



HICKORY GROVE

BAPTIST CHURCH

The Beauty of the Gospel

March 15, 2020

Romans 10:5-13

Clint Pressley

⁵For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. ⁶But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷"or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

(Pastor prays)

The Gospel of Jesus is a beautiful thing, a lifegiving thing. Because of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, we don't fear God's wrath. We live in God's love and forgiveness. The Gospel is a freeing thing. Because of the finished work of Jesus, we don't have to constantly feel like we are proving ourselves to other people or even to God. The Gospel is a confidence-building thing because of the cross.

I belong to God and He always takes care of His own. It's why we can rejoice in the Gospel of Jesus during this pandemic. We have already learned in Romans 8 that God works all pandemics for the good of those that love Him and are called according to His purpose. It's why I want to point you to Jesus today. I want you to love and trust our good God who's going to take care of you and your family and your future. He's going to do it for your good and His glory!

Today we've come to a great passage that shows us the riches of God's grace and gives us great cause to trust Him. In this paragraph, Paul is talking about being right with God. You might call it righteousness. And he's contrasting two kinds of righteousness. One is by law, which is oppressive, legalistic and impossible. And one is by grace, which comes through faith and it's freeing and comforting and confidence-making. Today is a good day to be thankful for the gospel of grace, to be strengthened and to rest in the joy of God's peace that comes through faith in Jesus. God loved us enough to save us through the cross of Jesus then He will love us through this too!

The Gospel of Grace Gives Us Confidence for Life

There are five things to see from this passage:

The simplicity of the Gospel is faith – not law

In Romans 10:4, Paul says that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes. Then he proves it in verse 5, ⁵ *For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.* You see what Paul is doing in verse five? He quotes Leviticus 18 and says if a person is able to perform all the law requires it will lead to life. The problem and the point is that no one is actually able to do that. That's why Jesus came and fulfilled the law, because we can't. It is His earned, active obedience, and righteousness. The law points us in the right direction but provides no power to achieve what it demands. The law was never meant as a way to gain God's favor; instead, it reflects God's character and shows us our need for grace. It's why the Ten Commandments are so vital, showing us our need for grace.

Verse 5 is negative, showing that right standing with God can't be achieved. Verse 6 shows us it must be believed. So verses 6 and 7 show us that righteousness, based on faith, is much different. ⁶ *But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).* Paul is saying here that being right with God doesn't mean some valiant exploits such as bringing Christ down from Heaven or up from the grave. Here Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30 to remind us of the finished work of Christ, that God has done all that is necessary for us to be right with Him. He did so in Jesus. Jesus kept the law perfectly and then took the wrath of God completely. God raised Him victoriously and He has ascended gloriously. All that is left to do is to believe that. It's faith. It's not works, it's not

karma, it's not "paying it forward." The simplicity of the Gospel is that we are saved by faith, not law.

The basis of the Gospel is the Word – not imagination

I love verse 8. It's a quote of Deuteronomy 30: 14, *But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.* That is the word of faith that we proclaim. This is the beauty of the Gospel given to us in the Bible. This is why we do expository sermons: because each passage points us to our need for Christ. It's why you should take advantage of the access you have to the Bible. The Gospel is accessible. You don't have to be a churchgoer to understand it; you just have to be a self-proclaimed sinner in need of a savior.

The Gospel is not only accessible, it's understandable. God is holy, man is a sinner. Jesus bridges the divide in four ways. It's through His perfect life, atoning death, victorious resurrection and glorious ascension. In addition, in Christ, God's word is near in a way that it never has been before. And now, to be right with God, all that is required is faith, to come to Jesus believing. The simplicity of the Gospel is faith, not law. The basis of the Gospel is the word, not imagination.

The dynamics of the Gospel is belief – not action

You probably know these two verses and they need to be read together. As you read look at the structure of verses 9 through 10. ⁹ *because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* ¹⁰ *For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.* The structure is confess - believe, believe - confess. At the very heart of being saved is belief. And confession is nothing more than the actual verbalizing of belief. Isn't that what Jesus meant when He said, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks?"

Now, I want you to look closely at what it is we are to believe and confess. There are two things. We are to confess that Jesus is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead. That is the lordship of Christ, the resurrection of Christ. Lordship. This is where Christianity is won and lost. It's defined. "Jesus is Lord" is the earliest and most fundamental confession of a Christian. It's also the most radical. Our whole lives are spent as a living exposition of Jesus is Lord. When you confess "Jesus as Lord," you have declared and recognized Christ as the absolute authority in all things. When you come to Christ by faith, you are acknowledging that you have placed yourself entirely and without reserve under the authority of Jesus and you will carry out,

without hesitation, whatever He might choose for you to do! A good lesson to learn is that there is no salvation without Lordship.

Now we know that outward conduct doesn't save us, but Paul never contemplates an inward state that doesn't have an outward reflection. When you think about the elements of salvation in this passage it might be helpful to list them.

- The **response** of salvation. You will find it at the end of verse 9 and the beginning of verse 10. It is the simple and clear belief that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ and not by works.
- **Evidence** of salvation . You see that at the beginning of verse 9 and the end of verse 10. It's confession, saying the same thing. Now what is the confession.
- **Object** of faith. Right there in verse 9 it is Christ's Lordship and resurrection. Through these, death and sin are conquered.
- The result of this. Look at the end of verse 9 and the end of verse 10. **Saved, justified, saved.** It happens when you call on the name of the Lord. The dynamics of the Gospel are belief that leads to action. James would tell us that faith is never alone. Wherever there is real faith, there are obvious works. Before I get to the scope of the Gospel, let me show you joy.

The joy of the Gospel is justification – not shame

Once again Paul quotes an Old Testament passage that points to Jesus. In verse 11, he quotes part of Isaiah 28: 16. Let me read the whole thing to you. *therefore thus says the Lord GOD,*

“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,

a stone, a tested stone,

a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:

‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’

Paul modifies it to say, whoever believes will not be in shame. The joy of the Gospel is that shame has been lifted and forgiveness takes its place. There are few joys more joyful than the joy of being forgiven in Jesus! Can I give you one more last beautiful thing about the Gospel?

The scope of the Gospel is universal – not segregated

Let's look at verses 12-13. ¹² *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.* ¹³ *For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Paul is a Jew writing to Gentiles and declaring the unifying effect of the Gospel. Verse 12 gives equal footing to both Jews and Gentiles by the gospel. There is no distinction between two groups of people in sin and no distinction between two groups of people in grace.

One of the most profound evidences of the gospel is a racially diverse church. That's the beauty of verse 12. Since the tower of Babel, there have been divisions, distractions, oppression, hatred, and cultural inequity. Verse 12 says that the Gospel does something that hasn't been done since the tower of Babel. ¹² *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.* And then in verse 13 Paul brings it to a close by quoting Joel 2: 32. *And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.*

That's the glorious truth of the great gospel of grace. You can stand on it. You can build your family and hope on it. You can trust God to get you through anything because the gospel of grace gives us confidence for life!

(Pastor prays)