

## The Pursuit of Faith

Romans 10:1-12

7/ 24/ 05

### Intro

In Romans chapter eight, Paul was writing about all the results that are ours when we are in Christ Jesus. It is one of the most beautiful chapters in the bible because here we learn that that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, that we are made righteous in Christ, that we are given the Holy Spirit, that we are adopted as sons, that He will change us to be like Christ, and more.

After writing all these wonderful things, Paul then says that his heart is deeply sorrowful because he knows that his own people, the Israelites, have for the most part rejected God's offer of life in Christ Jesus and all these wonderful things do not belong to the Jews.

By giving us his heart for his people, we learn great insights into this faith by which we stand. It's about the pursuit of righteousness by faith.

### **These are insights into the pursuit of faith.**

#### **I. Zeal is Good**

##### A. What is our heart's desire?

- Paul begins by saying that his heart's desire and prayer is that the Jews would be saved.
- This is such a deep issue for him that he even says that he would be willing to give up his own salvation if it meant that they could live.

**Romans 9:3, "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites,"**

- Oh that we would have such a heart for those who are lost. We are so focused on ourselves that we often lose sight of others.
- Paul sets a wonderful example for us in praying for the salvation of others.

**I Samuel 12:23-24, "Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way. Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you."**

##### B. We need more zeal for God

- One of the reasons Paul so desired to see then Jews saved is because they had zeal for God.
- Zeal for God is good.
- It's sad when you see people who are very zealous for God; but wrong. They often have more zeal for God than Christians who have every reason to be filled with zeal.

**Illus – The reason this is often true is because every other religion requires them to earn their way to heaven. But they forgot to follow God's heart.**

**John 16:2-3, "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who**

**kills you to think that he is offering service to God. These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.”**

- We need more heat in our relationship with the Lord.

**Romans 12:11, “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.” (NIV)**

C. Zeal must be with knowledge

- It does no good to be zealous about something, but be wrong.
- Zeal must be according to knowledge.

**II Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”**

**Matthew 22:29, But Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.”**

**II. By This We Live**

A. We need God’s righteousness

- The Jews sought for righteousness out of the Law, but they didn’t find it.

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

- Many people today seek to establish their own righteousness. They come up with all kinds of crazy ideas about God, but it’s based on their own authority.

**Illus – I remember witnessing to a man who believed that God evolved out of cosmic dust. The authority for this knowledge was merely his own opinion.**

- God’s righteousness is given to us in Christ; this is the good news of the gospel.

**Romans 1:16-17, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith.’”**

**Illus – I did a memorial service for someone yesterday who truly a good man, but came to realize that that wasn’t enough and asked Jesus into his heart.**

B. “Do not say in your heart...”

- “Who will ascend into heaven to bring Christ down...” There is no one who can transcend this earthly existence and bring Christ down.
- “Who will descend into the abyss to bring Christ up from the dead...” Is there anyone who can bring Christ up from the grave?

**Isaiah 59:1-2, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not so short that it cannot save; nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation**

**between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.”**

- It is oh so simple. We don't go and bring Christ to us, we are far too weak and unholy, Christ makes it simple – he comes to us.

### C. The Word is near you

- “The word is near you,” Paul wrote, “in your mouth and in your heart.”
- We come to Christ with simplicity of heart. It is not difficult to be saved because He does all the work of salvation for us.

**Illus – No need to climb some high mountain or do some great deed of penance, He comes near to us.**

**Matthew 1:21-23, She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins... and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, “God with us.”**

## III. This is the Word of Faith

### A. Confess with your mouth

- There is nothing added to salvation, not baptism, not any works, it's this simple.
- Confess that Jesus is Lord. It's interesting that no where does it say that we must confess Jesus as Savior. If you confess Him as Lord, He will be your Savior.

- It means to confess that Jesus is in charge; that He knows when He is doing and that we want to follow what He tells us to do.
- There will come a day when every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, but only now does it bring salvation; when we do it willingly – from the heart.

**Philippians 2:10-11, “so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

### B. Believe in your heart

- “That God raised Him from the dead.”
- Believe in your heart means there is sincere belief. There is no deceiving God.
- Christ's resurrection is the foundation stone to all that we believe.

**Acts 26:6-8, “And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews. Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?”**

**I Corinthians 15:14, “and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.”**

C. You will not be disappointed

- If you believe in Jesus Christ as Lord, you will not be disappointed.
- You will receive salvation, but much more than that, you will receive everything that is behind the name of Jesus – you will not be disappointed.

**Jeremiah 17:7-8, “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.”**

**Ephesians 3:20-21, “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”**

Conclusion

**I pray that we would have the same heart’s desire as Paul and that we would know the power of praying for the salvation for others. I also pray that we would have zeal after God based on the closeness of His Son, Jesus Christ.**