**October 25, 2026 Session 9 Believe Romans 9:30-10:3,9-17**

**What a contrast.** In the legal system, confession confirms guilt and results in punishment. According to the gospel, confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior leads to forgiveness, freedom, and salvation.

**God is not fair.** In the first part of chapter 9, Paul addressed criticism who might have claimed that a gospel which excluded Jews and includes Gentiles on the basis of faith would be unjust. God is sovereign and has the right to operate according to His will. Humans have neither the right nor the understanding to criticize God's choices. **Romans 9:20** *"But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to Him who formed It, "Why have you made me like this?"* God is by definition just, so His dealings with both Jews and Gentiles are just, including calling forth one people of faith from both groups. The Jews thought that following the law and being a descendant of Abraham guaranteed them a place in heaven. The Jews did not think it was fair for Gentiles to be saved by mere faith. God foretold in the Old Testament that He intended to include both Jews and Gentiles among His chosen people.
**Hosea 2:23** "*Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy, then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' and they shall say, 'You are my God.' "* Paul asserted, based on the words of the prophets, that God would draw from all people those who would become His children. Everyone who confesses and believes in Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile, will be saved.

**Righteousness through faith (Romans 9:30 33) p. 75**
God is sovereign and acts according to His will, but God is not arbitrary or unjust. God has acted in the affairs of humanity, showing wrath and showing mercy. By God's power and mercy, both Jews and Gentiles can have right standing before Him by faith. For the Gentile, right standing before God was made possible even though they did not pursue righteousness. This does not mean that there weren't any good Gentiles. Paul was not claiming that all Gentiles have gained a right standing with God. He was asserting that in spite of their willful ignorance of God and general immorality, God has still cared for them and has made righteousness available to them [Gentiles]. The righteousness that Paul was talking about was the righteousness that comes from faith.
**Vs. 31** In contrast to the Gentiles, Paul observed that the people of Israel had been pursuing the law of righteousness. His observation about the actions of Israel points to Jews in general, not the actions of all Jews. Woven through Israel's history is a persistent thread of devotion on the part of some that survived even the most wicked of rulers and the most difficult of circumstances. "*Pursuing the law of righteousness"* specifically points to the pursuit of the law. The law

they pursued, the law of Moses, was righteous in that it came from God and called for the adherents to live in a godly manner. But those seeking to live by the law could never do so consistently or completely. The law also served the function of exposing a person's sin, and the righteousness demanded in the law remained out of reach. Israel has not achieved the righteousness of the law.
**Vs. 32** Israel sought the right goal [righteousness] but did so in the wrong way. Paul had already explained that no one can achieve righteousness by his or her own works. Even those who try to follow the law given by God will fail.
**Isaiah 64:6** *"But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* Without faith in our Lord Jesus, the best we can do is like filthy rags. Israel as a people failed to achieve the righteousness of the law because they pursued it as if it were by works. Those who misunderstood the role of the law acted as if keeping it could grant a person a right standing with God. They were wrong, and as a result they stumbled over the stumbling stone. Paul cited two places in Isaiah, to reveal the true nature of the stumbling stone. The stone God placed in Zion, Jesus, was not sent for the purpose of causing the people to stumble, yet some would stumble due to their own unbelief. **Isaiah 8:14** *"He [God] will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."*
**Isaiah 28:16** *"Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. Whoever believes will not act hastily."* For those who trusted in Jesus, the Messiah was a sanctuary. For those who trusted in themselves, Jesus became a stumbling block. Paul stated that believers would never be ashamed of placing their faith in Christ, the precious cornerstone and sure foundation.

**Misguided zeal (Romans 10:1-3) p. 76**
Paul's heartfelt concern for the lost is found in the expression in his prayer to God concerning them. I need to be more burdened for people who are lost. We know that only God can save through Jesus. The role of the Spirit in convicting, drawing, and transforming people ought never be underestimated. Paul had to affirm that any unbelieving Jews were devout people. In spite of their rejection of the gospel, they had a passionate desire for the things of God and genuinely sought to serve Him. Unfortunately, the Jewish zeal for God was misguided in following the law. They were passionate about observing the traditions of their fathers. Paul used the term for knowledge when referring to a genuine and deep understanding of spiritual things. **Ephesians 1:17** *"…that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."* Such knowledge confers an understanding of God's righteousness as revealed in Christ and leads to salvation.

**Vs. 3** Paul wrote that the Jews being ignorant of the righteousness of God and having not submitted to God's righteousness implies that they chose to ignore or disregard the truth revealed in the gospel.
When Christ came, some people clung to law-keeping and attempted to establish their own righteousness, refusing to acknowledge God's Messiah. Their will ignorance presents a sad picture of a misguided, religious people. Paul looked past their rejection of the gospel, respected their zeal, and earnestly prayed for their conversion.

**Salvation available to all (Romans 10:9-13) p. 77**
What the heart truly believes and the mouth confesses, and genuine confession reflects heartfelt faith. When responding to the gospel, confession affirms agreement with the message, acknowledging sin and lostness, the need of salvation, and a commitment to Jesus as the only means of salvation. The act of confession with your mouth is public by nature. Conviction is certainly a matter of the heart and is meaningful on its own. Confessing Jesus as Lord is the same as acknowledging that He is God and an external sign of one's acceptance of Him. Paul linked believing in your heart to the inner and genuine nature of faith. Believing in the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead affirms Jesus's identity, His victory over sin and death, and His power to save those who believe in Him. The resurrection proved the identity of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. **1 Corinthians 15:20** *"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."* The good news is for everyone. Those who place their faith in Jesus will never be ashamed of entrusting their lives to Him. Everyone, Jew and Gentile, can have confidence that God saves those who put their trust in Him. **Joel 2:32** *"And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the remnant whom the Lord calls."* There is no distinction based on heritage or ethnicity. Any person, whatever his or her background, who calls on the Lord in faith will be saved. This is still the message of the church today.

**Go tell (Romans 19:14-17) p. 79**
In these verses, Paul asked a series of four rhetorical questions intended to encourage his readers to share the good news with the lost. The questions start from the perspective of a person who has become a believer and acknowledges Jesus as Lord and works backwards to the beginning point of the person's conversion. The one who calls on the Lord is the one who has believed, and the person could not have believed without first hearing about Jesus. Hearing about Jesus presumes an encounter with a preacher and the presence of the preacher who was sent. Paul emphasizes the goodness of the entire evangelistic effort with a citation of **Isaiah 52:7** *"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good*

*news."* Preacher does not refer to an office in the church but an activity. The word means one who proclaims. Paul did not limit the proclamation of the gospel to a specific category of believers nor to a particular location. It is our responsibility to share the gospel.

**Vs. 16** Paul lamented that not all obeyed the gospel. The good news of the gospel is not always received with gladness. But the manner of its reception does not determine the truth of a message. Nor does it change the responsibility of the messenger—us! Not all may believe the message preached, but faith comes from what is heard. Without a message clearly communicated, the lost have no opportunity to respond in faith. The followers of Jesus do not just carry any message. The message that is true and has the power to transform is the message about Christ. Sharing the message of Jesus is the task that God has assigned to all His children. May we be ever faithful and never be silent.

**Vs. 17** Receiving the gift of salvation requires people to place their faith in Jesus. When individuals place their faith in Him, they will be saved. They cannot earn their salvation, nor can a person rely on someone else. Each person must come to Christ individually. As believers, we need to make sure that others have the opportunity to hear the gospel. After people hear about Christ, they will be able to respond to what they have heard. Hearing the gospel may prompt them to place their faith in Him.

**Think about it**

All people need to understand that true righteousness comes through faith, not works.

We need to pray for salvation of the lost.

Believers must tell others the gospel message.