repeat things enough, people will get them. So, if you are upset with me for my repetition, that was my training. If you repeat it enough, eventually it will stick up here [in the head]. Most hopefully it will stick here [in the heart]. That is more important.

So, you know, these three chapters in the middle, so to speak, are the ways of God. You might wonder where I got that from. It all came to me one day when I was reading the end of these three chapters in Romans 11. And Paul said this in verse 33, "O depth of riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable his judgments, and untraceable his ways!" That is what we are looking at. These ways of God are untraceable to the human mind, but not to the spirit. So that is what we will be dealing with.

### **God's Righteousness and God's Salvation**

Now, there are two dominant things in this section, this short section of 13 verses. Two dominant things. You must see them if you are going to understand the ways of God. If you are going to see His ways and walk in His ways, you must understand these two things. First, it is God's righteousness. That is the first thing that is made clear in these verses. Second is God's salvation. There is only one righteousness that is acceptable to God. There is only one way of salvation that can lead to eternal life. And those are the two things which Paul is dealing with. This one and only righteousness that is God's alone will satisfy God. This one and only salvation is the only way God has ever made to the Father. It is essential we understand this. It is not our righteousness; it is not our salvation. It is the divine way, God's way. That is the secret for entering into the Christian life, and living the Christian life, and being a testimony, a living testimony of the people of God.

### **Christ Is the Only Way to the Father**

You remember John 14, when the Lord was about to return to his Father, of course, go to the cross and return to His Father. He told them, "Ye believe on God, believe also on me." He talked about his Father's house having many abodes. You remember the story. I think you all remember the story. And He said, "I go to prepare you a place; and if I go and shall prepare you a place, I am coming again and shall receive you to myself." How wonderful those verses are. And then He happened to say, "And ye know where I go, and ye know the way." Well, of course, doubting Thomas could not get that. Doubting Thomas, spiritually, was a little too thick-headed, like many of us, to get it. He said, "Lord, we know not where thou goest, and how can we know the way?" And the Lord Jesus said those famous words in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father unless by me." I think that is tremendous.

Compressed in this one answer of the Lord Jesus is the whole of the Christian life. There is no other way than Christ. There is no other truth than Christ. Now our brother is a philosopher; he went to a very good philosophy school, I understand. Isn't that right, Abraham? And he tried to prove the Bible wrong. That was one thing he wanted to do when he first did not believe it. But he discovered there is one truth; it is Christ. What a revelation. And then we discover not only that, but we discover there is only one life. There are not two alternatives. Well, there is in one sense. You can still have your life and save your life. It will not be a good ending. Or you can have that life that is forever; that life, which is eternal; that life which is the life. That life which the Bible illustrated in those first words and talked about the tree of life. That is what the Lord Jesus was talking about.

### **Outline**

Well, we will look at four points. First of all, Paul's Desire for Israel. You have to understand this; this will really help us. Because I believe there is a secret in this, and I will tell you in a moment. This is in Romans 10:1-4. We need to see The Nearness of God's Righteousness. Something so grand must be so difficult, and so hard. It is incomprehensible that you and I could enter into such a thing. But we need to understand the Bible teaches otherwise. The nearness of God's righteousness, the simplicity of God's righteousness. And then we need to understand Two Essential Elements of God's Salvation. You know those verses, but we will go over them again. You have heard them many times. And finally, I think the tone that the Apostle Paul ends on in these 13 verses is The Full Assurance of Salvation. There are a few words in particular in there which caught my eye and caught my heart and convinced me that this was the first fullest of divine assurance. So that is what we will be looking at.

### **Paul's Desire for Israel**

Let us begin with Paul's desire. You remember verse one, "Brethren, the delight of my own heart and my supplication which I address to God for them is for salvation." Now the "them" there, all of you King James fans, says, "for Israel;" but "for them" here is the same. His burden, his desire, his heart, his passion for his own brothers and sisters according to the flesh, Jews, was so great. It was, as it is described in some versions, a consuming desire. Now I think that is rather remarkable because if you remember Paul's history, the Jews sought to destroy him and kill him; they once left him for dead outside of the city. Surely, he was dead. They went against him and followed him and tried to shut down his ministry for the whole of his life. The Judaizers tried to destroy him at every hand. Now if I were Paul, I would not have written this verse. I would not say this, "My consuming desire is for them." I think I would be praying for God's judgment. But we see the difference in Paul, right? What a difference!

### **God's Unchanging Heart toward Man and Woman**

Now I happen to believe this is what God is wanting with every man and woman. This is the divine desire. This is God's ways. He can be hated, disobeyed, turned away

from. We could be given to idols. Yet His heart and His consuming desire towards us will never change. This is what we see in these verses. I think it is a tremendous thing. I have already mentioned the Wuest translation has the “consuming desire.” This is a God-given burden. This is not something you can say, “Okay, well, they really did not mean it. I will give them a little bit of slack, you know; I will think about them and pray for them every once in a while.” It was much greater than that. It was a God-given burden. Now you need to understand that. He enters into this with this thought, first of all about his natural brothers and sisters.

And I believe we see something wonderful here. I call it the heavenly heartache. I do not know if you like that explanation, but the heavenly heartache, the divine desire, and I believe in all of us, this is what He is looking for. Do we have such a heart for the lost in this world? Do we have such a heart for our brothers and sisters? You know, Ryan, I remember we recently have been talking about a gospel meeting, right? here in Richmond, planning a gospel meeting. We could plan a gospel meeting. We could do a gospel meeting. It may or may not be successful. But the one thing, and I thought that was wisdom, was that Monday night we met and fellowshiped with you guys. The thought came out that what we ought to be praying for is for this spirit of the gospel to come upon us. Here you see in this man the spirit of the gospel. You see it in depth; you see it in consuming passion. And if we are going to be effective in praying for others, leading others to Christ, it is going to be those that have something of the spirit of the gospel upon them. That is what this first verse is about. Pray the Lord would open our eyes and give us such a spirit. It tells us so much about this man, the Apostle Paul. It tells us that this is what God is looking for in us. Well, I think you understand.

### Religion vs Life

Verse two. I will read it again, “For I bear them witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” Now zeal is the trademark of every religion in this world. If a devotee is full of zeal for the things they believe, he is a faithful or she is a faithful servant. Zeal is the trademark, all religions have a religious zeal. And Paul said something about them that was rather tremendous, “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God.” And then he said, “But not according to knowledge.” That is the problem in the world today. We live in many ways in a religious world. There are different belief systems and sects and peoples all over the world that have great faith in what they believe. They are zealous; they are filled with a zeal. They make their message known. But here we understand it is a zeal not according to knowledge.

Well, that is the difference between religion and the Christian life. That is the vast difference. You remember, Paul came by this honestly, right? This was who Paul was. This was the revelation. Paul knew himself. He knew he had a real zeal. He knew he was blinded by his Jewish religion. He was the best example of Judaism, this student of Gamaliel; who was far advanced, it says in Galatians 1:13-14, above his contemporaries. And he said when he spoke that to the Galatian church in the letter, “For ye have heard what was my conversation formerly in Judaism, that I excessively persecuted the assembly of God, and ravaged it.” Quite a strong statement. “And advanced in Judaism

beyond my contemporaries in my nation.” And listen to what he said, “Being exceedingly zealous,” that was his description of his own self. He said, “Being exceedingly zealous of the doctrines of my fathers.” And he talked of the Jewish people in II Corinthians 3:15 he said, “But unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil lies upon their heart.” They were zealous, but not according to knowledge.

Well, I think you see something of what is in the heart of God in this. This man Paul, his eyes were blinded. And yet one day on the Damascus Road, the way, the truth, the life in the person of the Lord Jesus met him and knocked him from his steed. And he said to him, “Who are you, Lord?” I always think that is a good answer. A brother told me the other day about his salvation experience. He was not saved, but he told me about his prayer. He said, I prayed, “Lord, if you are real, reveal yourself to me.” That is a good start. Do you understand? If someone out of their mouth, not knowing the sovereign Lord Jesus, would begin a prayer as an unbeliever, “Lord, who art thou?” This is progress. You get it? Well, Paul was turned around on that Damascus Road. He began to be delivered from his religious blindness. He began to see a righteousness that is different than the righteousness of the law. He began to see a salvation that was different than the salvation afforded through religion: temporary at best, worldly at most. Well, I think maybe in these first two verses you begin to see something.

### **Ignorant of God's Righteousness**

In verse three it tells more clearly what the problem with the Jewish people was: “For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness.” What revelation Paul had. Their problem was they thought they could attain a righteousness through their God-given law. Now you might stumble at that. Why was this law God-given if it could not produce righteousness? It is a good question. I have often asked myself that question, but I think it is a good question. But he says the problem was they being ignorant of God's righteousness and further revelation he had, “and seeking to establish their own righteousness.” Now there is a lot of light in that verse, “have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” Now brothers and sisters, this tells us everything we need to know about religion in this world. They are seeking a righteousness not of God. It is their own righteousness. They really seek it with all their heart. But they have not submitted to the one and only righteousness that can produce real righteousness. This is why Paul took this up. This is the way of God. There is one righteousness, only one. This was the heart of the problem with the Jews.

It is great light in these verses. It tells us two things: our own righteousness or God's righteousness. Now, you know, I do not even have to tell you this. You know where I am going. You know my infatuation with two's in the Bible. Here again, you see, when it comes to righteousness, there are only two choices: your own, and many of the people in this world are trying to produce that, like the Jews; or God's righteousness. We either seek our own righteousness first, or at last submit to the righteousness of God. That is the answer. Just remember those two words: we seek our own righteousness, that is what the Jews did, that was the issue with the Jews; or we submit to God's righteousness. I think these verses are quite full when you look at them.

## The Purpose of the Law

I will tell you the thing I was intimating about before. The law of Moses never intended to produce righteousness. You might think, "Why did God give it to them in the first place?" And why did He say, "Do all these commandments." Linda and I are going through the Old Testament and it repeats over and over: "Do all these commandments and keep all of my statutes;" and even goes further "and all of my ordinances;" and this will be the result. Surely it must mean that it is possible, right? You do not think so? I cannot convince you otherwise? I think some people would say it is possible. If I am devoted enough, if I work enough, if I desire Him enough, if I read enough, if I pray enough, if I seek enough, it is possible. But what you do not understand is the righteousness that comes by the law is totally impossible.

Let me explain it a different way. Maybe it is more thorough. It was given to expose unrighteousness. That is the answer. That was the purpose of the law. This divine law, written by the finger of God, at least the Ten Commandments on the tablets of stone, was given not to produce righteousness, but to expose unrighteousness. This was God's way. They were in the divine laboratory, the Jews. And the Jews had the most privileges of any nation ever on the face of the earth. They were given divine presence, the divine law, divine protection. If any people had the possibility of being a righteous people, they had it, right? That would seem to be, to me, the clear inference. The Jews had such a sense of pride in the law that it could produce a self-righteousness, their own righteousness.

## Self-Righteousness

Now let me try to explain with a simple little illustration. We have a phrase in the West. I do not know if you have this phrase in China, but we have a phrase in the West, that a person is a self-made man or self-made woman. You know what that means? That means through their efforts and through their devotion and through their applying themselves, somehow, they arrive at success. And sometimes they arrive through tremendous difficulties and problems. And we proclaim that person is a self-made man. You know, in the Christian life, there is no such thing as a self-made man. It is a God-made man. I will never forget the impression one single verse made upon me in Matthew, when Peter and Andrew his brother were called, and the Lord said, "Come, follow Me." Many of us stopped there. And then He said this, "I will make you fishers of men." That one phrase changed my whole view of the Christian life. We were to be not self-made, self-righteous human beings but God-made. Do you understand the difference? What an enormous difference.

This is what Paul is pointing out. This is what Paul is saying. Verse 4 says, "For Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone that believes." I like what Griffith Thomas says. He says, "All this deliberate and willful attitude on the part of the Jews was entirely inexcusable since Jesus Christ, their Messiah, was the end of the law for righteousness. He is the object to which the law points, the goal, and the termination." I think that is a wonderful statement. What light these brothers had. We need to pray for such light.

Newell said, and I think this is even more blunt by the way, "The law was designed not to bring about self-righteousness or self-hope, but contrariwise, self-despair." Isn't that remarkable?

The law was to drive us to Christ, as we read in Galatians. It was to be that schoolmaster, that tutor, that would drive us to the only One who was righteous. And in Him, we would find God's righteousness. That is the explanation of the whole Old Testament. I think it is wonderful when we read in Colossians 2:14. I will read this verse to you: "Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;" Now think about that. We often think of the Lord Jesus as being nailed to the cross, and we should. But not only was the Lord Jesus nailed to the cross, and by that our sins were taken away forever because He bore our sin. He did not just forgive our sins. Do not ever have such shallow theology. He literally bore our sins.

Corinthians speaks of it in the strongest words: "He was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That is God's righteousness. Well, I think you probably get the idea. Here it tells us in Colossians 2, that not only were our sins nailed to the cross in the person of the Lord Jesus; but the whole of the law, the hand-writing, the ordinances, all these things, they too were nailed to the cross. How wonderful. Our sins are gone forever. As far as the Christians go, what this verse says is, "For Christ is the end of the law to righteousness for all that believe." Thank God for that. Well, that is the first point.

### **The Nearness of God's Righteousness**

The second point is, what about the nearness of God's righteousness? Surely something this wonderful as God's righteousness must be the most difficult thing possible. Surely we cannot come by it in any easy way or manner. Surely it has to be the most impossible thing there is. After all, it is God's righteousness, right? I think that is the way we would think. Romans 10:5-8 show us how near God has made His righteousness; how possible He has made the impossible, and His salvation to us. Once again, Paul goes into two righteousnesses. He calls it the righteousness of the law, in these four verses - five to eight; and he calls the other kind of righteousness the righteousness of faith. Again, there are only two kinds. That is all there is. There is no third choice. You know, it is not like you stand in the deli line and you say, "I will take the ham and eggs." There is no third choice. There is a law of righteousness. That is the impossible one. And then there is righteousness by faith. That is what we are called to.

It says in verse 5, and in the first part of 6, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise." Paul used the Hebrew Scriptures because that is what the scriptures were at that day. And he would speak to his Jewish fellow citizens and people by using the Hebrew Scriptures. And he was quoting actually from Leviticus 18:5. This is very important, you understand. Leviticus 18:5 God says, "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments." And then the Lord said this,

“Which if a man do, he shall live in them:” Now, that is the catch. That is the catch! You will live by them. And then He says at the end of that verse, “I am the LORD.” You can argue with the Lord for bringing Israel through this way, but it is so that we will see the great salvation and great righteousness that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. That is the whole purpose. That is the whole purpose! Righteousness of the law then, as we read this, is by doing, you shall do them. There is no question. You do not just read them. You do not just memorize them. You do not just share with one another in fellowship. No, you shall do them. And the word is actually stronger, you shall live by them. How terrible. How impossible.

We need to understand that, or we will never understand the grace we have received in God's righteousness. Now, the righteousness of faith, on the other hand, is one other word. It is believing. That is all it is. It is believing, it is not doing. One is doing. One is believing in this One who has done it all. And when you believe in the Lord Jesus and this One that has done it all, you obtain God's righteousness. That is the simplicity of the story.

### **The Impossibility of Self-Righteousness**

I always think of James 2:10. I do not know how many of you are familiar with James 2:10. I have said it before, and I think maybe some were not so familiar with it. This speaks of how impossible the law is, how terrible the law is. This was James himself, a devoted Jew, who I will use air-quotes, “kept the law.” Okay? James was a devoted Jew. It says, “For whoever shall keep the whole law and shall offend in one point.” That is the phrase I want you to understand. “For whoever shall keep the whole law and shall offend in one point, he has come under the guilt of breaking all.” Isn't that terrible? That is impossible. You know, you might want to argue with God. “I have kept three out of ten.” God's word is so precise. It is impossible if you offend, and notice it does not even say in the whole law, in one point. How would you like to be under that professor? If you offend in one point, you are guilty of all. What if your professor says you either get an A plus, 100 plus, or it is all an F? That is what the law says. Now, do you think that is impossible? I think that is impossible.

You know my wife, Linda, she does not get mad at me. You know, people get mad at me by the way, at least I will say that right now. People say, “I cannot believe you mentioned your wife in the ministry. It must drive her batty.” And maybe she agrees with them, but I mention her only because I love her. I remember when we were married, she told me about her high school days and her part-time employment at the Barksdale Theater up in Ashland. I know none of you guys go to the theater and you may not know what that is. But she would go there, and she would hear these Broadway musicals. And throughout our marriage, every once in a while, she will break into a song about Oklahoma. I do not know what she is talking about. Or The Man of La Mancha, Don Quixote. You know, the hapless knight swinging at windmills. You remember that famous song, I listened to it the other day from the original character in The Man of La Mancha. And it says, “To dream the impossible dream.” That is the main theme song. “To fight the unbeatable foe. To go to the unreachable star. This is my quest.”

That is having your own righteousness. It is impossible. An impossible dream! All of us in the Christian life or in this world that seek to have our own righteousness instead of God's righteousness. Or we are like that flailing knight, in his confusion, seeking the impossible. So, I have sort of memorized that song, I kind of like it. You might be tempted. I understand you find everything on YouTube. That is what they tell me. I found a story about a fisherman on YouTube. It is a good story. Look at the song. I believe that is man in pursuit of God with his own energy, his own zeal, his own desire, his own ambition. It is to dream the impossible dream.

### **Obtaining vs Attaining**

Well, I think you get the point. I think this is very clear. Griffith Thomas said there is an enormous difference between "obtaining" and "attaining." You get the difference? Obtaining has an O and attaining has an A. Okay. Attaining is something we do in our own energy, our own strength, our own zeal. We attain something. And when you attain it, sometimes the world lauds you. They say, "Look at them, look at him, what he attained in life." But God's righteousness is obtained. In other words, it is given to you as a gift. When you believe in the Lord Jesus, you are given the gift of righteousness. You understand the difference? How easy, how close, how near, how wonderful. It was not by your own efforts. It was simply God's gift and God's grace. I think that is marvelous. All we have to do is believe.

And then we discover I Corinthians 1:30, that Paul wrote to that church in Corinth full of problems. It says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who has been made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and holiness, and redemption." This is the secret. This is what Paul is getting to. I remember another story about Martin Luther. I read this years ago in Miller's Church history. It was about Martin Luther. Do you know this changed the world? This concept of God's righteousness instead of our righteousness. Martin Luther was referred to as a "monk's monk." I will never forget reading that in Miller's Church history. He was the epitome of devotion. He left Germany and went across Europe. And if I read it and I remember right, and you can correct me if I am wrong, barefoot across the Alps. They had snow, by the way; down to Rome to get an audience with the Pope, because he knew if he got an audience with the Pope, he would get indulgences, and his sins would be forgiven. So he went to what is called Pilate's Staircase. Now supposedly these are the same stairs the Lord Jesus went up in the Judgment before He was crucified. As a matter of fact, the legend is that on the 11th of the 28 stairs there is a blood stain. It is the blood stain of Christ. And Miller says these were miraculously transported to Jerusalem. So Luther gets there, full of zeal, begins on his knees, climbing up these marble steps. I would be dead on the fourth step with my knees. And they still do it; pilgrims still do it, climb on their knees to show their devotion, and the heavens opened and spoke to Luther and said, "The just shall live by faith." This is so wonderful. Brothers and sisters, three times on that journey, His voice spoke to him, "The just shall live by faith." And he saw in a moment it was not his righteousness, but it was God's righteousness, and he was forever free. And the whole

of the Christian world was turned upside down and inside out. And it is what we know as the Reformation.

### **God's Righteousness Is Near**

Thank God we can know God's righteousness. Thank God it is near. Thank God it is close. Thank God it is no longer impossible. This is the beauty of what Paul is sharing here. You know, let me read three verses, six through eight. "But the righteousness of faith speaks thus: Do not say in thine heart, Who shall ascend to the heavens? that is, to bring Christ down; or, Who shall descend into the abyss? that is, to bring up Christ from among the dead. But what says it? The word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." Brothers and sisters, this is a quote from the Old Testament. The word of faith that produces the righteousness of faith is so near, so possible, it is in our hearts. This is the glory of the simplicity of the Gospel of God. How wonderful it is. I think we should understand this and understand how near God is to everyone that calls on Him.

We will end with that point. How close to God is everyone that turns to Him, He does not penalize them and say, "You do these 10 things, and you can come to Me." He is open armed to receive everyone that will come to Him. This is what I think is so beautiful about this. We only have to believe. We only have to believe! Brothers and sisters, I believe when you come to the Lord, God gives us the faith to believe.

I love Galatians 2:20. Paul is saying in that monumental statement, "I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Now, did you notice he did not say, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by my zealous faith in the Son of God." He did not say that. This is the miracle: how near is God to us.

### **The Nearness of God**

You know those verses talk about ascending to the heavens. Do you think, do you want to produce your own righteousness? Ascend to the heavens. Can you do it? Do you want to produce your own righteousness? Descend to the abyss, or bring Christ down. Can you, do it? It is impossible. But if you want a different righteousness, believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall have that eternal righteousness.

The Old Testament people understood this, and this is partly, I think, a quote from Job, which is, by the way, the oldest book in the Bible. They saw this thing of how high is the heavens. It was those that came and questioned Job, and they asked him in Job 11:7, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Notice what that is talking about, you finding God? This is what they accused Job of: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" Isn't that what Paul's talking about? A righteousness of law, one you produce. But then verse 8 says, "It is as the heights of heaven." Who shall ascend to the heavens, that is to bring Christ down? And then it says, "And deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know?" Brothers and sisters, this is so wonderful. This is so wonderful! Christ accomplished these two things. Christ ascended

to the heavens. Christ descended to Sheol. And only because He did those, and we believe in Him, are we able to obtain this righteousness of God, in this salvation of God. It is that near you.

## **Two Essential Elements of God's Salvation**

### **The Inward Believing**

Well, let me give you the last point, just a few thoughts. The last point: two essential elements of God's salvation. There are two things, if you look at Romans 10: 9-10, these are well-known verses. These are referred to as "The Roman Road." "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from among the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart is believed to righteousness; and with the mouth confession made to salvation." There are two things here. There is one, there is an inward believing, there is a heart believing. What we need is a heart believing. It is different than a head believing. We know that. We have heard that from the first days as believers. The other is there is an outward confession. These two things are required to know God's salvation.

### **The Outward Confession**

Now, I think that is precious. It is not just one thing. I do not believe there is any such thing as secret Christians; I know some people might disagree with me on that. That is okay. But there is first of all a heart believing. And if you read these verses, that is where we get God's righteousness, just a heart believing. And then there is another thing, if we confess with our mouth. A believer ought to confess with his mouth or he is not a believer. You know that confession changed the world when we read the Book of Acts. It was a living confession, a living witness. So, two things ought to happen in you to have God's salvation. First, believing in the heart; second, confessing with your mouth. And when you do those two things, you experience God's salvation. We have already obtained God's righteousness, and then we obtain God's salvation. I think this is wonderful.

### **Righteousness Is Immediate and Salvation Is Progressive**

You know, if you read these verses and you understand carefully, God's righteousness is immediate. Understand that you do not have to wait 10 years as a Christian to mature and then you have God's righteousness. It is immediate when you believe. But God's salvation is progressive throughout your Christian life, until you are with the Lord. That is what Peter meant when he said, "Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of the soul." Now good Evangelicals will say, "No, no, no, brother, you were not right about that. I received that salvation the day I believed in the Lord Jesus." And you did. But if you understand that salvation is a lifelong process: we believe in the beginning; we believe as we continue to be conformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of the Lord Jesus; and we, at the end, have our full salvation when Christ is revealed to us. That is what the person who wrote Hebrews said, "He is able to save us to the uttermost." This is a lifelong process.

## The Full Assurance of Salvation

And then we end with this thought of the full assurance of salvation. It is only in these last three verses. But I think this is wonderful, Paul held this to the end. It says in verse 11, "For the scripture says, No one believing on him shall be ashamed." Did you notice what he said? "No one." That is the height of assurance. "No one." We can doubt it. We can say it is not true. But the apostle Paul's own testimony, "No one believing in him shall be ashamed." This is the highest assurance. I cannot think of higher assurance. I cannot think of better assurance.

But he gave more than that. He did not just stop with that. If you read verses 12 and 13, he says, "For there is no difference of Jew and Greek; for the same Lord of all is rich towards all that call upon him." Listen to what it says. "For every one whosoever, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Now, in biblical words, "shall" is an absolute word. It means certainty. Everyone. Not only did he say, "No one, no one who believes in the Lord shall be ashamed;" but then he said, "Everyone, everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord." And then he added to the assurance by saying, "Whosoever." It reminds you of John 3:16.

## Conclusion

Praise the Lord. Brothers and sisters, we have this highest assurance. When we have God's righteousness, when we have God's salvation, we have the highest assurance that can be given to men and women. This is Paul's testimony in Romans 10:1-13. This ought to be our testimony. May the Lord open our eyes.

*Lord, we are so grateful for Your words, make them living. Lord, we cannot do this. But we do not want to live in the impossible dream and spend our life trying to be what only You can do in us. We pray, open to us God's righteousness that with heart believing, we know we are righteous in You. Open to us our heart in this nearness that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Not may be saved, not hope to be saved, not struggle to be saved, but shall be saved. Lord, we thank You for Your words. Make them alive. Amen.*

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|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>God's Righteousness and God's Salvation</b>          | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Introduction</b>                                     | <b>1</b>  |
| The Ways of God                                         | 2         |
| God's Righteousness and God's Salvation                 | 2         |
| Christ Is the Only Way to the Father                    | 2         |
| Outline                                                 | 3         |
| <b>Paul's Desire for Israel</b>                         | <b>3</b>  |
| God's Unchanging Heart toward Man and Woman             | 3         |
| Religion vs Life                                        | 4         |
| Ignorant of God's Righteousness                         | 5         |
| The Purpose of the Law                                  | 6         |
| Self-Righteousness                                      | 6         |
| <b>The Nearness of God's Righteousness</b>              | <b>7</b>  |
| The Impossibility of Self-Righteousness                 | 8         |
| Obtaining vs Attaining                                  | 9         |
| God's Righteousness Is Near                             | 10        |
| The Nearness of God                                     | 10        |
| <b>Two Essential Elements of God's Salvation</b>        | <b>11</b> |
| The Inward Believing                                    | 11        |
| The Outward Confession                                  | 11        |
| Righteousness Is Immediate and Salvation Is Progressive | 11        |
| <b>The Full Assurance of Salvation</b>                  | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Conclusion</b>                                       | <b>12</b> |

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Speaker | Pittman, Kenny                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Venue   | Richmond, Virginia, US                                                                                                                                                                |
| Date    | May 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2025                                                                                                                                                            |
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