

A RELATIONSHIP THAT LASTS

ROMANS 10:1-10

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[5] For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. [6] But the righteousness based on faith says, "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 that we proclaim); [9] because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (ESV)

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Introduction

Today I want to speak about the importance of having relationships. Throughout your life, many people will come and go, it is the nature of the society we live in today. Gone are the days where a person was born into the world in the house in which they grew up. Gone are the days where you were buried in the family plot on your own property.

We can travel to different counties within minutes where it used to take most of a day with the horse and wagon.

When a family began to build a house or a new barn, the neighbors would simply come to the site and raise the house or the barn. It was made into an event where the women would gather to cook and catch up on the news.

Horizontal Relationships

True relationships were built through a common life experience or cause. I have read reports of people who went through the same disaster together, have a continuing relationship for decades. The same can be said for those that have served in the military during combat. There is a brotherhood created in serving and that is rarely broken. My best friends in high school I haven't seen or talked to in over 40 years.

Our horizontal relationships are very important. If you are in your 40's or older, you know that friends come and go. Merriam-Webster defines a friend as "one attached by affection or acquaintance; a favored companion."

We can have friends and never invest in them. PTA, church members, people we went to college with could all be an acquaintance. But we might never have built a relationship with that person. I have some friends that I don't even know their children's first names. Or if their children are married and the names of their wives or grandchildren.

Linda and I have friends that we might see every 10 years or so but when we meet, it is like we haven't been apart except for the receding hair line or the few extra pounds they are carrying. Some of our closest friends we see about twice a year.

Relationships are more than having friends. Relationships are built on investing. Investing time. Investing emotionally. Investing during times of tragedy and sorrow. Investing in confidences. There are two important points in the difference of having friends and building relationships with people. In a friendship that has turned into a relationship, that relationship is reciprocated by the other person. And secondly, our friends may not be a positive influence in our lives, where those we are investing in are.

That is the beauty of investing in someone's life. When King Solomon was instructing the young men on life in general, he said:

Proverbs 18:24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Let us look into today's passage.

Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

As a pastor, I understand Paul's lament. In the previous chapter we find the subject of who Paul wants to see saved. It is Israel's unbelief that brings Paul's emotion to the surface.

Romans 9:30–33 (ESV)

³⁰ *What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ as it is written,*

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

It is Paul's heart's desire and his prayer for his fellow Jews to be saved.

[2] For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

Paul laments that it is not for lack of trying that they are not saved. They have a zeal for God, but they don't understand God and His desire for them. They have a zeal, “a jealousy and fervent mind” toward God, but in their zeal, they do not know him.

[3] For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

May I say here that ignorance is a voluntary action? Paul is saying that they have chosen not to understand God and His desire in their hearts, but instead fill their time in establishing their own understanding of God.

I am ignorant of many things today. I am ignorant of Advanced Calculus. I am ignorant of the fundamentals of sewing. I am ignorant of roping a calf. I am ignorant of writing a case study in a law suit.

I am not stupid. I am not slow of mind on these areas. I simply choose not to know them. It is totally my choice to be ignorant of Advanced Calculus, sewing, roping a calf or writing a case study.

In this case, Israel chose not to know and understand God's righteousness. Instead they tried to find God in their own righteousness. That is defined as "works"

[4] For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Christ – or rather faith in Christ. Justification can only be obtained through Christ and not through our own attempts of righteousness.

... *the end of the law for righteousness* - the Greek word for end translates as *completes*.

Therefore, this verse may be transliterated as "It is the faith in Christ that completes God's Law to attain righteousness to anyone who believes."

[5] For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

Moses is the writer of the Law. In it, righteousness was prescribed as keeping every aspect of the LAW, which we all know is impossible. Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia:

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. KJV

Righteousness under the LAW was and is impossible to attain. The LAW was our "schoolmaster". In other words, the Law showed us that righteousness can only come by Christ.

[6] But the righteousness based on faith says, "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 that we proclaim);

So what does the Doctrine of Justification say and mean? It is based on faith and not of works. The word is easy to understand and embrace...it is in your mouth, meaning that the doctrine does not have to be sought out...it is already in your thoughts. It is "in your heart" The Bible writers use heart when explaining our mind and its ability to understand, meditate and decide.

The Gospel message is so easy to hear and to have an understanding of. It is the "word of faith." The Apostle sums up this passage by illustrating what the Gospel message, the "word of faith" doctrine really is.

[9] because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Confess and profess are the same root word in the Greek. Once a person hears the Gospel message, their understanding of the Gospel is in their heart or understanding then a profession of Jesus Christ as Lord is not far from coming to fruition. The requirements include an understanding that Jesus is Emmanuel (God with Us), that He died a death of sacrifice unto the LORD for the sins of man. My sins and your sins, He died for each and every one of us. He was placed into the earth and three days later, the LORD raised him from the dead and now He sits at the right hand of the Father is all that is needed. Nothing else matters. It is the birth, death, resurrection and His certain return that we cling to and believe in. Paul says if we believe those things, *“You will be saved.”*

[10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Belief is not simply understanding that Jesus is God, who died, was resurrected and will soon return. It is believing this above all other doctrines or teaching. It means that a person puts that influence into every action and word spoken in their life.

I could go to a church every day of my life. On the contrary believing in the church doesn't save me. I could read the bible through every year, but that doesn't save me. You could be baptized so often that the fish know me by name, but that doesn't save you.

Salvation comes from two separate events. The first is understanding that our sin separates us from God. We are told to confess our sins in order to gain repentance.

The second step is to acknowledge that Jesus is God and that He died for our sins, was bodily resurrected from the grave and now sits at the right hand of God. He rose victorious over sin, death, Satan and the curse. This is what we believe, repent of our sins, confess that Jesus is God and our Savior.

Salvation brings justification. *“Just-as-if-I'd-never-sinned”* That only comes with belief...not just knowledge.

That belief must take over your whole being for in that moment that you truly believe, salvation occurs.

Henry Morris writes considering salvation.

There is a popular Christian song whose chorus ends with these words: *“You ask me how I know He lives; He lives within my heart.”* This may sound spiritual, but this is not how we know He lives! We are saved because of the objective fact that He died for our sins and then rose bodily from the tomb, triumphant over sin, death, the Curse, and Satan, alive in His glorified body for evermore. It is this which we must believe in our hearts and confess with our lips. For Him to rise bodily from the grave means that He is nothing less than God, the very Creator Himself. It is only because of who He is that He could do what He did, and this is what we must believe in our hearts.

There are people who believe that Buddha lives in their hearts, or the spirit of *“the gods”* indwells their hearts, or even that *“the Christ”* is in their hearts, but *“the heart is deceitful above all things”* (Jeremiah 17:9). We can believe many things and feel many things that are not so. We know Jesus Christ is a living Savior, not because we feel His

presence in our hearts, but because He rose from the grave on the third day and “shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days” (Acts 1:3). The gospel of our salvation does not rest on our feelings, nor on someone’s teachings, but on the objective, proven, certain facts of history. Jesus Christ is alive, whether anyone feels Him living in their hearts or not, and He is at this moment bodily in heaven at the right hand of the Father (e.g., Romans 8:34).

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). HMM

Conclusion

It is Paul’s heart’s desire and his prayer for his fellow Jews to be saved. It is my desire that everyone within the sound of my voice might be saved. There is no greater calling for a Christian, that the presentation of the Gospel.

- A person is not saved because of spiritual encounter or a feeling overcomes us.
- A person is not saved because you adhere to a specific teacher or someone you admire says so.
- A person is not saved by Communion, baptism, keeping the Ten Commandments, giving regularly to the church.
- A person is not saved because of the amount of time we spend in prayer.

We are only saved by repentance and belief. Everything else is a false salvation.

Acts 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.