

# Romans 10 - Israel in the Present: Rejected

## V. Sovereignty (Rom 9:1—11:36)

### (2) Israel in the present: Rejected (9:30—10:21)

#### (A) Israel pursued righteousness by Law rather than by faith (9:30—10:4)

(a) Israel's refusal to righteousness by faith (9:30-33)

(b) Paul's concern over Israel's spiritual condition (10:1)

(c) Israel's ignorance of righteousness by faith (10:2-4)

#### (B) Israel ignored the teaching that righteousness is by faith rather than works (10:5-13)

##### (a) Righteousness available through faith (10:5-10)

(i) Not by Law (10:5)

(ii) Not hard to find (10:6-8)

(iii) Is available through faith (10:9-10)

##### (b) Righteousness universally available (10:11-13)

(i) Available to all (10:11,13)

(ii) For both Jew and Greek (10:12)

#### (C) Israel refused many opportunities to accept God's righteousness by faith (10:14-21)

##### (a) Five elements of evangelism (10:14-15)

##### (b) Israel refused to believe despite effective preaching (10:16-17)

##### (c) Israel's excuses for unbelief answered (10:18-21)

###### (i) Excuse #1 (10:18)

(a) Excuse: Israel did not hear

(b) Response: Message went everywhere

###### (ii) Excuse #2 (10:19-20)

(a) Excuse: Israel did not understand

(b) Response: Gentiles believed

###### (iii) Conclusion (10:21)

## Romans 10

### (2) Israel in the present: Rejected (Rom 9:30—10:21)

#### (A) Israel pursued righteousness by Law rather than by faith (9:30—10:4) (Cont'd)

(b) Paul's concern over Israel's spiritual condition (10:1)

1 Brothers *and sisters*, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation.

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

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God about the Jews is that they would be saved.

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

- The fact that his own countrymen, the Jews, missed the Messiah because they came to Him by works instead of by faith broke Paul's heart

— In 9:3, Paul wished that he was "separated from Christ" for the sake of unbelieving Israel. Paul says that if it meant being cut off from Christ and spending eternity in hell for Israel to accept the Messiah, he would do it.

(c) Israel's ignorance of righteousness by faith (10:2-4)

2 For I testify about them that they have a **zeal for God**, but **not in accordance with knowledge**.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

2 For I can testify on their behalf that they have a zeal for God, but it is not in keeping with full knowledge.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

- "...zeal for God" - the Christ-rejecting Jews Paul is referring to were the most fervent people on earth for God. Ironically, it was Israel's "zeal" that set her up for failure.

— Zeal also characterized Paul's life, which in many ways duplicated Israel's experience as a nation. Perhaps Paul had his own experience in mind (Cf. Acts 26:11; Gal 1:13-14; Phil 3:4-6). It had kept him from believing on Christ too (Cf. Acts 22:3; Gal 1:14)!

— Zeal without knowledge is dangerous. Zeal is never a substitute for truth. It's as if Paul's people are in a fast car, but going the wrong direction.

— The Jewish people had a knowledge of God, but they did not know God the Messiah, which is crucial for salvation

- "...not in accordance with knowledge" - *epignōsis*, full knowledge; the Jews had knowledge (*gnosis*), but Paul says they did not have full knowledge (*epignōsis*)

— Their problem was not a lack of zeal, but a lack of knowledge

— Hosea made the same point: the reason Israel is lost is because of "a lack of knowledge" of spiritual truth (Hosea 4:6)

— The "knowledge" that they are missing is knowledge that Jesus is the Messiah (1 Tim 1:13)

— The Jews don't understand the basics of their own Bible; they don't understand how their patriarch, the very first Jew, came to righteousness (through faith, Gen 15:6)

— In all of their zeal, the Jews of the 1st century missed a rudimentary piece of knowledge (faith instead of works), thus they tripped/stumbled over Christ

— The 1st century Jews were sincere, but they were sincerely wrong. Being sincere doesn't make one right. In 1 Kings 18:28-29, the prophets of Baal were sincere in thinking that they could invoke their god through self-mutilation, they cut themselves until blood gushed out, but no one paid attention.

— You can also go the opposite way...you can have sincerity with no zeal. You can have a ton of biblical knowledge, but your zeal for the things of God can dissipate. Your prayer life dissipates. Evangelistic fervor for the lost dissipates. But they know all the right stuff. This is dead orthodoxy.

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

3 For they are ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God while they try to establish their own, and they have not submitted to God's means to attain righteousness.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

- "...not knowing about God's righteousness" - a state of "willful ignorance"

— The Jews did not seek God's righteousness or seek to be declared righteous by faith. Rather, they sought to establish their own righteousness, to their own glory, by works.

- "...seeking to establish their own" - they sought their own "religion" instead of going down the path that God had clearly laid out for them in the pages of the OT

— They didn't know the truth...it was available and obvious for them to receive, but they willfully rejected it, remained in a state of "willful ignorance" and decided to work out their righteousness in their own way

- "...did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God" - consequently, they were not subjected to the method required to come to Christ

### **God's Righteousness and Ours**

We use the same word to speak of God's righteousness and human righteousness.

However, these are two completely different things:

- God's righteousness is His own nature. God *is* righteous, just as God *is* love.
- Human righteousness is merely a social quality—avoid certain deeds and do certain things society agrees are good.

There are five dangerous consequences when people fail to see the completely different nature of God's righteousness and their own:

1. They are self-satisfied
  - When people confuse their righteousness with God's, they are like sick people who do not seek a doctor because they like what they see in the mirror
  - They may use exercise or new clothes, but ignore the disease that will kill them
  - Their outward appearance only conceals their desperate need for a cure
2. They look down on others
  - People who are satisfied with their own righteousness have a high view of themselves and a low view of God. They think they are much better than other people.
  - Their attitude is often, "I'm not as bad as that guy"
3. They resent Jesus and His gospel
  - This explains why many Jewish leaders hated Jesus when He was among them
  - Like all who are self-righteous and prideful, they expect others to commend their behavior and act like them
  - Jesus' unattainable righteousness was an intolerable offense to people who considered themselves to be quite good and clearly better than others
4. They misunderstand and mishandle the Law
  - God gave the law to show that all people are sinners, not a way to be saved
  - When people suppose their own efforts make them righteous, they attempt to lower God's standard to a level they feel able to meet
5. They are unwilling to submit to God's righteousness
  - We will not submit to God's righteousness, which means acknowledging we need it and seeking it in Christ where alone it may be found

4 **For** Christ is **the end** of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

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

4 For the Messiah is the culmination of the Law as far as righteousness is concerned for everyone who believes.

4 For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

- "For" - *gar*, the Greek includes the coordinating participle, but it is not translated in the NIV

— It introduces a statement that is crucial to Paul's explanation of Israel's stumbling

- "...the end" - *telos*, the result, the termination, the summation, the completion

— Christ is the end/result of works righteousness because righteousness is now found in Jesus Christ alone, by faith (Phil 3:9)

- The word stands in the emphatic first position in the Greek sentence. It means that Christ is the *designed* end, the *object* to which the Law pointed (Gal 3:24; 2 Cor 3:1-18; Heb 7:11-18).
- Jesus is both the “purpose” of the Law and the “termination” of the law. Since He is the end of the Law, there is no justification through the Law (Gal 2:16). See **Mosaic Covenant**
- > **The Law of Moses Has Been Rendered Inoperative** in [8 Covenants of the Bible](#).
- Sanctification also no longer comes through the Law (Heb 7:19). Thus, since both justification and sanctification do not come through the Law, it is quite evident that the Law ended in Christ.
- Paul spent the first part of his life trying to be righteous before God through his own effort and zeal in keeping the Law. And then one day it was revealed to him that all of his efforts meant absolutely nothing. He then dropped all of that and decided to simply trust in the One who was righteous, Jesus Christ.
- There are two ways to God...trust in yourself that you can work it out on your own, or simply trust in the One who has already worked it out for you.

(B) Israel ignored the teaching that righteousness is by faith rather than works (v5-13)

(a) Righteousness available through faith (10:5-10)

(i) Not by Law (10:5)

**5** For Moses writes of the righteousness that is based on the Law, that the person who performs them will **live** by them.

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

**5** For Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the Law as follows: “The person who obeys these things will find life by them.”

**5** For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

- Paul is going to make the case that salvation by faith was taught by Moses.

- Paul quotes the OT (Lev 18:5) saying if you want to be justified by the Law, you must live the Law perfectly (James 2:10)

— In Lev 18:5, Moses himself saw the impossibility of keeping the Law

— The contrast in this passage is not between the Law and faith, but between righteousness proceeding from the Law and righteousness proceeding from faith. No man attains any righteousness that proceeds from the Law because he fails to keep the Law perfectly. Thus, the only way a man is justified, or declared righteous, is if he proceeds on the basis of faith.

- If a Jew were to receive righteousness by keeping the demands of the Law, that would be human achievement; it would not be from God
- However, a Jew would need to keep the entire Law perfectly all his life—an impossible task (James 2:10)
- "...live" - experience justification (Cf. 2:13)

(ii) Not hard to find (10:6-8)

6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL GO UP INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down),

6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down),

6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will go up to heaven?' (that is, to bring the Messiah down),

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*:)

- Verses 6-8 are quoted from Deut 30:11-14...

— This passage outlines the prescription that God gave to the Joshua generation on how to prosper in the Land

— Moses' point was that the Israelites should not think that pleasing God was something beyond their reach. A proper attitude of faith toward God is essentially what He required.

— It was pointless for the Israelites to think that they had to be good enough to "ascend into heaven" in order "to bring the Messiah down" to earth to save His people.

- You don't need to ascend into heaven to learn the truths of God...

7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

7 or 'Who will go down into the depths?' (that is, to bring the Messiah back from the dead)."

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

- ...and you don't need to descend into the abyss to learn how to come in faith to Christ and learn how God gives him a righteousness that he has never earned...

— God had already accomplished those things for the ungodly in the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus. All they had to do was accept what God had done for them in Christ.

— To obtain righteousness, one does not need to go either to heaven or hell, because it is apart from human merit. Man does not need to initiate the Incarnation to bring Christ down, since this has already been done. Nor does man need to initiate the Resurrection to bring Christ up, since this has already been done. Faith righteousness is not initiated by human merit.

Paul interprets Moses' words in light of the Cross. To think that anything we do persuades God to save us is to live as if Jesus had never come down from heaven, or to act as if God had not raised Him from the dead. In other words, when we add to God's requirement of faith, we say Jesus' perfect life and substitutionary death is not enough. But Jesus has done all that is necessary for our salvation.

To "ascend into heaven" and "descend into the deep" are proverbial expressions for doing impossible things. But great sacrifices and impossibly hard or even miraculous acts add nothing to Jesus' finished work on the Cross.

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,

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,

8 But what does it say? "The message is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart." This is the message about faith that we are proclaiming:

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

- ...these teachings are plain, they are right in front of your face.

- For the Israelites in the OT, the formula was clear: obey the Mosaic Law and be blessed (Deut 28:1-14), but disobey the Mosaic Law and be cursed (Deut 28:15-68)

- Paul quotes from Deut 30:14 to reaffirm the fact that the great Lawgiver taught salvation came by faith

- "...word of faith" - the message that righteousness comes by faith. This is the message or gospel that Paul has been preaching.

- Faith is easy compared to a lifetime of slavish obedience to the Law. Anyone can express it easily, with the "mouth" and accept it easily with the "heart."

- These quotes from Deuteronomy were part of Moses' charge to the generation of Israel about to enter the land of Canaan

- This exhortation was the conclusion of Moses' prophetic description of God's dealing with Israel. Blessing was promised for faith and obedience, and chastisement would result from rejection and disobedience.

- If Israel forsook God, Moses said, she would face worldwide dispersion and affliction. When the people then finally do turn to God in faith, He will restore them to blessing, prosperity, and prominence among the nations (Deut 30:1-10).

- The point of Moses' exhortation (Deut 30:11) is that the generation to whom he was speaking had the message (Deut 30:14)

— Since the Israelites in Moses' day had the message, they did not need to ask that it be brought down from heaven or that someone "cross the sea to get it" (Deut 30:13). Instead, the word (Moses' instructions) was "nigh" (near) them (Deut 30:14).

— In effect, Paul indicated that the same truth applied to his generation, with the added fact that Christ had come in the flesh (John 1:14), and had been resurrected. Therefore there was no need for anyone to ask "to bring Christ down" (in His Incarnation) or "to bring Christ up from the dead." He had already come and had been resurrected.

— The message of righteousness by faith in Paul's day was "near" his readers (available to them) and this was "the word" (*rhēma*, "saying") of faith he was proclaiming.

(iii) Is available through faith (10:9-10)

9 that **ifyouconfess** with your **mouth** Jesus as Lord, and believe in your **heart** that **God raised Him from the dead**, you will be **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 will be saved;

9 If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

- Verses 9-10 are a form of Jewish poetry called synonymous Hebrew parallelism. Hebrew poetry did not rhyme sounds, it rhymed ideas.

— In synonymous Hebrew parallelism, the second line (v10) summarizes or explains the first line (v9). In other words, the second line (v10) is saying the exact same thing as the first line (v9) but with different words. Same thought, different words.

- Accurate interpretation of any passage must begin with its context. The broader context of Rom 9-11 deals with the nation of Israel:

- Rom 9: Israel in the Past: Elected
- Rom 10: Israel in the Present: Rejected
- Rom 11: Israel in the Future: Accepted

— Therefore, any attempt at accurate interpretation of v9-13 must view these verses in the proper relationship with the nation of Israel

— Even the immediate context of the verses both before and after v9-13 are about Israel:

- 9:30—10:4 - Paul declares that Israel largely rejected Christ because it sought to establish its own righteousness through works of the law rather than receive the gift of God's (imputed) righteousness through faith in Christ.
- 10:5 - summarizes the salvation philosophy of unbelieving Israel stated in 9:30—10:4
  - Paul quotes from Lev 18:5 to show that works-righteousness is based on law-keeping and the principle that if you can truly keep the Law you will live.

- The problem with the attempt to be justified (declared righteous) before God by law-keeping is that someone must keep the Law perfectly since God is perfectly righteous, but no one is perfectly righteous in God's sight.
- 10:6-7 - Paul says that person who has the (imputed) righteousness of faith speaks in a certain way. A Jew who believes in Jesus would not say to "bring Christ down" from heaven (v6) or "to bring Christ up from the dead" (v7). A believer is one who already has faith in Christ therefore they don't think they must still "do" these things because they know that Christ already did them.
  - The reference in v6 to not needing to bring Christ down from heaven before believing parallels Paul's subsequent statement about confessing with the mouth that "Jesus is Lord" in v9.
  - In v7, the righteousness of faith does not say, "Who will descend into the abyss? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead" because the Jewish believer already knows that Christ has risen from the dead. There is no need to bring Him up from the grave because the work of His sacrificial death and bodily resurrection is already complete.
    - The reference in v7 about not needing to bring Christ up from the dead parallels the other half of v9 where Paul speaks of believing in one's heart that God raised Jesus from the dead.
- 10:8 - the message of faith in Christ that brings imputed righteousness was as near and available to the unbelieving Jews as their mouth and heart
- Summary of v6-8: The message of faith in Christ that brings imputed righteousness was as near and available to the unbelieving Jews as their mouth and heart.

In v9-10, Paul continues using the terms "mouth" and "heart" to explain that a person's faith in Jesus as the risen Lord *is reflected* in the confession of that person's mouth.

The Greek word "confess" is *homologeō*, which means to agree with, admit, or "to say the same thing." Other examples in in 1 John 1:9 when we agree with God that we have sinned, or in 1 John 4:2,15 and 2 John 7 when we agree that Jesus is the Son of God who came in the flesh.

Confessions of Faith have a long history in Protestant Christendom. These "confessions" are just another way of saying, "This is what we believe to be true." This is the same sense in which Paul uses the word *homologeō* in v9-10. Thus, the confession of the mouth in v9-10 is not a second condition to be justified before God but is merely how belief in Jesus is expressed by one who is righteous through faith and not by works.

Remember, v6-8 set forth how a person **speaks** who is **righteous** before God through his or her **faith**, as clearly seen in the bolded words of verses 6-8 below:

"the **righteousness of faith speaks** in this way" (v6) "Do not **say** in your **heart**" (v6)  
 "But what does **it say**?" (v8) "**the word** is near you, in your **mouth** and in your **heart**"

(v8) "the **word of faith** which we **preach**" (v8)

Rom 10:9 simply says that if the righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus Christ could speak, what comes out of the mouth would agree with what is believed in the heart. Thus, the confession of the mouth in Rom 10:6-10 is essentially the same point Jesus made in Matt 12:34-37 (see notes there)...that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks and reveals what a person believes in his or her heart.

In Rom 10:9, when one confesses with the mouth that "Jesus is Lord," this is a mirror reflection of the belief in the heart that Jesus is truly Lord because He rose from the dead. Technically, it would not be accurate to say that the confession and belief in v9-10 are "synonymous" or "identical" as some commentators have expressed. Rather, confession of Christ is the consistent, harmonious reflection of faith in Him, just as a picture is an accurate representation of an object that was photographed.

- Based on the context, this verse (contrary to what many teach) does not add a condition for salvation (other than faith) to the gospel...the condition for salvation is not to believe and confess, it's just to believe. Over 150x in the NT the only requirement put forward for salvation is belief.

— What about a mute who cannot speak? Is the gospel open to them since they are unable to confess? Yes. What about someone from a tyrannical nation (China, islamic countries) where Christianity is illegal and Christians are killed? If they don't confess Christ, under the punishment of death, are they saved? Yes.

— People who teach that confessing Christ is a requirement for salvation surprisingly never refer to John 12:42 or John 19:38

- Unfortunately, this verse is wrongly used by many evangelical ministries to teach the ABC (Admit, Believe, Confess) path for salvation. They say that if you don't confess Christ before man, you're not really saved. They also point to (what they believe says the same thing) Matt 10:32-33 to bolster their case (see notes there)

— If Paul is saying that a genuine Christian must confess the Son, this would make public confession of Christ a condition for salvation, in addition to trusting Him. This has no Biblical support.

— Confession is a command that is part of the second tense of salvation, sanctification. 1 John 4:15 says: Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him, and he in God. God "remains" in him, means to "abide" and refers to fellowship with Him, not salvation.

— To invoke this verse in an evangelistic context to mean that an unbeliever must confess and believe in order to be "saved" (justified) is to completely ignore the context (immediate and larger), and completely butcher proper Bible interpretation to fit a preconceived theological position.

- "...if" - third class condition (*ean* + subjunctive), meaning if at any future time this condition (confession & belief) is met (by the Jewish Remnant at the end of the Tribulation period), then this (you will be saved/delivered/rescued) will follow

- "...you" - in context, this refers to the Jewish Remnant

— The "you" cannot refer to Gentiles, Church Age believers, or any other group other than Jews and the nation of Israel. There is no indication anywhere in the text that "you" could even remotely be referring to any other group of people.

- "...confess" - *homologeō*, *homo*, "the same"; *logeō*, "to say" — it literally means "to say the same thing" or to "be in agreement with"

— In this context, it refers to "saying the same thing" about Jesus Christ as God and other believers do, namely that He is the Messiah. It is an acknowledgement of one's faith in Christ.

— This is what the Jewish Remnant will do from Petra/Bozrah at the end of the Tribulation period, which will directly lead to Jesus' return at the second coming

— They will acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah; they will "say the same thing" and "be in agreement with" God the Father on who Jesus is (the Messiah)

Hosea 5:15: I will go away *and* return to My place Until they **acknowledge their guilt** and seek My face; In their distress they will search for Me.

Matt 23:39: **For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'**"

— Their confession will be to "acknowledge their guilt" and then say (confess), "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD" (acknowledge Him as Messiah), then Jesus will return to rescue them at Armageddon

- "...mouth...heart" - a source of confusion in the interpretation of this verse

— These come from v8, where Paul quoted from Deut 30:14. The statement quoted accounts for the unusual order of "confess" then "believe" in this verse. The typical order is that a person believes, then acknowledges/confesses their belief (v10; Cf. 2 Cor 4:13-14).

— Paul quoted from Deut 30:14 to reaffirm to the Israelites that the great Lawgiver taught salvation came by faith

— What they are "confessing with their mouth" and "believing in their heart" is the "word of faith" (v8), which was the message that righteousness comes by faith.

— Paul is pointing out the "simplicity" of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. For the Jews, faith is easy compared to a lifetime of slavish obedience to the Law. Anyone can express it easily, with the "mouth" and accept it easily with the "heart."

- "...God raised Him from the dead" - the fact that Jesus is "Lord" (God and Savior) became clear when He arose from the dead (Cf. v7). Jesus' resurrection was the proof that He really was the divine Messiah, God's Holy One (Cf. Ps 16:10-11).

- Belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ meant belief that Jesus is Lord. Paul was probably speaking of belief in His resurrection as an evidence of saving faith, not as a condition for salvation.
- Jesus' resurrection was not part of His saving work. His death saved us (3:25), not His resurrection. While the resurrection is part of the good news of salvation and the gospel message (1 Cor 15:3-4), belief in the resurrection of Christ is not a condition for salvation.
- A person could experience regeneration if they only knew and believed that Jesus Christ died for their sins—without even knowing of His resurrection
- If a person heard the gospel, including the fact that Jesus arose from the dead, and did not believe that Jesus arose, would they be saved? If he disbelieved in Jesus' resurrection because he did not believe Jesus Christ is whom He claimed to be, that person would not be saved. However, if he disbelieved in Jesus' resurrection because he did not believe in the possibility of bodily resurrection, he probably would experience regeneration. In the latter case, he would just need teaching on this subject.
- This is not to discount Jesus' resurrection in any way, shape, or form. But the Bible is clear that it was His sacrificial death on the cross that appeased the wrath of God against sin, and by which we can be saved/justified before God.
- "...you will be saved" - *sōzō*, to rescue or deliver from destruction
- Those who interpret this verse out of context to mean that Christians today must confess Christ in addition to believe completely butcher the proper interpretation of "saved"
- Saved (*sōzō*) in the NT is not a technical word, meaning it does not have the same meaning every time it is used. Saved often means "delivered" or "rescued" rather than referring to our justification, as it does in this verse.
- Elsewhere in Romans (excluding Rom 9-11), the verb "save" (*sōzō*, v9) and noun "salvation" (*sōtēria*, v10) are used for the believer's past spiritual salvation, involving regeneration, justification, and reconciliation (Rom 1:16-17; 5:18; 8:24; 11:11,14-15) and for the believer's future salvation of glorification (5:9-10; 13:11). These references are in the sections of Romans where the context is salvation/justification or our future glorification.
- However, in Rom 9-11 (Cf. 10:1,9,10,13), *sōzō* and *sōtēria* are used to refer to the physical, national deliverance of the saved Jewish Remnant at the end of the Tribulation period
- In 9:27, Paul quotes Is 10:22-23 to speak of "the remnant" of Israel being "saved" on "that day" (Is 10:20). Since the "remnant" of believing Israelites is an important theme of Rom 11, it is reasonable to conclude that Paul has this same salvation in mind in 10:1,9-10,13.

— This interpretation correlates with the whole counsel of God, as this type of physical deliverance for Israel is a major theme in both the OT and the NT: Is 35:3-4; 63:1-6; Jer 30:4-11; 46:27-28; Joel 2:30-32; 3:1-2,9-16; Zech 8:13; 9:10-16; 12:1-10; 13:8-9; 14:1-9; Matt 24:13,21-22; Rom 11:26; Rev 16:13-16.

— So the belief and confession described here result in deliverance from danger, not salvation/justification. It also makes a mockery of the gospel. It ruins the simplicity of salvation designed by God and communicated throughout Scripture, which is that we're justified by faith alone in Christ alone.

— If you add confession as a requirement to gain salvation, it becomes a salvation based on works, which is an affront to the sacrifice of Jesus

10 for with the heart a *person***believes**, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he **confesses**, resulting in **salvation**.

10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

10 For one believes with his heart and is justified, and declares with his mouth and is saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

- This verse summarizes v9 in general terms (synonymous Hebrew parallelism); see note on v9

— Paul often summarizes ideas in the previous verse in general terms, with the summary often referring to the results of the action in view, as it does here (Cf. 4:25; 5:21; 6:23; 7:25)

- So how do we harmonize the 150+ passages that speak to faith/belief alone as the sole requirement of salvation, with Rom 10:9-10?

1. Look at the summation statement in v11...belief is held out as the one requirement for salvation
2. Confessing Christ is not a condition of salvation, but it can be an evidence of salvation
3. The focus/context of Rom 9-11 is Israel. Rom 10:13 is a quote from Joel 2:32, which in context is talking about what Jews at the end of the Tribulation will do, which is to come to faith in the Messiah. So "confession" in these verses is a description of the prayer of the believing remnant at the end of the Tribulation when they will call out to their Messiah to rescue them (Cf. Matt 23:39).

— So v9-10 describe the prayer of the believing remnant to God of Ps 118:26 at the end of the Tribulation. Jesus will immediately answer that prayer, return, and save Israel from the destruction of the impending armies (Armageddon).

- The confession that Paul speaks about here is not a confession that believers make to other people after we're saved. It's the confession of the Jews in prayer, not to their fellow man, but to God Himself, at the end of the Tribulation.
- "...salvation" - *sōtēria*, the question is: what aspect of salvation does taking a public stand for Christ secure?
- It might save the believer making the confession from potential discipline from God
- It might save the believer from loss of future reward (Cf. 2 Tim 2:12)
- It might save the believer from some sort of shame (v11; Cf. 1 John 2:28)
- What we can be confident this does not mean is that confession by a believer is required to save them from eternal hell, as confession is a work and we are clearly saved by faith alone in Christ alone
- In addition, v11 removes all doubt about the sole condition of salvation that v9-10 may have created...

Many churches or para-church ministries will use the ABC method of evangelism...

- **A**dmit you're a sinner
- **B**elieve in Jesus
- **C**onfess

...but this is what we would call a "dispensationally misapplied" verse. It's a verse for another dispensation, concerning Israel, not the Church. So the theory goes, if you do A and B, but not C, you're probably not a Christian and you're going to hell.

Rom 10:9-10 does not belong in the proclamation of the gospel today...it belongs with Matt 23:37-39, because Israel must publicly acknowledge their Messiah before His Second Coming. So is public confession a bad thing? Not at all! But we have to understand it properly, not as a condition for salvation, but as a condition for fellowship with God (Cf. 1 John 4:15). The moment you add A or C to the simple message of B is the moment you preach salvation by works, distort the gospel, and change God's Word.

### **Heart Faith vs Head Faith?**

Another erroneous interpretation of v9-13 is that this passage is telling us that we need to have a special kind of faith—a *heart* faith versus a *head* faith to be saved from hell. Many people have used the reference to "belief in the heart" (v9) to write tracts like "18 Inches to Salvation" (the distance between head and heart).

Joel Osteen often teaches this by creating a false dichotomy between the head and the heart. Biblically, the head and heart are frequently used interchangeably in reference to the inner person (Jer 17:10; Dan 2:28-30; Heb 8:10). For example, Job 38:36 says, "Who has put wisdom in the *mind*? Or who has given understanding to the *heart*?" Ps 73:21 also says, "Thus my *heart* was grieved, and I was vexed in my *mind*." These are examples

Synonymous Hebrew Parallelism, where the same truth is repeated or rephrased in similar language. If the Lord wanted to distinguish the heart and mind, He would contrast them using Antithetic Parallelism.

Beside the fact that Scripture doesn't distinguish between heart faith and head faith, how would we ever really know whether we've believed something only in our head but not our heart? If you believe the gospel facts that Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead and you've relied on His finished work for your eternal salvation rather than your own works, must you now *feel* a certain way about the gospel in order to truly believe it in your heart? This common error undermines the assurance of salvation by injecting an emotional element of subjectivity to the sole condition of faith in Christ for salvation.

### **Does Rom 10:9-13 Teach Lordship Salvation?**

Another false interpretation of Rom 10:9-13 claims this passage teaches you must make Christ *Lord of your life* to be saved. Based on the fact that the word "Lord" appears in v9 and v13, many assume this means the lost must submit to the Lordship of Christ as a condition for eternal life. This view was depicted for decades in the popular tract "Four Spiritual Laws" published by Campus Crusade in which the lost are told they must put Jesus on throne of their life to be saved.

Many proponents of Lordship Salvation appeal to Rom 10:9 to support their false gospel, including John MacArthur who writes:

"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" (Rom 10:9). Advise them [the lost] to **count the cost** thoughtfully. Salvation is absolutely free. So is joining the army. You don't have to buy your way in. Everything you will need is provided. But there is a sense in which following Christ—like joining the army—**will cost you dearly**. It can **cost freedom, family, friends, autonomy, and possibly even your life**. The job of the evangelist like that of the army recruiter—is to tell potential inductees the full story. That is exactly why Jesus' message was often **so full of hard demands**. [John MacArthur, *Faith Works*, p204]

This misinterpretation is seriously and tragically wrong. Rom 10:9 nor its context imply nothing about a "cost" or "hard demands" to be saved. In fact, such a view is **exactly the opposite** of what Paul is saying in Rom 9:30—10:8 where unsaved Jews were already making salvation hard rather than simply believing in Christ and His finished work for their imputed righteousness. Paul's point is that salvation is not that hard, so why are you Jews making it so difficult?

Furthermore, how does a confession of faith that Jesus is the Lord somehow morph into a condition for holy living? Confession that something is true does not necessarily equate it with sanctified living. Jesus is truly the "Lord" God and thus He possesses all divine

attributes (Col 2:9), including sovereignty. But as God, Jesus is also infinitely righteous. Does this mean we must live a righteous life to be justified? As God, He is also holy, loving, patient, and good. Does this mean that unless we are holy, loving, patient, and good in practice we are eternally lost? This leads right back to a works-gospel.

(b) Righteousness universally available (10:11-13)

(i) Available to all (10:11,13)

11 For the Scripture says, "**WHOEVER** BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE **PUT TO SHAME.**"

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

11 The Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will never be ashamed."

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

- Paul again quotes Is 28:16 (see note on Rom 9:33, where he quotes the same verse, with a difference)

- "...WHOEVER" - in this verse, Paul substitutes "THE ONE" [NASB20] in 9:33 to "WHOEVER" [NASB20]

— To make sure readers do not miss the new emphasis, Paul makes the same point again in v13 in a quote from Joel 2:32

- Paul removed all doubt about the requirement for justification that his statement in v9-10 may have caused

— Belief in God, specifically in His promises, is the only condition for justification (Cf. 3:24-25). These promises are also the basis of the believer's assurance that they possess salvation (Cf. 1 John 5:12-13).

— Paul supported his position by re-quoting part of Is 28:16 (Cf. 9:33), adding the Greek word translated *whosoever*. God responds with the gift of righteousness to every individual who believes.

- "...PUT TO SHAME" - disappointed

**Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Character of Salvation (10:12-13)**

The first line of ignorance, on the channel of salvation, led to a faulty conclusion and a second line of ignorance: that God intended to save Jews only.

(ii) For both Jew and Greek (10:12)

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 on Him;

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 on Him;

12 There is no difference between Jew and Greek, because they all have the same Lord, who gives richly to all who call on him.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

- Earlier, Paul proved that salvation in the OT was to those who believed, not on the basis of human works. In this verse, he shows that salvation is universal to all who believe. Because salvation is free, it is necessarily universal. It is free to both Jews and Gentiles alike. Insofar as the way man is saved, there is no distinction.

— In 3:22-23 he pointed out that all are sinners, both Jew and Gentile. Now he points out that all may be saved, both Jew and Gentile. The Lord of the Jews is the Lord of the Gentiles.

- Paul is not saying that all distinctions between Jews and Gentiles have been erased. In context, the point is that as far as the way one is saved, there is no distinction: all are saved by grace through faith.

— But Israel's ignorance of the universal character of salvation caused them to stumble over belief in Jesus. Since the Law was given to the Jews and not the Gentiles, the Jewish people wrongly concluded that God intended to save Jews but not Gentiles (unless the Gentile took upon himself the full Law).

(i) Available to all (10:11,13)

13 for **"EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."**

13 for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- Quoted from Joel 2:32: "And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered**: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."

- "...EVERYONE" - see note on v11

- "...CALLS ON" - to pray in faith for salvation (on the significance of the "name," Cf. Acts 3:16); this is a prophecy of the acknowledgement that Israel will make one day

— The context of Joel 2:28—3:21 is the physical deliverance of Israel in the future Day of the Lord (Tribulation)

— Specifically, Joel 2:32 refers to the Jewish Remnant calling on Christ to save them at the end of the Great Tribulation (Cf. Matt 23:37-39)

— Jews (and Gentiles also) must first believe that Jesus is risen from the dead in order to acknowledge via confession that He is Lord (v9-10) and then "call on" Him for deliverance

— Thus, v9-13 is not teaching two conditions to be saved from hell (believe and confess/call), but only one condition (believe) for justification (imputed righteousness) and a subsequent condition (call) for Israelites to be physically saved/delivered into the kingdom at the end of the Tribulation when Christ returns (Rom 11:26).

- The Second Coming is triggered by Israel's public acknowledgement that Jesus is their Messiah. This is what Joel 2:32 is talking about, and what Paul is quoting here, and what he's espousing in v9-10 (Cf. Matt 23:37-39).
- When the elect "call upon" God, they are responding to His calling of them (8:28-30)
- "...LORD" - the "Lord" of Joel 2:32 is Jesus Christ
- Peter also quoted this verse in Acts 2:21 for the same reason Paul did here. Both apostles wanted to show that the door of salvation is open to everyone.

This verse refers to the elect Remnant calling on the Name of the Lord to rescue them from impending destruction at Armageddon. Joel 2:32 refers to the physical deliverance from the future day of wrath upon the earth and the restoration of the Jews to the Land, not deliverance from hell. The Jewish people are going to have to believe in Jesus as the Messiah in order to be rescued by Him at the Second Coming (Hosea 5:15). Both the Old and New Testaments teach that before Christ can return to earth for His millennial kingdom, the nation of Israel must believe in Jesus as their Messiah and call on Him to save them (Lev 26:40-42, see extensive notes there; Jer 3:11-18; Hosea 5:15; Zech 12:10; Matt 23:37-39; Acts 3:19-21).

(C) Israel refused many opportunities to accept God's righteousness by faith (10:14-21)

God will save all, Jew or Gentile, who call upon Him. There is no discrimination in salvation (v12-13). God is rich toward both groups of the human race. Unfortunately, Israel rejected God's gracious offer of salvation. Neither the majority nor a large minority received the righteousness of God by faith. Paul proved this evaluation by a series of logical, rhetorical questions with answers taken from the OT.

(a) Five elements of evangelism (10:14-15)

**14** How then are **they** to **call on Him** in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a **preacher**?

**14** How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

**14** How, then, can people call on someone they have not believed? And how can they believe in someone they have not heard about? And how can they hear without someone preaching?

**14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?  
- Paul now argues, similarly to v5-13, that the gospel was looking Israel right in the eyes, it was easy to find, God did not hide it from them. The reason Israel missed the gospel is

because of their heart condition.

- "...they" - unbelieving Jews

- Paul presented the logical sequence for a lost person coming to faith in Christ, in reverse order here

- Faith depends on knowledge of facts. Someone (a "preacher") has to proclaim these facts for others to know about them.

- "...call on Him" - the "calling" here is the prayer of the Jew (Cf. v9-10) to Jesus Christ to rescue them at the end of the Tribulation period

- "...preacher" - unfortunately implies an ordained minister, but Paul meant a Christian proclaiming their faith

- To "preach" means "to be a herald, to announce," it is not limited to proclamation from a pulpit!

- The nature of salvation, which is free to everyone, necessitated that it be preached without distinction. This freedom to all proved to be a stumbling block to unbelieving Jews, but they did not have the excuse of not having heard.

#### Four Questions

Paul makes 4 points in his questions, each a link in the chain of argument, and each conclusion tacitly assumed:

1. There is no calling upon the name of the Lord without faith
2. There can be no faith without hearing; faith must have content, and one must hear the content of faith before he can believe it
3. There is no hearing without preaching
4. There is no preaching without sending

15 But how are they to preach unless they are **sent**? Just as it is written: "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"

15 And how can people preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are those who bring the good news!"

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

- Paul outlines in v14-15 the steps involved in preaching the gospel (in reverse order): someone is *sent*, they *preach* the gospel, someone *hears* the gospel, and then they *believe* the gospel

- While there are many steps in getting the gospel out to people, there is just one step for the hearer to be saved: belief in Christ by faith alone

- This passage is often used as the basis for the church's missionary program, and rightly so, but its first application is to Israel
- "...sent" - suggests that those heralding the gospel operate under orders from a higher authority. Paul's description implies that this higher authority gave them their message.
- God has sent every Christian to proclaim the gospel to the lost (Matt 28:19-20; John 20:21). Unfortunately, many Christians are waiting for some special calling from God before they go. They do not realize that God has already sent them.
- Where we go, and to what segments of humanity we proclaim the gospel, are secondary issues. If we get active proclaiming the gospel, God will direct us where He wants to use us (Ps 37:23).
- Ultimately, sending people to share the gospel is God's work. When God sends the messenger, He blesses the message.
- Paul quotes from Is 52:7 where the messenger announced God's favor in restoring Jerusalem following their exile in Babylon (Cf. Is 40:9-11). The verse also anticipates the regathering of Israel to her land and the reign of the Messiah.
- Here, Paul applies Is 52:7 to show that the message had been preached, but it was simply not believed. Because of their second ignorance, the universal character of salvation, they failed to preach salvation through faith to the Gentiles.
- Because of Israel's failure to do the sending, the Gentiles did not hear. This fact was not true of Israel, however, as Paul shows that the message was heard in the next three verses.

*Many things are important, but nothing is as essential as preaching and teaching God's Word.*

(b) Israel refused to believe despite effective preaching (10:16-17)

**16** However, **they** did **not all** heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "**LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?**"

**16** However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

16 But not everyone has obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah asks, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

- The preaching of the gospel that Israel heard was effective for salvation, because it was God ordained

- "...they" - Israelites; the original Greek simply says "But not all accepted the good news," but in context, Paul is referring specifically to Israelites

- "...not all" - some believed, but the vast majority did not; there was only a small remnant of Jews who trusted in Jesus Christ
- At Pentecost, Peter preached and 3,000 believed his message; however, there were likely nearly 1M people in and around Jerusalem at that time. God used these 3,000 as the foundation for the Church.
- The majority of Jews wandered off into unbelief. This includes the vast majority of the religious leaders, all of the Sadducees (there's no record of a Sadducee ever coming to Christ), and all but a small handful of Pharisees rejected Christ.
- "...heed" - *hupakouo*, to listen; to harken; to harken to a command; thus, to obey, be obedient to, submit to
- To obey the gospel and to believe the gospel are equivalent phrases
- Paul quoted Isaiah to prove that, in spite of the "good news" of Israel's restoration, and the promises of Messiah's coming and deliverance, Israel failed to voluntarily submit to the demands of the gospel.
- Many Jews who rejected the gospel also rejected Paul. They persecuted, beat and imprisoned him because of his message (Cf. Acts 14:5,19; 16:19-24; 22:22; 23:10; 2 Cor 4:9; 11:16-33)
- "...LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" - Paul quotes Is 53:1 to prove that there was a failure to obey on Israel's part. Isaiah 53 deals with Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus.
- He is also giving them a lesson in *prophecy*. Isaiah prophesies Israel's rejection!
- John applied this verse to Israel who rejected the evidence of Christ's miracles (John 12:37-41)
- This failure of the Jews to respond to the good news was true in Jesus' days on earth and in Paul's day as well
- Philip demonstrated to the Ethiopian eunuch that the person mentioned in Is 53 was the Jewish Messiah (Acts 8:30-35)

17 So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

17 So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

17 Consequently, faith results from listening, and listening results through the word of the Messiah.

17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God [Christ].

- The role of the Word of God in salvation. The Word of God is the instrument that God uses to make the sinner aware of their need for Jesus Christ (along with the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, Cf. John 16:7-11). See note: **The Gospel Is Necessary for Salvation** in Rom 1:16

— There is something about the Word of God that pierces our hearts, that make us aware that something is wrong with us: sin. When we hear the Word of God, we're convicted of something, and the Holy Spirit uses that conviction to make people aware that they need to trust the gospel (2 Tim 3:15).

— The Word of God makes us aware that we need Christ, then the Word of God tells us how to fill that need and come to Christ. *Everything* needed for salvation is found in God's Word. If the Word of God is not taught, there is no chance for anyone to come to faith in Christ or for a believer's faith to grow.

— The story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:27-31), the rich man wanted Abraham to send Lazarus back to his five brothers to warn them, because they had the same unbelieving attitude as he did. But Abraham told the rich man, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. If they don't listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.

— A miracle, even someone rising from the dead, is not enough to persuade those who are steeped in unbelief. They had what they needed, which is the Word of God that makes people wise unto salvation. If your heart is hardened to the witness of the Word of God, you can perform any miracle you want and it won't lead to salvation. In fact, another Lazarus did rise from the dead (John 11) and the nation did not come to Christ.

— If the Word of God is not taught in churches, then the opportunity for the sinner to come to Christ is not given. The unbeliever may be coming to church but they will remain unregenerated and unbelievers because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Then, you have a crowd, not a church, because the Word of God is not preached and people are not coming to Christ.

- This verse gives us the origin or the source of faith. Notice that this verse doesn't state that faith comes from God as a gift. Faith comes from hearing "the word of Christ" (Scripture).

— So the logical conclusion to this statement is that the intake of God's Word produces faith in us...the more of God's Word we intake, the stronger our faith will be.

When people rightly teach the Bible, we do not hear their words, we hear the Words of God. And the voice we hear in our hearts is the voice of Christ.

(c) Israel's excuses for unbelief answered (10:18-21)

(i) Excuse #1 (10:18)

(a) Excuse: Israel did not hear

(b) Response: Message went everywhere

**18** But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? On the contrary: "THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD."

**18** But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world."

**18** But I ask, "Didn't they hear?" Certainly they did! In fact, "Their voice has gone out into the whole world, and their words to the ends of the earth."

**18** But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

- Excuse #1: we never heard the gospel

- This would contradict everything Paul just said in v14-15

- Some might insist that the Jews were not given adequate opportunity to hear the message...Paul kills that argument. The problem was not a lack of hearing...it was a lack of obedience. There is no valid excuse for Israel's unbelief!

- To establish that Israel has heard, Paul quoted Ps 19:4 concerning God's general revelation in creation (Cf. 1:18-20), which is enough to make anyone who fails to seek and worship the true God guilty. This shows that the Jewish people were inexcusable, for the message that came only through nature (general revelation) should have brought them to faith.

- Ps 19 is about the revelation of God in both general revelation (creation, Ps 19:1-6) and special revelation (the Word of God, Ps 19:7f)

- But they had more than just the message of nature preached to them. This psalm also discusses God's special revelation in the OT, which was entrusted to Israel (Ps 19:7-11).

- So Israel had general revelation, they had special revelation (including the Mosaic Law), they had the Prophets, then God Incarnate shows up, right on schedule. Yet Israel rejected all of these.

- To Israel of His day, Jesus said: Search the Scriptures (the OT); for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me (John 5:39).

(ii) Excuse #2 (10:19-20)

- (a) Excuse: Israel did not understand

- (b) Response: Gentiles believed

**19** But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, "I WILL **MAKE YOU JEALOUS** WITH *THOSE WHO ARE NOT A NATION*, WITH A FOOLISH NATION I WILL ANGER YOU."

**19** But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you."

**19** Again I ask, "Did Israel not understand?" Moses was the first to say, "I will make you jealous by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that doesn't understand."

**19** But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you.

- Excuse #2: Israel did not understand the message. The message was so intellectual, so complex, so philosophical, that we simply didn't understand it. It was too high above our intellectual level to grasp.

- Paul's response is...well, the Gentiles didn't seem to have a problem understanding it, since they came to Christ in droves. Those who the Jews considered to be "dogs" understood the message.

- Paul quotes Moses (Deut 32:21) and Isaiah (Is 65:1-2) to refute this excuse: the Jews did indeed understand the gospel of salvation by grace through the work of Jesus Christ. Otherwise, they would not have reacted with jealousy and anger when the Gentiles received the salvation they rejected. The gospel would have been another example of Gentile religious foolishness.

- God's message couldn't have been too difficult to understand because the non-elect Gentiles understood it. If Gentiles could understand it, why could not Jews understand it, the custodians of the Word of God (Rom 3:2), not grasp the message?

- The fact is, God's grace to sinful people apart from keeping the Law offended many Jews. Many people today reject the gospel for the same reason: they reject grace. They want a God who commends their self-righteousness.

- In Rom 11, Paul will describe the fact that at some point in the future, Israel will believe the message in faith and come to Christ, but in the meantime He will work primarily through the Gentiles, who never sought Him in the first place.

- Today, the grace that God is pouring out on Gentiles and the church is designed to make the Jews jealous, in an effort to woo the Jews to come to Christ

- "...MAKE YOU JEALOUS" - God said that He would give Israel a desire to return to Himself by blessing another people. This is what has happened since Jesus died.

- Quoted from Deut 32:21 - "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."

- Paul explains how God's present blessing on the Church is currently provoking unbelieving Israel to jealousy

- Paul's point in this verse is that as God lavishes His grace on the Church, Israel is becoming provoked to jealousy, because God is taking on another "woman." Israel is called the "wife" of Jehovah throughout the OT, but after their rejection, God is pouring out His grace on His "bride," composed mainly of Gentiles. And God is lavishing His grace on Gentiles in order to provoke Jews to jealousy, to stimulate Israel to come back into faith one day.

— This is happening today as God is taking His blessings, which used to be poured out on Israel, and is now pouring them out on the Church

— God has poured out so much grace upon the Church that the angels “stoop down” to observe what is happening (Eph 3:10; 1 Peter 1:19). They just can’t believe what is taking place.

— This should have made Israel more desirous to return to God, accepting His Messiah, and experiencing His blessing. However, that didn’t happen, as the record of Church growth in Acts proves. As time went on, fewer Jews responded to the gospel, while more Gentiles accepted it. This response was not due to ignorance but due to deliberate rejection.

- “...NOT A NATION” - *ethnos*, nation; they (the Church) are not a nation

20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, “I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I REVEALED MYSELF TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME.”

20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, “I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”

20 And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who were not looking for me; I was revealed to those who were not asking for me.”

**20** But Isaiah is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

- Quoted from Is 65:1...

— This verse supports Deut 32:21 (quoted in v19), with emphasis on the fact that the Gentiles came to God

— Both OT leaders wrote about God’s turning to the Gentiles, whom the Jews thought had no understanding (*asunetos*, lacking understanding; senseless; Cf. Rom 1:21,31)

— Israel knew the truth. The Gentiles neither sought God or asked for Him, yet God, in His merciful grace, saved them. The message that the Jewish people were rejecting, Gentiles were accepting.

### (iii) Conclusion (v21)

21 But as for Israel, He says, “I HAVE SPREAD OUT MY HANDS **ALL DAY LONG** TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.”

21 But as for Israel He says, “All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.”

21 But about Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and rebellious people.”

**21** But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

- After Paul responds to two excuses for the Jews missing their Messiah, he gives us the real reason: they had a disobedient and obstinate heart (Is 65:2)
- The reason God has temporarily set Israel aside is their stubborn rebelliousness
- Moses and the prophets warned Israel about this attitude repeatedly, but Israel persisted in it even after God had provided their Messiah
- The problem is not a lack of preaching, it's not a lack of evangelism, it's not a lack of missionary work, it's not a lack of grace and love on the part of God, it's not a lack of divine mercy, it's not a lack of divine patience...the problem with Israel, and the problem with most unsaved people today, is a heart that is unbelieving.
- A heart so closed that it wants no influence of God in their life. A heart that is so wicked and full of sin that they just don't want God to interrupt their lives.
- It's a condition of the human heart, yet all day long God stretches out His hand...
- "...ALL DAY LONG" - refers to the ongoing offer of salvation. Israel has rejected the Lord, but the Lord has not rejected Israel.
- God has not withheld salvation from Jews; He has held out His hands, imploring them to return to Him, but they remained "disobedient and contrary." They did not respond to God's invitation.
- Israel's continuing rebellious and unbelieving disobedience was judged by God's turning to the Gentiles (v20; Cf. Acts 8:1-8,10).
- Israel's *Diaspora* was predicted in the Torah: Deut 28:64-67