

THE ROAD OF THE RIGHTEOUS

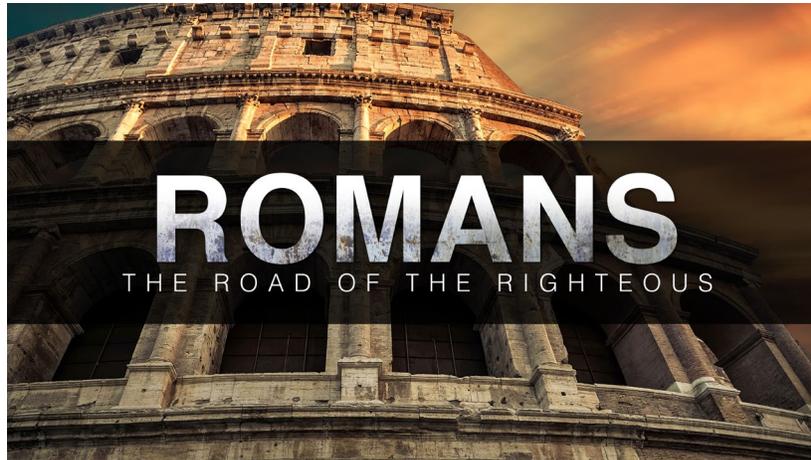
Expositional Study Of Romans

Romans 10:1-13

Written By

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A couple of doors down from my last church in California was a *Seven Eleven* (which is now a 76 station). One night, a local thug came in the store brandishing a black pistol, demanding money. Fearing for his life, the cashier emptied the cash register and placed the money in the criminal's waiting hand. With that, the man fled the premises. In his mind, it was the perfect crime. No harm. No foul.

When the police arrived, they took witness testimony and then checked the video surveillance system. Sure enough, there in full HD color was the perp with his weapon. He should have worn a mask to, at least, make tracking him down a little more difficult.

I'll never forget the robber's words when the local news ran them, "Say, man. That dude wasn't me. That was someone who looks like me. I didn't rob that store. No way. You've got the wrong guy."

Right. The video said all I needed to know. Had I been on the lucky jury, the verdict phase would have been quick and to the point, "He's guilty. Let's go home."

Funny how we naturally and cleverly make excuses for our bad behavior. Give us a little breathing room, no matter our age, and out will come the most amazing reasons why we, of all people, are not responsible for a sinful infraction. Admit it. Our sin-tainted DNA comes pre-programmed with the knee jerk reaction of passing the proverbial buck. If you don't believe me, then just sit in marriage counseling and you'll quickly change your mind. Menacing and dysfunctional marriage partners are quite adept at projecting all of their issues on everyone but themselves.

The pious Jews in Paul's letter to the Romans were made of same sinful stuff. Once they heard God predestines and elects (or chooses) people, individually or nationally, to be His people, then they logically concluded that since God had rejected them for rejecting the Messiah they

were not responsible for this misdeed. They had no choice but to reject him, hence the problem of their national distaste for the person and worship of Jesus should be laid at God's feet, not theirs.

Again, I say, right.

As Paul, a converted Jewish rabbinical scholar, argues in Romans 8:30-9:32, God does predestine and elect people to be His people. Remember, not all Jews were chosen to be His special people. He chose Isaac, but not Ishmael. He chose Jacob, and not Esau (Rom. 9:6-13). So, it is true. God predestines and elects certain people to have a special, intimate, eternal relationship with Him.

Does this doctrinal reality, which is woven, by the Spirit of God, through both testaments like a golden thread, mean we are, then, not responsible for our actions? Far from it. How do I know this? I know this tenant is true because of Paul's teaching in Romans 9:30 through 10:21. In this section of Scripture, Paul waxes eloquent about man's responsibility for his actions in this life toward God and God's ways. Unfortunately, he does not resolve the seeming cognitive enigma which exists between God's predestination and election and man's free will. He merely assumes that in God's cosmos, where His ways are beyond our ways and His thoughts are beyond our puny, limited thoughts (Isa. 55:7-9), the twin truths are not diametrically opposed but work in perfect, seamless unity.

Paul's teaching about human responsibility takes a front seat, as I have noted, in Romans 9:30-33. God had prophesied with precision that the nation would reject the Messiah (Isa. 53); however, they were, and are, responsible for spiritually stumbling all over His words and works. This section, of course, forms the fifth answer to the fifth question Jews struggled with as they entertained Paul's teaching about justification by faith being open to Jews and Gentiles. That question needs restatement and further analysis because we, too, struggle with the tension between God's elective purposes and our supposed free will.

Jewish Questions Naturally Arose From Paul's Teaching About The Gospel Of Jesus (Rom. 9)

What were those questions, which in many respects are still applicable today?

- *Question #1:* Does Israel's spiritual failure and rejection of the Messiah nullify God's national promises (Rom. 9:6-13)?
 - *Answer:* No, because God sovereignly and unconditionally chose Israel.
- *Question #2:* Do God's precise choices demonstrate He is unjust because He did not choose everyone (Rom. 9:14a)?
 - *Answer:* No, because His character pulsates with righteous purpose (Rom. 9:15-18). Remember He did not chose every family member of the Patriarchs to compose His chosen people, just select ones. In so doing, He blesses some . . . apart from their works, and does not bless others. Yet in all of this sovereign choosing, God continued to work out His purpose for mankind.
- *Question #3:* Since God chooses to bless or curse, how can He hold us accountable (Rom. 9:19-21)?
 - *Answer,* No, we freely act and God freely acts.
- *Question #4: If God Is Just, Why Does He React Slowly To Sin* (Rom. 9:22-29)?
 - *Answer #1: God Has His Purposes* (Rom. 9:22-23). He has distinct purposes

toward the lost and the saved, between non-Christians (v. 22) and non-Christians (v. 23).

- *Answer #2: God Has His Plans* (Rom. 9:24-29). He has specific and strategic plans towards Gentiles (vv. 24-6) and Jews (vv. 27-29).

Question #5: What Is The Relation Between God's Election And Man's Free Will (Rom. 9:30-10:21)?

Answer #1: The Gentiles Freely And Favorably Responded To God (Rom. 9:30). Some of them willfully and freely chose to drop their vacuous, sinful worldviews (polytheism, hedonism, Epicureanism, etc.) when they heard the gospel story of the Savior who left heaven to bear their sin on the cross and to rise the third day as the victor over sin and death. They didn't stumble over Jesus's person and work, but, on the contrary, they gladly embraced the eternal forgiveness and salvation He offered . . . and still offers today. It was, and is, their choice based on His wooing.

The Jews, conversely, who should have immediately accepted Jesus as their messianic Savior based on all of the spiritual light the Trinity had given them throughout the Old Testament, they, of all people, willfully tripped all over His claims. This is Paul's argument in 9:31-10:13.

Answer #2: The Jews Freely And Unfavorably Responded To God (Rom. 9:31-10:13). Not only did the Jews reject out of hand the claims of Jesus, despite all of the miracles He performed to validate His identity, they willfully and freely devised a works-oriented gospel which left no room for the true gospel. Paul brought this up, as you will recall, in chapter 9 verses 31-32:

³¹ but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law. ³² Why? Because *they did* not *pursue it* by faith, but as though *it were* by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone (Rom. 9).

The stone, Jesus (Dan. 2:44-45), called for all people to come to Him by means of faith only (John 3:16; 5:24-25). Pridefully thinking this was too simple, and that God *surely* will count man's religious works as important on judgment day, the Jews willfully and freely created a "gospel" of religious works related to the Law (Torah). If anyone knew about this false spiritual road, it was Paul. If anyone knew about the inability of works righteousness to replace or be added to the redemptive work of Jesus, it was Paul.

Knowing the vacuous nature of this method of salvation that Jews, and really all mankind, willfully and freely adheres to, moves Paul to drill down deeper into the topic in the ensuing verses. His goal, of course, is, really, two-fold: one, to showcase the false gospel against the true gospel, and two, to definitively demonstrate, once and for all, how each person is responsible before God what they do with the true gospel.

Paul develops his extended argument here in a five-fold format. We will logically work our way through each of his points.

First, consider Paul's Passion (Rom. 10:1). Paul was not some cold, calculating, lofty academic regarding spiritual truth. No, he, who knew how spiritually blind he used to be, speaks from his heart when he thinks about other Jews who willfully and freely reject Jesus, the true Messiah.

¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation. (Rom. 10).

Even though God knew Israel would reject the Messiah, this, from Paul's perspective didn't mean God was finished with them, nor that they didn't have a personal responsibility to respond positively to Christ's gospel. Hence, he who believed firmly in divine predestination and election still saw the daily need to pray the lost among his people. And how did he pray? With great, consuming passion. How do I know this? The Greek word he uses for prayer connotes this, viz., *deesis* (δέησις).¹ Question: Who, from your old sinful lifestyle, are you praying for? Whose name are you keeping before the throne of God? God does predestine and elect; however, since we don't know who the elect are, we are called to pray for God to save the lost in our lives. Note this well: belief in the vertical concept of predestination and election should never negatively impact your prayer life on the horizontal plane of real life. So, again I ask you: Who are you praying for . . . passionately, not passively?

Second, consider Israel's Problem (Rom. 10:2-3). Their problem, spiritually speaking, is a worldwide issue:

² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge (Rom. 10).

History demonstrates how the seventy-year Babylonian captivity burned Israel's love of idol worship from their bodies. The *Mishnah*, which supposedly contained God's additional words given to Israel on Mount Sinai, served to tell the post-captivity Jews how, in minute detail, to acquire an ongoing relationship with God by means of obedience to the Law. Put differently, the Law of Moses contained the broad strokes of what God desires from followers, while the *Mishnah* sought to make sure each Jew knew exactly what adherence to the Law really meant. Hence, if they wanted to know how far they could walk the Sabbath, or what constituted work, the section in the *Mishnah* called *Sabbath* told them in painstaking, legalistic detail. Here's one example from Sabbath chapter 12:

לְהִסָּק אִם, שָׁהוּ כָּל, לְתַקֵּן אִם, עֲצִים לְקַטְתָּהּ. חֵיב, שְׂהוּא כָּל וְהַמְזַרְד וְהַמְקַרְסִם הַמְנַכְפֵּשׁ, שְׂהוּא כָּל הַחֹרֵשׁ
הַגִּדִי פִי כְּמֵלֵא, בְּהַמְהֵל אִם, שְׂהוּא כָּל, לְתַקֵּן אִם, עֲשָׂבִים הַמְלַקֵּט. קִלְהָ בְּיָצֵה לְבִשְׁל כְּנָי

He who plows any amount, or who weeds, or who prunes [trees], or who cuts off young shoots, no matter the amount, is liable. He who gathers wood: if in order to

¹Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), **δέησις, εως, ή** (Lysias, Pla.+; Diod S 14, 106, 1; Plut., ins, pap, LXX, pseudopigr.; Mel., HE 26, 6; Nägeli 40) 'entreaty', in our lit., as almost always LXX (but not 1 Macc 11:49) **urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God, prayer** (so Plut., Coriol. 227 [30, 2]; Ps.-Lucian, Amor. 19; pap; Jos., C. Ap. 2, 197) **Lk 1:13; 2:37; Phil 1:19; 2 Ti 1:3; 1 Pt 3:12**; 1 Cl 22:6 (last two both Ps 33:16); Pol 7:2; GJs 2:4; 4:1, 2; 20:3. W. *ίκεσία* (OGI 569, 11; PPetr II, 19 [1a], 2 *μετὰ δέησεως και ίκετείας οὐνεκα τοῦ θεοῦ*) 1 Cl 59:2. W. *προσευχή*, the more general term, to denote a more specif. supplication (3 Km 8:45; 2 Ch 6:29; cp. Alex. Aphr., An. Mant. II, 1 p. 186, 3 *εὐχαὶ και δέησεις*; Orig., C. Cels. 5, 4, 19 *πᾶσαν ... δέησιν και προσευχὴν και έντευξιν και εὐχαριστίαν ἀναπεμτέον*) **Ac 1:14 v.l.; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6; 1 Ti 2:1; 5:5; IMg 7:1**. W. *προσκαρτέρησις* **Eph 6:18**; w. *ίκετηρία* **Hb 5:7**; *έν δέησει* Hv 3, 10, 7; *δ. ποιείσθαι pray* (PParis 69 II, 11 *ένθα σπονδάς τε και δέησεις ποιησάμενος*; BGU 180, 17; StudPal V, 6, 1; 3 Macc 2:1; cp. Jos., Bell. 7, 107) **Lk 5:33; Phil 1:4; 1 Ti 2:1**. *ἀναφέρειν δέησιν offer prayer* (to God) B 12:7. *έν δέησει in or with (your) prayer* Hv 3, 10, 7. W. addition of the object *ύπερ τινος* **Ro 10:1; 2 Cor 1:11; 9:14; Phil 1:4; 1 Ti 2:1f. περί τινος** (En 13:6) **Eph 6:18; πολὺ ισχύει δ. Js 5:16**. RAC VIII 1134–1258; IX 1–36.—DELG s.v. *δέω* 2 p. 270. M-M.

effect an improvement, [he is liable] for any amount; if for lighting a fire, as much as is required for boiling a light egg. He who collects grasses: if to effect an improvement, [he is liable] for any amount; if for an animal, as much as fits in a kid's mouth.

ג ג

קלב, סממניוֹת מְשָׁנִי בֵּין, שְׁמוֹת מְשָׁנִי יֵנֵב אֶחָד מִשֵּׁם בֵּין, בְּשִׂמְאָלוֹ בֵּין בֵּימִינוֹ בֵּין, אוֹתִיּוֹת שְׁתֵּי הַכּוֹתֵב הַמְשַׁכֵּן קִרְשֵׁי עַל כּוֹתֵבִין הָיוּ שְׂפָדָה, שְׂסֵר מִשּׁוֹם אֶלָּא אוֹתִיּוֹת שְׁתֵּי תִּיבּוֹ לֹא, יוֹסִי רַבִּי אָמַר. תִּיב, לְשׁוֹן דָּג, מִדְּנִיָּאל דָּן, מִנְחֹרֶר נֹחַ, וּשְׂמוֹאֵל מְעוֹן־מֹשֶׁה שֵׁם, גְּדוֹל מִשֵּׁם קָטָן שֵׁם מְצִינּוֹ, רַבִּי אָמַר. זוּגוּ בָּן אִיזוֹ לִידַע מִגְּדִיָּאל:

He who writes two letters, whether with his right hand or with his left hand, whether the same letter or two different letters or in two pigments, in any language, is liable. Rabbi Jose said: they made one liable for writing two letters only because [he makes] a mark, since this is how they would write on each board of the tabernacle, to know which its companion was. Rabbi Judah said: we find a short name [forming part] of a long name: “Shem” as part of “Shimon” or “Shmuel”, “Noah” as part of “Nahor”, “Dan” as part of “Daniel”, “Gad” as part of “Gaddiel”.²

If anything, post-captivity, Israel had a burning zeal to obey the Law of God, the Mosaic and the Mishnah, in order to acquire and maintain a relationship with Him.

During the blood-thirsty reign of the Seleucid ruler named Antiochus Epiphanes, Eleazar the priest went to his death over the fact they sought to defile his body by making him eat pork. William Barclay recounts the shocking event recorded in 4 Maccabees:

Antiochus ordered him to eat pork. The old man refused. ‘No, not if you pluck out my eyes, and consume my bowels in the fire. We, O Antiochus,’ he said, ‘who have been persuaded to govern our lives by the divine law, think that there is no compulsion more powerful than our obedience to law.’ If he had to die, his ancestors would receive him ‘holy and pure’. He was ordered to be beaten. ‘His flesh was being torn off by the scourges, his blood flowing, and his sides were being cut to pieces.’ He fell, and a soldier kicked him. In the end, the soldiers so pitied him that they brought him dressed meat, which was not pork, and told him to eat it and say that he had eaten pork. He refused. He was in the end killed. ‘I am dying in burning torments for the sake of the law,’ he prayed to God. ‘Even in the tortures of death he resisted,’ says the writer, ‘for the sake of the law’ (cf. 4 Maccabees, chapters 5–6).³

When Paul spoke of zeal for obedience to the Law, he knew from Jewish history what he was talking about. He also knew from his own life how he had formerly sought to stay right with God by adherence to the plethora of divine laws. He speaks about this in his letter to the Philippian:

... although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the

²Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1933), 111.

³William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, 3rd ed. fully rev. & updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 162.

nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. ⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ (Phil. 3).

If anyone thought they would get into heaven based on religious works, it was men like Paul. He was the poster child for legalism as the means for sustaining spiritual life.

This same religious zeal is alive and well in Israel today. On Sabbath everything shuts down, and you certainly do not want to get on a Sabbath elevator because it is pre-programmed to stop at every floor of a hotel. When a faithful, zealous Jew gets on this particular elevator he doesn't have to break the Law by working were he to attempt to push the button for a certain floor. Barriers are also erected in the lobby of hotels on Sabbath so the pious Jews do not have to watch un-pious Jews work on the Sabbath by manning the front desk. In addition, no food is cooked for the non-Jewish guests so as to break the law not to work on Sabbath. Leftovers, which are quickly warmed up, keep everyone spiritually faithful.

Why did the Jews of Paul's day, and even those of our day, think this type of legalistic activity would, and will, garner favor with God?

³ For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God (Rom. 10).

The Greek verb here for "not knowing," is one you know well: *ἀγνοέω*, *agnoco*, from which we get our work agnostic. Simply put, the word means the Jews were simply unaware that righteousness is something God declares over you at the moment of FAITH. It is not something you acquire as you perpetually observe mindless, never-ending religious rules and regulations. Pridefully, however, thinking their works were, in fact, important to God, the Jews willfully and freely chose not to subject themselves to God's righteousness which comes only by means of faith in the person and work of Jesus, the Messiah. They, like so many today, devised an intricate system of religious rules and regulations which went way beyond those God had given them, and then taught everyone that obedience to these laws would hopefully give them spiritual life one day.

Question: Are you guilty of creating your own gospel because you don't like God's gospel of a sinner becoming justified in His courtroom by means of faith? Are you trapped in a religion of your father and mother which teaches you that you must adhere constantly to their religious rules and regulations to be saved? If so, please realize that this system of salvation will never save you because your works can never cover your sin. I think you are starting to realize that, right? Are you guilty of a misplaced religious zeal? Note to self: Religious zeal will never save anyone for it is based on man's work, not God's work. It, however, is your free choice to either stay with your religious system or to embrace, by faith, the gospel Jesus offers you. You are responsible for your actions, just as the Jews in Paul's day were.

No wonder Paul spoke more about this works-based concept of redemption. It is so pervasive. You see it in Judaism, Islam, Christian Science, Hinduism, Taoism, Mormonism, and the like. Unlike the Christian gospel, they are all founded and grounded, though erroneously so, on the concept of working oneself into the good graces of God. As Jesus warns in Matthew 7, they will be shocked on judgment day when their works won't measure up to His lofty standard of perfection (Matt. 7:22). And because they possess a freewill they will be held accountable for the religious path they chose to walk.

With verse 4, Paul moves from the negative to the positive.

Third, consider God's Provision (Rom. 10:4). In one sentence, Paul tells us why works righteousness will never please God:

⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. 10).

What was the purpose of the Mosaic Law? J. Dwight Pentecost's article *The Purpose of the Law* in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, gives us the multiple purposes of the Law:

- It revealed the holiness of God (1 Pet. 1:15).
- It exposes the sinfulness of man (Gal. 3:19).
- It revealed the standard of holiness required of those who desire fellowship with a holy God (Psalm 24:3-5).
- It was our schoolmaster to guide us to see Christ as the fulfillment of the law (Gal. 3:24).
- It served to unify the nation, to bring them together as one (Ex. 19:5-8; Deut. 5:27-28).
- It separated Israel from other nations (Ex. 31:13).
- It provided the means whereby sinners could secure forgiveness of sins (Lev. 1-7).
- It showed Israel how to worship God (Lev. 23).
- It showed whether one was in God's theocracy or not (Deut. 28).
- It showed man of his utter inability to keep all of the Law and by so doing it, *ipso facto*, pointed him to Christ, the One who could fulfill all of the demands of the Law because He was without sin.⁴

Now, every sinner, Jew or Gentile, who believes in the person and work of the perfect One, Jesus Christ, secures true righteousness. Each man, however, must willfully and freely make his choice to accept, by faith, that Jesus was, and is, the complete fulfillment of everything the Law of God required. This, in and of itself, leaves no room for man to attempt to work his way into God's presence. The only work which counts to God is the work of Christ, who alone was capable of fulfilling all of the Law. Now, salvation and righteousness come to those who embrace this truth by means of faith, and nothing else.

Question: Do you, who still hold to salvation by your works, now see the utter futility of your position? I think the time is right to abandon your works, while opting to believe in Christ's redemptive work. The choice is yours. What will you do?

For those, like the Jews of Paul's day, who might need a little more information about why they should walk away from their concept of righteousness acquired by means of works, Paul gives us some powerful proofs to move us toward spiritual truth and spiritual life.

Fourth, consider God's Proofs (Rom. 10:5-8). First, let us read the texts Paul quotes here from the Old Testament.

⁵ For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. ⁶ But the righteousness based on faith

⁴J. Dwight Pentecost, "The Purpose of the Law," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, no. 228 (July 1971), 227-233.

speaks thus, "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 which we are preaching, (Rom. 10).

In verse 5, Paul, an Old Testament scholar, quotes from Leviticus 18:5 to drive home the point that if you want to attempt to achieve righteous by means of works, then you will have to live a perfect life for the Law calls for perfect obedience.

⁵ You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD (Lev. 18).

This is the first proof that all Jews (really, all people) should leave their works-based notion of salvation because they cannot ever meet its lofty requirement.

Moving to verse 6, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 30:11-14 to drive home the point that there is nothing Jews need to do in order to secure righteousness before God. No needs to try and ascend to heaven to bring the Messiah to mankind because He has already come on His own free will, and no one needs to descend into the grave in order to resurrect the Messiah because He already did this, again, on His own free will. Hence, there is nothing the sinner needs to do to secure salvation other than believe in what Christ has already accomplished. Christ, then, is not hard to find, as Paul states in verse 8. He is but a word of faith away to a sinner.

For those who realize the vanity of their works-based salvation, Paul does not leave them hanging either. In the ensuing verses he shows them how to find true salvation. Once more, the emphasis is upon each person making their own free will decision with gospel of Jesus.

Fifth, consider God's Provision (Rom. 10:9-13). Here Paul leaves no doubt in any Jewish mind regarding how a person is really saved.

⁹ that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;

Note the cause/effect relationship in verse 9.

To the Jews who rejected outright the deity of Jesus, Paul says that in order to be truly saved they must confess Him as Lord, *kuprion* (κύριον). This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew name for God, viz., Yahweh or Jehovah. Thus, to confess Jesus is Lord is tantamount to saying that you believe He was, and is, in fact, God Himself. Mark well what Paul is not saying. He is not saying in order to be saved you must subjectively submit to the Lordship of Christ and commit your life to constantly following hard after him. He is not saying this at all for this would undercut his argument against works being part of salvation. What is saying is directed, first and foremost, to the Jews who rejected Jesus. In order for them to be saved and obtain God's righteousness, they had to change their minds about the person of Christ. He was, and is, the Lord, God in the flesh, as prophesied (Mic. 5:2).

In addition, in order to be saved, unbelievers like the Jews who denied the resurrection of Jesus, must confess they believe in the reality of the resurrection. As Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection is THE foundation of the faith. With it this is faith and salvation. Without it there is no hope. No wonder, then, that Peter made Christ's resurrection the capstone of his sermon on that first Pentecost after the death and resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:29-36). He shared

this truth and 3,000 Jews left their legalism behind and placed their faith in the only One who could save them. What happened to them is exactly what Paul talks about in Romans 10:10,

¹⁰ for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

First, their willful faith in Jesus's deity and resurrection led to their salvation. Second, they were, to recall the words of Isaiah in 28, verse 16, not disappointed because they were saved to the uttermost. Yet none of this was put into motion until they first willfully and freely believed in and confessed Christ as the resurrected Lord. The same holds true today. If you will but come to Christ on His terms, not yours, you will not be disappointed for He will save you once and for all time.

And just who can come to God His terms of grace? Paul blew the Jewish mind with these closing words:

¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; ¹³ for "Whoever will call upon the name of the LORD will be saved" (Rom. 10).

Paul's words here are reminiscent of the lyrics of the hymn *There's Room At The Cross For You*.

The cross upon which Jesus died,
Is a shelter in which we can hide;
And its grace so free is sufficient for me,
And deep is its fountain as wide as the sea

There's room at the cross for you,
There's room at the cross for you,
Tho millions have come, There's still room for one
Yes, there's room at the cross for you.

Tho millions have found Him a friend,
And have turned from the sins they have sinned,
The Savior still waits to open the gates
And welcomes a sinner before it's too late.

There's room at the cross for you,
There's room at the cross for you,
Tho millions have come, There's still room for one
Yes, there's room at the cross for you.

The hand of my Savior is strong,
And the love of my Savior is long;
Through sunshine or rain, through loss or in gain,
The blood flows from Calvary to cleanse every stain.

There's room at the cross for you,
There's room at the cross for you,
Tho millions have come, There's still room for one
Yes, there's room at the cross for you.

[Ira F. Stanphill, 1946]

If you have never confessed Christ as your resurrected Lord and Savior, then please realize there is plenty of room at the foot of His blood-stained cross for you. Drop you works at His nail-scarred feet, and accept, by faith, His redemptive work. He will, in turn, forgive you and save you. And at that precise moment you will join a whole throng of people who are not disappointed they made this decision of all decisions.

But you, first, must freely step forward in faith and confess Him. Do this and you shall live.