

BELIEVE & LIVE

Monday, June 5

Reading: Romans 10:1-13

Romans 10:9 *If you declare 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 profess your faith and are saved.*

Paul's focus now shifts from God's sovereignty to man's responsibility. Paul's greatest desire and prayer for his fellow Jews was that they might accept Christ as their Savior. But Israel's zeal for God was misdirected. They believed that they could achieve justification with God on their own by keeping the law. By focusing on the law, they rejected God's means of salvation through faith in Christ. They missed the fact that the whole purpose of the law was to point them to Christ who completely obeyed and thus fulfilled the law and paid the penalty the law required.

By trusting in obedience to the law, Israel misunderstood their own Scriptures. They saw righteousness in terms of outward appearance, rituals, and customs. However, Paul reminds them that in order to be right with God by the law they would have to obey it perfectly - - - never sinning even once. This is an impossibility (James 2:10).

While righteousness by the law says "DO and Live," the righteousness that is by faith says, "BELIEVE and Live." God has done it all! There is no need to go to heaven to find the answer. Christ has already come to earth to show us the way to God. He has also been raised from the dead, thus He ever lives to save those who believe. Thus salvation is near and available to all.

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. "Christ is the Culmination of the Law." The Jews tried to reach God by obeying the Law. Thus they missed the grace that Christ offered and rejected their only hope of salvation. We are not saved by doing a bunch of rules and rituals. We are saved by believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who tack on a bunch of manmade rules to salvation are missing the point, just as the Jewish nation did. If we listen and obey the Holy Spirit who lives in us, He will direct us into a life of holiness. What "rules" are you trying to live by today? How can you give the Holy Spirit full control of your life? What does the Holy Spirit use to speak and guide you?
2. "If You Declare with Your Mouth, 'Jesus is Lord.'" These are some key verses when talking about salvation. Salvation involves both an outward and inward change. Confession is not an addition to faith but an outward response to it. The believer confesses that Jesus is God. The second aspect of faith is believing in your heart. This is the inward act of faith. These are two parts of the one expression of faith. Paul once again quotes from Isaiah 28:16 (cf. 9:33) to show that God will keep His end of the bargain. He will never fail to provide righteousness for those who believe. Have you trusted Christ with your brain AND your heart? Can you publically and confidently say that 'Jesus is Lord' of your life? This is what it means to grow in your faith – that you are continuously giving your life over to His control.