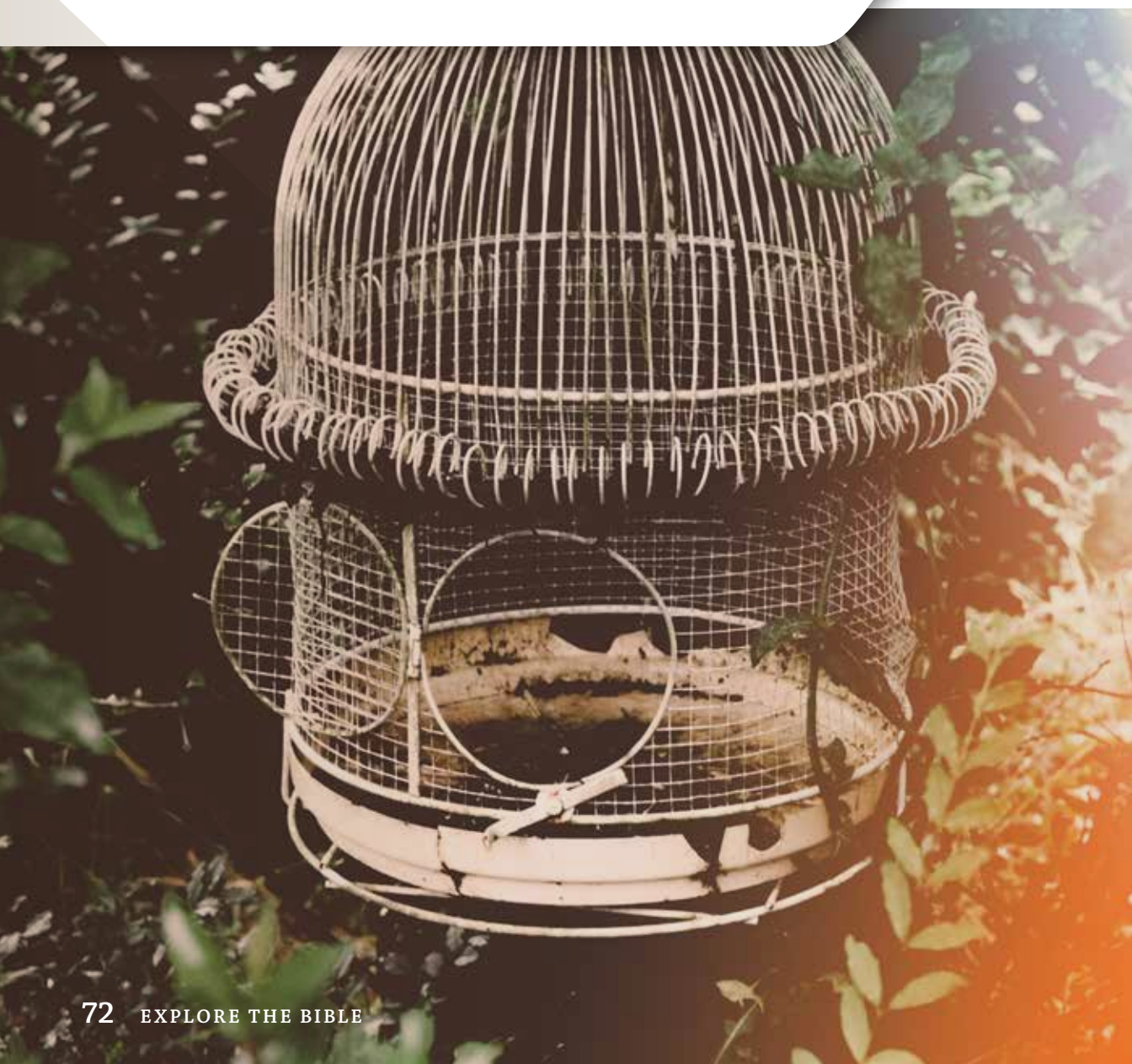


Session 9

Saved

Salvation has always been granted through faith.

Romans 10:5-15



What are some ways people try to gain God’s favor? Why do people try to gain His favor?

People try all kinds of things to be right with God. In some cultures, sacrifices are offered to appease the gods. People bathe in sacred rivers and meditate on sacred mountains. Others bow down before statues and burn incense. Paul answered this age-old question. Salvation is available only to those who call upon Jesus. Our salvation is rooted in the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus and available only through His completed work on the cross.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The first eight chapters of Romans represent the theological framework of our salvation. Paul emphasized human depravity and our inability to save ourselves (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). He then focused on the solution to that problem—the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. God demonstrated His immense love by sending His Son as a sacrifice (5:8), and that sacrifice transforms life as we know it.

This new way of life is not something we achieve on our own. Instead, we depend on the power of the Spirit. The Spirit plays a vital role in the lives of believers. He guarantees our relationship with God (8:1-11) and reminds us that nothing can separate us from His love (8:31-39).

This progression provided the theological framework for Paul to address practical issues, starting in chapter 12. But first, he included an extended section on the role of the Jews under the new covenant (chaps. 9–11). Jesus’ death had ushered in a new era, but God was not done with Israel. His chosen people still had a role to play in His kingdom—alongside His children who came to Him under the new covenant.

The new way of doing things wasn’t really new, though. Faith, Paul said, had always been God’s way for a relationship with Him. The symbolism behind the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to the ultimate sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

In a sense, while things had changed, they really had stayed the same. What the Old Testament saints observed in expectation, New Testament believers saw fulfilled in Christ. Even though many Jewish hearts were hardened, Paul emphasized the power of grace and faith to provide redemption to all who believe.

ROMANS 10:5-15

5 Since Moses writes about the **righteousness that is from the law** **5**: The one who does these things will live by them. **6** But the **righteousness that comes from faith** **6** speaks like this: Do not say in your heart, “Who will go up to heaven?” that is, to bring Christ down **7** or, “Who will go down into the abyss?” that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. **8** On the contrary, what does it say? The message is near you, in your mouth and in your heart. This is the message of faith that we proclaim: **9** 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. **10** One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in **salvation** **10**. **11** For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame, **12** since there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him. **13** For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. **14** How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a **preacher** **14**? **15** And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: **How beautiful are the feet** **15** of those who bring good news.

Passage Outline

Confess and Believe
(Rom. 10:5-10)

Whoever
(Rom. 10:11-13)

Tell All
(Rom. 10:14-15)

Keywords

- A. The law’s purpose was to point toward our need of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:19-26) because fulfillment of the law can only come through Jesus, who lived perfectly (Matt. 5:17-18).
- B. When Jesus is Lord of our lives, God credits us with righteousness through faith (Rom. 4:18-25).
- C. When we place faith in Jesus Christ, we’re saved by His power that works in our lives (Rom. 1:16).
- D. Paul’s desire for his fellow Israelites’ salvation was so sincere and strong that he wrote, “for I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the benefit of my brothers and sisters” (Rom. 9:3).
- E. We have good news of Jesus to share with the world (Isa. 52:7; Nah. 1:15).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Moses spoke of *righteousness that is from the law*. However, that righteousness was reserved for *the one who does these things*, meaning the one who obeys the law.

How might the idea of gaining righteousness from the law be expressed today? What is the appeal of earning salvation when we can have it for free?

BIBLE SKILL: Use a Bible dictionary to help understand a Bible passage. –

Look up “confession of faith” in a Bible dictionary. Review some of the passages identified in the article. Note how a confession of faith is portrayed in the Old and New Testaments. What insights did you gain from the comparison? Which passage identified in the article gives you the greatest insight into Paul’s use of “confess” in Romans 10? Explain.

In contrast to the impossible standard of the law, faith has nothing to do with works. When *faith speaks*, it doesn’t talk about perfection. It talks about grace. God gave Israel the law, but He also made a way for them to experience forgiveness when they failed. He did not put *righteousness* out of their reach.

Giving faith a voice, Paul wrote that it proclaims a gospel of hope. Even more important, the message is near for all who are willing to listen. They can testify to it through the words of their mouths and rest in the peace that fills their hearts. That is the message of faith Paul had proclaimed since his conversion.

The apostle made it clear that God created every person, so He is *the same Lord of all*. He doesn’t have one plan for Jews and another for Gentiles. Faith in Christ is the only path to Him—for any people group.

What makes salvation through faith in Jesus being offered to all so wonderful and so difficult at the same time?

KEY DOCTRINE: Salvation – There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord (John 14:6).

Questions are effective teaching tools, and Paul used a series of rhetorical questions to explain God’s plan for sharing the gospel message with all people. These questions created a logical flow for readers to follow.

What makes the feet of a person who shares the gospel beautiful?

APPLY THE TEXT

- God promises to save all who place their faith in His resurrected Son.
- Salvation through faith in Jesus is available to all people.
- Believers must actively tell others the gospel and willingly send out missionaries throughout the entire world.

How would you describe your confession and belief about Jesus? How did that confession and belief change your life? How does it change your life today?

Who are the “Gentiles” in our culture these days—not just ethnically, but maybe socially or economically? How can you and your Bible study members intentionally reach out to those groups this week?

Believers can support missions through praying, giving, and going. How can you participate more actively in each of those areas? What obstacles do you need to overcome?

Prayer Requests



DAILY EXPLORATION

Day 1: Perfect righteousness requires perfect obedience.

Read Romans 10:5, highlighting the word righteousness.

Quoting Leviticus 18:5, Paul pointed out that obedience to God's rules and regulations is required for righteousness. Anything less than complete obedience falls short. In other words, perfect righteousness through the law takes perfect obedience. Of course, no one has attained perfection except Jesus. Paul wrote earlier that none of us are righteous (3:10). The law might point us in the right direction, but it cannot provide salvation.

How would you express the idea of gaining righteousness from the law? What is the appeal of earning salvation when you can have it for free?

Day 2: Faith requires belief and confession.

Read Romans 10:9-10, identifying the two requirements of faith.

In verses 9-10, Paul dug deeper into the message of faith and its role in righteousness. The primary point is that salvation is not the result of our own efforts. As Paul boiled down the message of the gospel, he noted that we need to take two key steps. The first step is to *confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord."* The Greek word translated *Lord* (*kurios*) is the same word used for the personal name of God (*Yahweh*) more than 6,000 times in the Greek version of the Old Testament. Confessing Jesus as Lord is the same as acknowledging that He is God. This would have been difficult for a devout Jew to swallow. In fact, the Jewish leaders crucified Jesus because He claimed equality with God. This would have been a huge sticking point and a primary reason Jews were rejecting Jesus. But salvation is not possible without confessing "Jesus is Lord."

While confession is an external sign of one's agreement that Jesus is God, it goes beyond simple lip service. Paul said faith also demands you *believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead*. The resurrection was a foundational element in the apostles' teaching. It remains the key proof of Jesus' identity as Messiah and distinguishes Him from other would-be saviors.

Ultimately, this two-fold demonstration of faith through confession and belief represent two sides of the same coin. You can't have one without the other. Salvation is not a mere intellectual exercise of knowing stuff about Jesus. It goes beyond a set of facts about His death and resurrection. Belief and confession are expressions of personal trust in Christ. To believe in Him is to trust Him as the only way to God.

What does it mean to "confess" and "believe"? Can you have one without the other?

Day 3: Salvation is available to all.

Read Romans 10:11-12, understanding the importance of salvation being available to everyone.

Paul did not base his teaching on his own opinions or thoughts. He relied on what Scripture says. For him, God’s Word was the ultimate authority for truth. In this case, *the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame.* Centuries earlier, the prophet Isaiah had given that message of hope to a nation of Jews who were prone to wander (Isa. 28:16). Here, Paul applied it to a new group of faithful believers—with no regard to ethnicity or heritage.

The term *shame* could also mean “disappointed.” The idea is that believers—whether Jew or Gentile—never have to wonder about God’s faithfulness. He will always keep His promises and never let His people down.

Paul’s use of prophetic texts is significant. The Jews honored the words of the prophets as God’s own words. So, by using them as evidence for this new paradigm of faith, Paul was proving that Israel had misinterpreted and misapplied God’s plan for salvation. Everyone included Gentiles and always had. Paul said there was *no distinction between Jew and Greek*, though most Jews would have disagreed.

What limitations do you sometimes put on the gospel message through your attitudes, words, or actions? How should salvation being available to all impact how you share it?

Day 4: We all have a universal need for salvation.

Read Romans 10:13, underlining the verse.

To drive his point home, Paul again turned to the prophets. Quoting Joel 2:32, he emphasized that everyone is welcome at the cross. No one must stand on the outside looking in. Through this, Paul provided a clear and authoritative statement of our universal need for salvation and God’s gracious offer to provide it.

God worked out His plan by bringing the Messiah through a chosen nation. But He extends the benefits of that plan to *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord*. Ironically, Paul’s teaching that the Gentiles were entitled to what the Jews had long considered only theirs revealed a deeper truth. The Jews who rejected Jesus needed the salvation that so many Gentiles had found in Christ.

What makes salvation through faith in Jesus being offered to all so wonderful and so difficult at the same time?

Day 5: We must proclaim the gospel.

Read Romans 10:14-15, noting the steps in sharing the gospel.

Paul had already established these basics of salvation, but he took them a step further. People need someone to share the message with them in a way that they can understand. For that, they need someone willing to speak to others on behalf of God. The responsibility of reaching all the world is given to all believers, not just a handful of pastors, evangelists, and missionaries.

Paul's final question emphasizes our commission from God to reach the world. Gospel witnesses are *sent* into the world. They don't wait for people to come find them in sanctuaries on Sunday or by the water cooler on Monday. Proclaimers are to actively move out into the world to share the message of the gospel.

God has given us this privilege. From the moment we accept Christ as Savior, we become evangelists and missionaries. Whether we circle the globe or walk next door, we must spread the gospel every chance we get.

What makes the feet of a person who shares the gospel beautiful?

TALK IT OUT

Reflect on the truths found in Romans 10, sharing with other members of your Bible study group.

How did Paul use Moses' words to talk about righteousness (faith vs. law)? Why are our good works never enough?

Why was it important for Paul to describe the availability of salvation?

What are various ways we can participate in sharing the gospel?



For additional context, read "Priority of Preaching" in the Spring 2020 issue of *Biblical Illustrator*. Available at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator.