

Romans, Part 29

The letter to the Romans was given to provoke a response and lead people to Christ. In the first 8 chapters, we were shown how justification and righteousness are accomplished through Christ. We were shown our own weakness and sin and then God's plan to redeem and save through Christ. Romans 9-11 reveals the way God accomplished His plan.

- In chapter 9, God has always worked this way. God always intended that salvation would come to all people through the seed of Abraham. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.
- In chapter 10, we are shown that God's plan from the beginning was to provide His salvation for all people through Christ. The law was given as a schoolmaster (guardian) to bring us to Christ, (Galatians 3:24).
- In chapter 11, God continues working to bring about the salvation of the world.

Throughout the Book of Romans, the Apostle Paul presented many questions to provoke faith in God's salvation through Christ.

In the first nine chapters of Romans, the reader is asked 44 questions. Before asking another series of questions, we are told, *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Then he asks 18 more questions in chapter ten and eleven. These questions are asked to provoke thinking people to evaluate for themselves what God has done. This was a particular challenge to the Jews, for they could not understand how anyone could become righteous without obedience to the law. For many generations they attempted to please God by obedience to the Law and be accepted by their own self-righteousness, but miserably failed. Now Paul said *"they ignored the righteousness that comes from God, and attempted to establish their own righteousness,"* (Romans 10:3). Self-righteousness can never accomplish what Christ has done.

Romans 10:4 NKJV For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Christ has made it possible for anyone to come to God. God's salvation is a matter of faith in what Christ has accomplished by fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law. The law points out personal sin, but Christ came and fulfilled the law and offered His righteousness to anyone who believes in Him.

So, how can a person be made right in God's sight?

Romans 10:9-13 NIV 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.”

In Christ, the distinction between Jew and Gentile is removed and anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Thus, access to God and His blessing is not just based on God’s covenant with Abraham and his descendants. Anyone can find access to God’s salvation through this grace and by the same process and Savior.

The next set of questions give a backwards progression to salvation.

Romans 10:14-16 NLT But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!” But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, “Lord, who has believed our message?”

Paul was quoting from Isaiah 52:7.

Isaiah 52:7 NIV How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

Let’s reverse this progression of salvation and see how we are saved.

First, someone must be sent.

This implies that SOMEONE does the sending.

Who does the sending?

John 20:21 NKJV So Jesus said... *“As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

Jesus was the first to proclaim the good news.

In Luke 4:18, the Lord quoted from Isaiah 61, *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor...”* Jesus was sent into this world to declare the good news of the gospel of God, (John 3:34). Those who believe and follow Him are sent to proclaim this same message.

Mark 16:15 NLT And then He (Jesus) told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.”

The Lord wanted them to go and share the good news, but He wanted them to go under the influence of the Holy Spirit in the same manner in which He did.

Acts 1:8 NLT But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.

And you will be **My** witnesses, telling people about **Me** everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

This power to be His witnesses enables believers to share the “Good News” under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 22:17 NLT The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let **anyone** who hears this say, “Come.” Let **anyone** who is thirsty come. Let **anyone who desires** drink freely from the water of life.

Notice the universal nature of the great commission.

Go into all the world, to everyone. Go to the ends of the earth. Anyone who hears should tell others. Anyone who desires may freely receive life. Everyone who receives this great grace and blessing are sent to tell others about God’s saving grace.

Second, they have a message to share.

What is the message?

They are sent to share the message of the Good News.

Romans 10:17 NKJV So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 10:17 NLT So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.

What is the “Good News?”

The “Good News” is the “Gospel” of Jesus Christ, God’s Son has become flesh in order to save the world. The world needs to know that the Savior was born and that He lived a sinless life. All the world needs to hear about His vicarious and substitutionary death on a cross to save us from our sins. Christ bore our sins on the cross and suffered for them. As a result, He is able to help us in every manner in that He suffered vicariously for us, (Hebrews 2:18). Everyone needs to hear that Jesus Christ is our Savior, Deliverer, and Healer. They need to hear that Jesus bodily arose from the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father. The Gospel Message reveals our Savior Jesus Christ.

If faith comes by hearing the Good News about Christ, why are there so many who are not saved? Why did so many in Israel not receive God’s salvation?

Romans 9:33 NIV As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.”

When Christ came, Israel rejected, despised and turned away from Him.

Many still reject the fact that God’s Son came in the flesh, died on the cross and bodily arose from the grave. They may accept the fact that He lived and

died, but reject the fact that He arose from the dead. Everyone who trusts in Him will find God's salvation.

Romans 10:18-21 NIV But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone 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; 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."

Both Moses and Isaiah spoke about God's persistent grace, mercy and salvation being offered first to Israel and then to all peoples.

When God included us, He did not forsake Israel.

Romans 11:1-5 NIV I ask then: Did God reject His people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject His people, whom He foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how He appealed to God against Israel: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." **So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.**

In Elijah's day, the remnant of seven thousand was proof that God had not cast off His people. The remnant in Paul's day was continuing proof of God's persistent mercy and grace. Israel did not believe that God could save the Gentiles who had no understanding. They thought salvation and righteousness belonged only to the Jews who were given the Law.

Consider this phrase, "There is a remnant chosen by grace."

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Romans 11:6-7 NKJV And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

God's grace to the Gentiles has provided salvation for all who believe.

Israel stumbled and failed to obtain righteousness because they refused to accept God's grace and plan of salvation through Christ. They attempted to please God by their own self-effort rather than accept God's free gift by Christ. The Law had brought them to Christ, but when Christ appeared they

refused to accept Him. All Israel heard was you cannot do this (the Law), but when Christ came, God provided a new and better way.

Romans 11:11-12 NLT Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.

What was Paul saying?

God has made salvation available to anyone who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept God's salvation through Christ.

Romans 11:15 NLT For since their rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, their acceptance will be even more wonderful. It will be life for those who were dead!

Because Israel rejected Christ, the Gospel was taken to the Gentiles.

Grace and salvation is a work of God. That same grace that brought us salvation is able to restore Israel, if they believe.

Romans 11:20-23 NLT Yes, but remember—those branches were broken off because they didn't believe in Christ, and you are there because you do believe. So don't think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen. For if God did not spare the original branches, He won't spare you either. Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off. And if the people of Israel turn from their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to graft them back into the tree.

Paul is telling every believer to keep their faith and trust in Christ.

Do not become wise or proud about yourself as Israel did.

Ephesians 2:8 NLT God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.