

Romans 10

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning to those who are watching online and those who are listening in on the telephone, once again it's good for us to come together to worship God in this way.

The intimations just to remind you that the service this evening will be online just before 6 and Stuart King will be taking the service this evening so be encouraged to come to that and the YF and the prayer meeting will both be on Zoom at half past 7 YF tonight and the prayer meeting at half past 7 on Wednesday.

So be encouraged to come to these meetings. Let's worship God now and let's sing to his praise and we sing from Psalm 118 and we'll sing from verses 19 to verse 25 of the psalm.

Set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness, then will I enter into them and I the Lord will bless. This is the gate of God, by it the just shall enter in. Thee will I praise, for thou me hurtst and hast my safety been.

That stone is made hard cornerstone, which builders did despise. This is the doing of the Lord and wondrous in our eyes. This is the day God made and it will joy triumphantly. Save now, I pray thee, Lord, I pray.

[1 : 36] Send now prosperity. These four stanzas to God's praise. O set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness, then will I enter into them.

And I, the Lord, will bless. This is the gate of God, by it the just shall enter in.

Thee will I praise, for thou me hurts, and hast my safety been.

That stone is made head cornerstone, which builders did despise.

This is the day God made in it. This is the day God made in it.

[3 : 37] Let's pray. This is the day God made in it.

This is the day God made. This is the day God made in it.

Let's unite our hearts now in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you this morning. We thank you for this opportunity that you've given us once more to come together in this way in worship.

We thank you that we come before you as our Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Saviour. We thank you that he is the gate that we sang of in the psalm. He is the cornerstone of our salvation.

He is the door. He is the gate through which we enter into the righteousness that comes from God. We thank you that through Christ we are able to know that we are saved, that we have salvation.

[4 : 47] And we ask, Lord, that in this hour of worship that we would have our eyes fixed upon Jesus. We pray that we would know the assurance of and the joy of your salvation of us.

We pray that we would be found reaching out in faith to take hold of the grace that is freely offered to us in the gospel. We thank you for Jesus. We thank you for all that he did on our behalf, for the life that he lived for us, for the death that he died in our place, and for the fact that he did not remain dead, but he rose from the dead.

And even the fact that we gather together on this Lord's day is a reminder, whereby we look to the resurrection of Jesus. On the first day of the week, it was discovered that Jesus was no longer dead, but he was risen.

And we thank you that his promise stands good for time and eternity. Because I live, said Jesus, you too shall live. And we ask that we would know that life in abundance and that life that is eternal through this gift of grace in Jesus.

So fix our eyes upon him, we pray. We ask, Lord, that you would be working in the hearts of all those who are listening in and all those who are tuning in at this time. We pray for each person, Lord.

[6 : 13] You know us, you know our needs, you know where we stand before you. We pray for any who are listening in or who are watching who are not yet Christians. We ask that you would be working in the power of your spirit to show each one our sin and our need of Jesus.

And help us to see that all who come to Jesus will never be driven away, but will be received and will be saved. We pray for those, Lord, who are your people.

Those of us who are Christians. We know that we are a people who are prone to wonder. And if during this period where we've been out of fellowship from each other in the physical sense, if there are any who are beginning to feel low, any who may be beginning to wonder, we ask that you would draw each one back.

We thank you that you not only call us to come to you, but you call us each day to come to you, to draw near to you, to return to you when we stray. Help us, Lord, we pray, to keep on keeping on.

Help us to abide in Christ. And we thank you that as we do so, we are promised that you will use our lives to bring fruit that will redound to your glory.

[7 : 28] So we pray for that touch of your spirit this morning. We ask, Lord, that what we do would not simply be looking at a screen or listening in on a telephone. But we ask that this would truly be an act of worship where we are those who feel our hearts touched by your spirit.

Because apart from that touch, apart from the work of your spirit, what we do is in vain. So be amongst us, Lord, we pray. Move in our hearts, move in our homes.

Be at work in each one of our lives and help us as we look to you. We pray, Father, for Stuart as he prepares to open your word also this evening.

We thank you that we are not those who are left to stand here and discuss their own thoughts. But your word is open. And we pray, just as this service, we pray this.

We pray also for Stuart, that you would guide him in all that he says. And we pray that we would hear your voice as he preaches. And we pray for all other congregations around us, that you too would be working in these churches and speaking, Lord, through your servants, whatever the gospel is preached.

[8 : 42] We pray for those who are in particular need, Lord, as we do each week. We continue to ask that you would comfort those who are grieving. And we bring to you, especially Nanny on Scott Road, that you would draw near to her, that you would comfort her, that you would uphold her as she continues to feel that sense of loss as we miss John Norman.

Be with her and be with the family, we pray, and be with all who are grieving. We pray for those who are struggling, those who may feel low in their own minds and their own hearts.

We ask that they would know your touch, which brings encouragement. We pray that you would give to them, give to each one of us, the joy of the Lord, which is our strength.

And we pray, Lord, for those who are sick. We thank you for the degree of protection that we have known here from this virus, which has been so prevalent in the country. And as things begin to open up, we pray for continued protection of all who are here, the congregation and beyond.

Guard us, Lord, and keep us. And we pray especially for the homes here, for Harris House and for the home of rest in Leverborough. We ask, Lord, that you would protect the residents and the staff.

[10 : 02] We ask that you would guard us, Lord, that we would know your hand upon us. And we pray for the nation, for the country. As we go from lockdown into a degree of freedom, we pray for wisdom for those who are in authority, that they would make the right decisions and that they would look to you for the wisdom that they need that comes only from you.

So hear our prayers. Continue with us, we pray. Help us to keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus, for we pray these things in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Amen. Boys and girls, it's good to know that you are on the screen, behind the screen there.

And I'm going to begin by showing you a video. So keep your eyes peeled. Here comes the video. You are on the screen, behind the screen there.

I'm going to say, because of producer winds and wild, who are on the screen there. Actually, if you want to pause here that you have to show up in your screen there. If you want to, we're actually scrolling through the screen there. Let's go Knickers coisa, which is the video one who shows up so good to start off. It's no official none of that. But today we are going to do that now. You're going to point out feeling good, especially for any of them.

I'm going to betitragious. I'm going to go out and see You're on the screen forigger excitball. so What do I do with theida townsh Here we go.

[12 : 37] Here we go.

Here we go.

Yes! It all starts with just that one little throw.

And when I watched that video, it made me think about how God works. God often asks you and I just to do one wee thing. And although we can't see it, he has lots of other things that may begin to happen, but it starts with the one little thing.

I remember hearing a story not long ago about a young boy. I think he was probably in his early teens at this point in this time.

[14 : 46] And he was a bit worried in his mind. He was a bit worried in his heart because he was beginning to realize that he was a sinner and he needed to be saved.

And he didn't know Jesus. And he knew he wasn't saved. And so he went one night to church. It was a snowy night. And he went through the woods to this wee church that wasn't far from where he stayed.

And that night, because of the snow, hardly anybody was in the church. And not even the minister could get to the church. So there was an old man. And he was told, well, you're going to have to take the service tonight.

And the old man, he didn't have much of a sermon prepared in his mind. And he didn't have much of a sermon to give. But he had to do it. So he stood up and he began to preach.

And he had a text. And he just kept on saying the text over and over again. It was a text, I think, from Isaiah, which is a text where it said, Look unto the Lord.

[15 : 53] Look to the Lord and be saved. And he just kept on saying it over and over and over again. Look to the Lord and be saved. And look to the Lord and be saved.

And at one point, the old man, he looked up and he saw the boy that had come to church just in the balcony. And he said, Young man, you don't look very happy.

Look to the Lord and be saved. He can give you happiness that lasts forever. And the young man, you know what he did? In that moment, he looked to Jesus.

He trusted in Jesus. And he was saved. And his name was Charles. The young man's name was Charles Spurgeon.

And he ended up becoming a minister. And he was used by God to save millions and millions of people. When he was alive and he preached sermons, so many people, they trusted Jesus because of him.

[16 : 58] And nowadays, we still read lots of books that Spurgeon wrote. And still lots of people are being saved. They are trusting Jesus because of the sermons that he preached.

But I often think about that old man. He probably went off home in the snow thinking, what a mess I made of that sermon. But God used it.

There's a story in the Bible a bit like that as well. It's about a young girl. She worked in a big house. And her boss was a man called Naaman.

He was a commander in the army. And he got sick. He was a kind man. But he got sick. And there was no cure for the sickness that he had. And the girl could see that her boss, that she liked and cared for.

He was struggling. And so she went to his wife. And this is what she said. This is all she said. She said, If only my master would see the prophet who's in Samaria.

[18 : 07] He would cure him of his leprosy. And to cut a long story short. Naaman, he got the message from this little girl.

And he went to see the prophet Elisha in Samaria. And God used Elisha to bring healing to Naaman. And Naaman was found trusting in what God said.

Why? Well, it was all because of that one little word that the little girl said. So, boys and girls, don't think just because you're young that God can't use you.

And don't think just because you can't teach long sermons that God can't use you. Sometimes it's not so much the older people that God uses.

Because sometimes he uses the younger people much more. And sometimes it's not so much the long sermons that God uses. It's just the wee word.

[19 : 12] Where you maybe encourage one of your friends to come to church. Or to tune in to Sunday school. Or where you just say something. Or do something that causes them to look to Jesus.

God can use you. He can use you to save many people. So, trust in him. And be ready to do the wee jobs.

Just a lot of things. The wee word. The kind act. Be ready to do these things. Knowing that God can do a lot from the little thing that he might ask us to do.

So, we'll pray. Lord, we thank you that you can use us. And we thank you that even though sometimes it's just a wee word that we give. We thank you that you can use it in a way that causes people even to look to Jesus and to trust him.

So, we pray that all the boys and girls would be trusting in Jesus. And when they trust in Jesus, we pray that they and that each one of us would do the little jobs that you ask us to do in our lives.

[20 : 21] You've said in Ephesians 2 that you've prepared good works in advance for us to do. So, help us to do the good works that you've organized for us. And we pray that you would use them to bring glory to your name.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Boys and girls, you can head now through to Sunday School. And we're going to turn now to Romans chapter 10.

Romans chapter 10. And we'll read the whole of this chapter. This is God's word. Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God. But their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Christ is the end of the law. So that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law.

[21 : 29] The man who does these things will live by them. But the righteousness that is by faith says, Do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven. That is to bring Christ down.

Or who will descend into the deep. That is to bring Christ up from the dead. But what does it say? The word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart.

That is the word of faith we are proclaiming. That if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord. And believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. You will be saved.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified. And it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the scripture says, Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.

For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile. The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

[22 : 30] How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. But not all the Israelites accepted the good news.

For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our message? Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message. And the message is heard through the word of Christ.

But I ask, did they not hear? Of course they did. Their voices go out into all the earth. Their words to the ends of the world. Again I ask, did Israel not understand?

First Moses says, I will make you envious by those who are not a nation. I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding. And Isaiah boldly says, I was found by those who did not seek me.

[23 : 36] I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me. But concerning Israel, He says, All day long, I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of His word to us. Just as we turn back to God's word, Let's pray once more. Lord, we simply ask once more for your help, For the help of the Holy Spirit, So that as we read and meditate upon these verses, That we may hear, That we may see, And that we may be moved in our hearts To respond in faith to the gospel of Jesus.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Some of you perhaps may have been to a place called Applecross. It's not far from where we used to live before we moved here to Harris.

And it's a beautiful place, Applecross. But the high road to Applecross, The Bialoch Naba, Is a terrifying road. It's very narrow. It's hugely steep.

And for much of the year, There's no way through on that road to Applecross. And the sign at the bottom of the road says that much. And you can perhaps see the sign on the screen there.

[25 : 00] And it says there in the sign, Not advised for learner drivers. Very large vehicles and caravans. It's the warning there. For those who are learner drivers, Who are in large vehicles and caravans.

They're being warned, Don't go this road. And yet my memory of being on that road to Applecross Was that there were forever learner drivers And large vehicles and caravans Trying to get over on the road to Applecross And being stuck.

They were failing. And Romans 10 is a bit like that sign Of the road to Applecross. It warns us about a road. A road marked law.

And it's a road that many people take. But it's a road that did not And does not And will not ever lead To being made right with God. And Romans 10 also Gives us a very clear instruction.

It gives us a clear signpost On how we can be saved. How we can be made righteous. How we can be made right with God. It tells us the way to peace with God.

[26 : 11] And that's the road marked faith. So today I want to look at these two roads And where they take us. There's the road marked law.

And there's the road marked faith. And that gives us our two points for the sermon. But just note as we move towards the first point That Paul He begins this chapter Chapter 10 In the same manner On the same note That he began Romans chapter 9 Paul is a Jew And he looks at his fellow Jews He looks at his fellow Countrymen and women And he sees that they are lost.

His heart's desire He says In verse 1 Is that they may be saved. My heart's desire And prayer to God For the Israelites Is that they may be saved. But his heart is breaking.

He has great sorrow For his own people Because he He can see that they're That they're not En route to being saved. They're on the wrong road. They were on this road Marked law.

So that's our first point. The road marked law. There's three things that Paul could see. And there's three things which we can still Often see in the lives of those Who are on this road marked law.

[27 : 33] And the first of these three things is that There can be a misplaced zeal. Paul says in verse 2 For I can testify about them That they're zealous for God But their zeal Is not based on knowledge.

See the Jews that Paul longed for It's not that they had no interest In the things of God. It's not that they were agnostic That they couldn't care less.

It's not that they were atheistic That they were in opposition to God. They had a real zeal for God. They were zealous for God Says Paul But the zeal that they had Was a misplaced zeal.

And Paul knew that. He could see that in them Because he had been one of them. One commentator, Kofi, says Paul recognized it From his pre-conversion days That had led him to Reject Christ And persecute the church.

He can now clearly testify That he has turned his back On these days When misguided zeal Ruled his life. So Paul thinks back He thinks back To what drove him And the zeal That he had In his heart Before he was a Christian It was a zeal Whereby he wanted to persecute Anyone who was a Christian He wanted to close down Any gatherings Where Christ would be lifted up.

[29 : 06] Paul had great zeal In doing that. You see that in the book of Acts But it was a misplaced It was a misguided zeal. And there are still many people Who can be serious about religion.

And they may well Lambast you over the Clothes you wear to church Or the version of the Bible That you use. They may have great zeal Over what you should sing Or not sing in a worship service.

What you do and don't do On a Sunday What denomination you're part of What your church looks like Whether there's pews Or no pews Etc. They have huge zeal Over these issues But they have no zeal For Christ And his glory.

They have no zeal For the cross. And so even though they move In the orbit Of Christianity Their zeal is misplaced.

And it will not lead them To salvation. Then if we think about Other religions We have to recognize That there are many Religions where there are People who have great zeal.

[30 : 18] We have the Jehovah's Witnesses Very often knocking our doors And they're trying to Persuade us To believe what they believe. Now that takes zeal But it's a misplaced zeal.

And we read We've read articles We've watched news reports Of religious extremists Who are willing to Strap explosives To their own body In order to Kill the unbeliever The infidel.

Now that takes zeal. But it's a tragically Diabolically Misplaced zeal. Now many people think That As long as you believe Something And it makes you happy And You can be enthusiastic About it And zealous in it Then Then that's fine.

And Paul here says In this chapter No that's That's not fine. You can be very zealous And yet be very wrong.

I remember shortly after Moving here to Harris And we were Invited as a family For a meal With friends Who were Who were staying over In Hushinish.

[31 : 39] And we were running Late that evening For the Dinner. And so I was driving With great zeal To Hushinish. And I believed That Hushinish Was located Somewhere between Shilabost And Skarista.

Now did my zeal Get me to To Hushinish? Well anybody Who knows The roads of Harris Knows that No it didn't. Because Hushinish Is nowhere near Shilabost Or Skarista.

So I had to Turn around. Turn around. I was on the wrong road. And so we We see here That We may have Great zeal.

We may be Very Zealous For God In our own minds. But if our zeal Bypasses Christ If it Sets aside The cross of Jesus Our zeal is misplaced.

We're on the wrong road. So first of all On this road marked Law We see That there can be A misplaced zeal. And secondly On this road marked Law We see that there can be A misunderstanding There's a misunderstanding Of salvation.

[32 : 56] Verse 3 Since they did not know The righteousness That comes from God And sought to establish Their own They did not submit To God's righteousness. Christ is the end Of the law So that there may be Righteousness For everyone Who believes.

And so Paul Still writing About the The Jews Whom he longs for Whom he loves He says With tears in his eyes We can imagine him Saying They did not know The righteousness That comes from God.

Now what does that mean? Does that mean that That they had never Heard Of this righteousness That comes From God The salvation That comes Through Christ?

Well I don't think It means that at all. I don't think it would be I don't think you'd be In Paul's company For five minutes Without him Telling people About Jesus. Which is an interesting Thing to think about.

How long would How long would Somebody have to be In your company Or my company Far before we Told them about Jesus? Paul is always Telling people About this righteousness That comes Through Jesus From Jesus From above.

[34 : 19] We can go to The book of Acts I'm not going to go there Just now You can do that yourself And you can see that Every place Paul went When he got to A new city The first thing he did Was he went to The synagogue And he told the Jews About this salvation That could be received Through Jesus You see him doing it Repeatedly in the book of Acts And yet we We see also in that book That they did not Want to know about it He went into the synagogue He began to speak to them About this righteousness Through Christ And they drove him out He didn't want to hear it Hendrickson the commentator Says Israel's basic fault It failed to acknowledge That is to accept And welcome The righteousness That God Has Sorry Israel's basic fault It failed to acknowledge That is to accept

And welcome The righteousness That has God As its author Is based on Christ's Substitutionary atonement And is appropriated By faith That was Israel's Basic fault They didn't want to know it And every time Paul spoke of Of this salvation Through Jesus They turned on him And they drove him Out of the synagogue With violence Paul had scars In his body That testified To the fact That he had told them Repeatedly About this righteousness That comes From God Through Christ But they wouldn't have it They chose not to understand God's way They chose not to submit To God's righteousness And they persevered In seeking to Establish their Their own righteousness By law All the ought Says They try to earn

God's favour Their way By earning it Through law keeping And so they do not Submit To God's Revealed Way Sometimes salvation Is misunderstood That's true But I think it's fair To say that More often than not It's not Misunderstood It's just Simply rejected There are some Who will be watching This today Some who are Listening in today Perhaps And you understand How to be saved It's not that you Haven't been told You've been told Many times And it's not that You can't believe It's that you Won't believe Eric Alexander Says Unbelief Is rebellion And faith Is obedience

Unbelief Is not so much I can't believe It's I won't believe Like the toddler You know With a toddler They won't let you Do things for them Once they Once they get to A certain age They don't want To be guided By the hand Of their parent When they get To a certain age They want To go their Own way They don't want To be fed Because they Say I can do Myself And we see that In the toddler But the reality Is we never Lose that The sinful Nature keeps On rising up Within us And saying I will do it And we take That into The area Of salvation God offers Us His full And his free Salvation In Jesus We just have To bow the Knee and Accept But instead We so often Say with the

With the Jew That Paul's Heart was Breaking for I will do It I will do It myself I will do It my way And that's To deliberately Misunderstand Salvation That's to Replace Gospel Knowledge That God Gives With our Knowledge To depart From God's Way And to go Our own Way And so we See this Roadmarked Law That Paul Highlights Here And we See already I think That There is No way Through to Salvation On this Roadmarked Law It's a Dead end Already I Think that Much is Clear but Just for the Sake of Argument Paul he Lingers on A little More and He takes A few More steps Down this Way Just enough For us to See beyond Any doubt That this Is a Dead end

[39 : 22] That takes Us to the Third element Within this Point We see a Misunderstanding Of salvation We see a Misplaced Zeal And thirdly Here we We see on This road a Misunderstanding Of self Verse 5 Moses Describes in This way The righteousness That is by The law The man who Does these Things This is Moses' Words The man who Does these Things Will live By them And that's A quote From Leviticus Chapter 18 And verse 5 And what Paul is Showing By quoting That verse Is that It is Theoretically Possible To be Made Righteous Through the Law But in Order to Go down That legal Route In order To live By keeping

The law One would Have to Keep Every law Of God All of The time For as Long as We live And one Would have To be in A position Where we Can say We have Never Sinned So Says Paul As he Quotes Moses There's The standard You want To go down The legal Route You want To try And secure Life By Going down The legal Route There's The standard I remember In university The standard For a Pass Was 40% You could be 60% wrong Still get Through School days For some Of the Older exams The pass Mark Was 50% And We tend To take These standards These numbers Into the Calculations Of salvation And I

Often hear People Saying Things like Well you Know If I Do more Good than Bad If I Make it To 50% Good Or Slightly Over Then God might Give me A pass Might look At my Life and Say Well you've Done enough That's not God's Standard If we Go down The legal Route We need To be 100% Righteous No sin So says Paul as He As he Teaches Through this Chapter Is there Anyone here Who meets That standard Anyone here Who is Sin free Anyone here Who has Kept The law 100% Of the Time And anybody Who would Raise a Hand and Say that That's me Well they They misunderstood Themselves

Jesus met A man Who fell Into that Category He was Known as The rich Young ruler We find him In Mark Chapter 10 Verse 17 And he Comes to Jesus And he Wants Salvation He wants Eternal Life And so he Asks the Question in Verse 17 Of Jesus What must I Do to Inherit Eternal Life And Jesus Answers Why do You call Me Good No one Is good Except God Alone You know The commandments Do not Murder Do not Commit Adultery Do not Steal Do not Give false Destiny Do not Defraud Honor your Father and Your mother Jesus Shows them The law Teacher He declared All these I have Kept Since I Was a Boy

And at That moment It's Very clear That we We can See this This man He misunderstood Himself And so Jesus looked At him Verse 21 Of Mark Chapter 10 Jesus looked At him And loved Him One thing You lack He said Go sell Everything You have And give To the Poor And you Will have Treasure In heaven Then Come Follow Me And at This The man's Face Fell And he Went away Sad Because he Had great Wealth And the Reality was He loved His great Wealth More than He loved God He was He was Sinning And making His wealth His riches An idol And he Was breaking The law So with That one Sentence

[44 : 24] Jesus Shows The man That he Cannot Earn Salvation By Law Because Through his Love of Money He was Breaking The law He was A sinner Like Everyone Else And you're A sinner That's the Reality Of The application Here And I Am a Sinner There is No one Righteous Not even One Romans 3 Chapter 9 For all Have sinned And fall Short of The glory Of God Romans 3 23 So if we Are trying To save Ourselves By travelling On the On the Roadmarked Law No matter How much Zeal we May have We Misunderstand Salvation We Misunderstand Ourselves And we We need To see That there's No way Through There's no

Way through To righteousness On this Road There's no Way through To God On that Road Marked Law Now if you Think back To the Sign For a Moment The sign To Apple Cross For the HCV Driver For the Person Towing A Caravan Or for The learner Driver Who wants To get To Apple Cross The sign At the Bottom Of the Bialik And the Bad Is bad News That's The first Thing we See when We look At it But Note on The sign I don't Know if You'll be Able to See it On the Screen But The sign The sign Says at The bottom That there's An alternative Route And now Paul He moves To the Alternative Route This True Way To Salvation This Road To Eternal Life This Road To Righteousness And it's The road Marked Faith

Which takes Us to Our second Point Now There's The road Marked Law Which is A dead End There's No Righteousness Through That That route But the Road Marked Faith Is the Road To Salvation There's Three Things That we Learn About Salvation As we Set off On this Road And the First Thing Is that Salvation Is Accessible Salvation Is Accessible Now Over These Last Few Months There's Many Things Which have Become Inaccessible For us Our Church Building For the Vast Majority Of us Is Inaccessible Some Shops That we Might have Been Frequenting In the Past Are Inaccessible Other People's Houses Up until Very Recent Days Have Been Inaccessible These Privileges Have Seemed For The Past While Far Away From Us And Paul Says Here Salvation

Righteousness Eternal Life It's Not Far Away Says Paul It's Near It's Accessible Verse Six But The Righteousness That is By Faith Says Do Not Say In Your Heart Who Will Ascend To Heaven That's To Bring Christ Down Or Who Will Ascend Into The Deep That Is To Bring Christ Up From The Dead Now What's Paul Saying There In These Verses Well He's Saying It's Not About Climbing Up To Heaven On The Basis Of Our Own Efforts That Would Be To Act As If Jesus Had Never Come Down From Heaven the law, not by works, not by strenuous religious efforts, but through faith in Christ.

What does it say for us, says Paul? The word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith we are proclaiming. And Paul uses a very clever technique there, which the Jew would have got immediately. He quotes again from the Old Testament. He's in Deuteronomy chapter 30 this time. And the verses that he quotes in verse 8, in their original context, they refer to the law of God. But here, Paul uses these words to refer to Jesus. Jesus, who by his own admission, said in Matthew 5, 17, do not think that I have come to abolish the law of the prophets.

[49 : 21] I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. So Paul is teaching us here. He's saying to us here, it's not what we do to obtain access to salvation that matters, says Paul. That's not what gives us access to salvation. Our works and our efforts, he's saying here, Jesus has done it all. He has kept the law that we could never keep for us.

He has lived that sinless, perfect life that we could never live. He's done it for us. He has met that 100% righteous standard for us.

And salvation comes through trusting in him. It's accessible through trusting in him.

There was no other good enough, we often sing, to pay the price of sin. He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in. We have access to salvation. We have access to God's righteousness. We have access to eternal life in and through Jesus, the Word made flesh.

So we see here, first of all, that salvation is accessible. And secondly here, we see that salvation comes by acknowledging Jesus as Lord. This is the step on from the last element here. It's good to know that salvation is near, that it's accessible, but that will do us no good if we don't access it.

[51 : 18] We don't actually receive what is near. You know, you can have a bank card and you can have a pin number, you can have money in your account, but until you actually go to the cash machine, the ATM, and put your card in and put your pin number in, you'll have no cash.

And you and I can know that the law doesn't save. We can know that that road is a dead end. We can even know that Jesus does save, that there is a way to receive righteousness in eternal life.

And yet we remain lost until we do business personally with Jesus. And so we can ask the question now, what do we have to do, Paul, to receive and to be sure of this salvation?

And he tells us plainly in verses 9 to verse 11, he says in verse 9, 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. For it's with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it's with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the scripture says, anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.

Salvation comes by acknowledging Jesus as Lord. And there may be some who are saying at this point, is that it?

[53 : 03] Is that all we have to do? Just look to Jesus, as Spurgeon was told. Acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Is that all that we have to do?

I spoke to the children in the children's talk about Naaman. That story from 2 Kings chapter 5.

Naaman has leprosy, has this life-ending disease of biblical times. And he comes to Elisha, the man of God, and he's seeking healing, he's seeking salvation.

And this man Naaman, he's a powerful man. He has gifts, he has money, he has things to trade. But none of that could actually bring healing.

So what did he have to do to be healed, to be made clean? Well, Elisha sends him the message. Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored, and you will be cleansed.

[54 : 13] So what did Naaman say when he heard that? Well, he said, and I'm paraphrasing here, he said, is that it? Did I come all the way here to be told that?

Is that it? I thought I could do a deal for this. I thought I could pay for this. I've got all this stuff with me. I thought I could earn this. But is that it?

I don't much like the idea of having to wash myself in that grubby river. And so Naaman went off in a rage.

Still with leprosy. Still unclean. But he was brought to his senses when one of his servants said to him, Well, if you'd been told Naaman to do some great difficult thing, you'd have done that, wouldn't you?

So why not just wash? And Naaman listened. He humbled himself. He did what God said, and he was healed. Now, how can you and I be saved?

[55 : 22] It's by believing in and confessing Jesus as Savior and Lord. It's as simple and it's as humiliating as that. We need to come to Jesus.

Nothing we can do. We've got nothing to trade with that God will place value on. We simply need to come to Jesus and be washed in the blood of Jesus.

There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty states.

That's the gospel. We'll sing it tonight as well. In the hymn, Rock of Ages. Not the labor of my hands can fulfill thy laws' demands.

Could my zeal, no respite, no? Could my tears forever flow? All for sin could not atone. Thou must save, and thou alone.

[56 : 34] Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling. Naked come to thee for dress, helpless look to thee for grace. Foul I to the fountain fly.

Wash me, Savior. Or I die. That's the message that is coming through so clearly in Romans chapter 10.

And I can never read these verses in Romans 10 without thinking of Dunda, whom we know for part of the congregation.

Dunda, the last conversation we had before he went to hospital, he was wrestling for assurance of salvation. And these were the verses that he was in.

And I can still hear him saying, with Romans chapter 10 open, and I can still see his finger on the verses he was saying. It says here that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

[57 : 43] And Dunda says, I believe all of this. I believe that Jesus died for my sins. I believe that he rose. I believe that he is Lord. So that means I'm saved.

And the Apostle Paul, or God the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul, says, yes, that's exactly how we're saved. It's about acknowledging Jesus as Lord.

The third point here, the final element of this, is to see that salvation is available.

Verse 12, For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, that the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on it.

Perhaps there's somebody who's watching just now or who's still listening in and you're wondering, is this for me? Can I be saved? And Paul's answer in this chapter is, yes, this is for you.

[58 : 48] If you have ears to hear the gospel, if you have eyes to see Jesus and you're in need of him, if you have a heart that you're not hardening, then this is for you. Whether you're Jew or Gentile, Jesus is for you.

His promise is that he richly blesses all who call on him. And then just in case we're still dithering, he follows that up in verse 13 with, for everyone, everyone, who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Salvation is available. If you're hearing this, salvation is available.

Salvation is accessible. And salvation comes by acknowledging Jesus as Lord. That's the roadmarked faith.

It's no dead end. it's the way, it's the only way to eternal life. So, can I encourage you, can I plead with you, if you're hearing this, to take it.

[60 : 06] the roadmarked law to dead end. The roadmarked faith is the road that leads to eternal life.

And you can see the chapter's not finished, there's verse 14 and following still to have here. I have no time to deal with the last section. But if I could summarize it in one word, it would be the word share.

Share this. Now, when we see a video or we read an article that we enjoy or we think it's important, we share it. And the thrust of the closing section in Romans 10, as you scan the verses there from 14 and following, is to show us the heart of God which we see in the Apostle Paul who wants to share this good news about Jesus.

He sees so many people. He sees his own people, the Jews. He sees Gentiles whom he has been called to reach out to. He sees that they are lost. He sees that they are outside of Christ.

And Paul's own desire, his heart's desire, verse 1, and Paul's desire for us is that we would share the good news about Jesus.

[61 : 27] And maybe to finish, just to encourage us to share, let us focus on that picture that we have as the chapter concludes, that picture of God, the Father, as we see him in that closing verse, like the Father and the prodigal son scanning the horizon, remember, looking for his wayward son to return.

We have this picture in verse 21 of God who is saying, all day long, I have held out my hands to a disobedient and an obstinate people.

And yes, that can be said of Israel. We know that. But it can also be said of many of us. We are disobedient.

We are an obstinate people who want to go our own way. But the good news is that God's hands are still outstretched.

He's still scanning the horizon, even of North Harris, to see if there is anyone, anyone this morning who will come to him.

[62 : 51] So be encouraged to come to him and keep on day by day coming close to him and be encouraged.

encouraged, even if it's just a wee word, just a little act as we thought about with the children, be encouraged to call others to come to Jesus.

Our calling, our responsibility, our privilege is to share this gospel that Paul has brought to us and to call anyone who will hear to come to God who will come to the Father through Jesus the Son and give him the glory to the things he has done.

And we'll sing these words as we conclude the service. to God be the glory great things he hath done so loved he the world that he gave us his Son who yielded his life an atonement for sin and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice.

[64 : 48] O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son, and give him the glory, great things he hath done.

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, to every believer the promise of God, the vilest defender who truly believes that moment and from Jesus our pardon receives.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice.

O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son, and give him the glory, great things he hath done.

Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done, and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son.

[66 : 21] But purer and higher and greater will be our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice.

O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son, and give him the glory, great things he hath done.

And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all, both now and forevermore. Amen. that God is done.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[67 : 43] Amen. Amen. gifted.