

“Good for the Soul” (Romans 9:30–10:13)

Charles Spurgeon, the great nineteenth century preacher, was once asked, “Have you been able to reconcile God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility?” He replied: “There’s no need to reconcile friends.”¹ Spurgeon’s remark should cause us to recognize that God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility are both vital truths for knowing God and growing in godliness. This means that when we discuss this controversial issue we must be sure not to dilute either side. Instead, we must be extreme! The truth isn’t in the middle; it’s in the extreme.² Therefore, as I preached Rom 9, emphasizing the extreme sovereignty of God, so I will now preach Rom 10, emphasizing the extreme responsibility of humankind.³ However, before looking at our text we need to understand the intellectual dilemma we find ourselves in.

The truths of divine sovereignty and human responsibility are called an “antinomy.”⁴ An antinomy is two seemingly opposed truths that are undeniably true,⁵ yet how they can be true together, is beyond human comprehension.⁶ Both truths are clearly taught throughout Scripture, yet how they fit together, only God Himself knows. It may help to recognize, “In God’s higher rationality, things which we think must be either/or can in reality be both/and.”⁷ That is why we can say that God is sovereign and people are responsible.⁸ Since Scripture presents both and doesn’t try to reconcile the two, we shouldn’t either. In Rom 9:30–10:13 Paul urges all people to believe in Christ and to share Him with others.⁹ The reason is simple: *God requires heart and lip service*. Paul shares two vital directives.

1. Works must be resisted (9:30–10:4). The only way to receive eternal life is through Jesus Christ’s righteousness. Paul begins this section by saying: **“What shall we say then?¹⁰ That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness,¹¹ attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law”** (9:30–31). One of the inevitable questions that surely stems from Rom 9 is: How do people become Christians? The answer is that people must exercise faith to have a relationship with God. In Paul’s day, Gentiles were not in any way pursuing salvation, but they attained it nonetheless. On the other hand, Israel made the pursuit of righteousness their national past time but came up empty-handed. Why did this happen? Simply put, Gentiles were willing to place their faith in Christ and Jews were not. God’s grace often produces great surprises because God chooses unexpected people. He often saves people you would never think would be saved.¹² This ought to serve as a reminder that we can’t possibly guess who will believe in Christ. We must, therefore, share the good news of Jesus with as many people as we can as frequently as possible.

Paul continues to explain Israel’s problem in 9:32–33: **“Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone,¹³ just as it is written [Isa 28:16; 8:14], ‘BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK¹⁴ OF OFFENSE,¹⁵ AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’”** Israel was guilty of trying to work their way to heaven. Unlike the Gentiles, the Jews wouldn’t accept Jesus because His plan of salvation was too easy.¹⁶ Picture a huge, flat stone hidden in the grass. Some people never see the stone because they are looking ahead and not down. Because they don’t see it, they stumble and fall. Others walk through the grass, slowly, carefully, uncertain of what lies ahead. Their head is down; their eyes are fixed on the ground. They see the stone, and instead of tripping over it, they stand on it. Thus, the same stone trips one person and supports another.¹⁷

These verses offer a principle that religious people are often the most difficult to lead to faith in Christ. Most religious people are convinced of their own righteousness. People who feel that they are living a good life don’t see how much they need Jesus. Personally, I prefer to speak to those who see themselves as rank sinners. They are often more sensitive to the good news of Christ. These verses remind us that what God wants more than anything is faith!¹⁸ The Jews and many other religious people stumble over the simplicity of it all. If only they could understand that *God requires heart and lip service*.

Despite Israel's rejection of Christ, Paul has a heart for his people. In 10:1 he writes, **“Brethren,¹⁹ my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.”** It is important to remember that Paul's use of “salvation” and “saved” in Romans does not refer merely to justification or going to heaven. Rather, these terms frequently refer to sanctification or Christian growth. So here, Paul is after more than just Israel's “fire insurance”; he wants his people to press on to spiritual maturity. He expresses this through his “heart's desire”²⁰ and his prayer. Please note the word “and.” Some people will pray but never share Christ; others will share but never pray. Few Christians do both of these disciplines well. Yet, both passion and prayer are necessary.²¹ We must pray like George Whitefield: “Lord, give me souls or take my soul!” Don't let another day go by where you say, “The time isn't right.” There's no better time than present! God wants you to be prayed up to proclaim Christ to others. Although God is sovereign and His purposes will not be thwarted, He typically accomplishes His will by using His people. He certainly doesn't need us, but He loves to use us. When we make ourselves available and serve Him in His work, we experience the joy that comes from doing what we have been created to do. Moreover, God even rewards us in eternity for faithfully serving Him on earth.

In 10:2–3 Paul explains why he has such a heart for Israel. **“For I testify about them that they have a zeal²² for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.²³ For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own,²⁴ they did not subject²⁵ themselves to the righteousness of God.”** The Jews are guilty of both ignorance and arrogance. Sadly, the “zeal” of the Jews was not based on “knowledge.” Zeal is an admirable quality, but zeal without knowledge is pitiful. Most people know that the Jews are an intelligent people. Approximately 22% of the Nobel Prize winners have been Jewish.²⁶ They dominate the fields of science, literature, the arts, music, philosophy, and economics. But in their worldly wisdom they have outsmarted themselves. They thought they could achieve the righteousness of God on their own merits. Yet, *God requires heart and lip service.*

We see people all around us who are zealous for lost causes. We see it in the cults, we see it in politics, we see it in social areas, and we see it in the militias. In fact, sometimes it seems as though zeal increases in direct proportion to ignorance. Paul should know. There was a time when his zeal was notorious.²⁷ However, what Paul didn't understand at that time was that God's righteousness could not be earned by any amount of zeal. It can only be received as a gift. After Paul became a Christian he didn't lose his zeal, but instead his zeal became based on truth. He wants this same transformation for his people. He wants them to maintain their zeal, but come to the knowledge of the truth of God's righteousness.

These verses are especially important for Western Christians. We live in a very politically correct, relativistic, and tolerant country. We have adopted an “anything-goes” mentality. “If it works for you, it must be okay.” Unfortunately, sincerity and zeal are not enough, for we may be sincerely mistaken. Jesus is the only way to God. The Bible is the only holy book. Faith alone in Christ alone is the only hope of eternal life. While these are difficult claims to make in this day and age, they are nonetheless true.

Paul boils down his argument in 10:4: **“For Christ is the end²⁸ of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”** This begs a question that scholars have debated for centuries, “In what sense is Christ the “end” of the Law?” The clue to the meaning of the word translated “end” is found back in 9:30–33. In this context, Paul used the word-picture of a footrace to describe how Jews stumbled on the track and how Gentiles, who had faith in Jesus, crossed the finish line. The word translated “end” (*telos*)²⁹ was sometimes used to describe the finish line in a race, so if Paul was still thinking about that word-picture, then Christ was the finish line of the law of Moses. Now, the finish line in a race is the termination of the race—the race is over once the finish line is crossed.³⁰ If righteousness is “apart from the law” (3:21), then for believers the possibility of trying to use the law as a means of justification is finished forever.³¹

[Not only must works be resisted, but also . . .]

2. Faith must be exercised (10:5–13). The quest for eternal life is not discovered by works but by faith. In 10:5 Paul explains, **“For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.”**³² One purpose of the law was to be a tool to help Israel grow in practical sanctification.³³ The law was never intended as a means of justification. Moses was not speaking of the hypothetical possibility of someone gaining eternal life;³⁴ rather, he was referring to “life” that results from maturity.³⁵ Thus, this verse serves as a contrast with 10:6–8.

In 10:6–8 Paul again emphasizes “the righteousness based on faith”: **“But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: ‘DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, ‘WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), or ‘WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).’ But what does it say? ‘THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART’—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching.”** These verses contain quotes from Deut 30:12–14 where Moses gives his “swan song” to the people of Israel. Knowing that he would never speak to them again, he reminds them that God had already revealed Himself to them on Mount Sinai. They could never say they didn’t know what God wanted. Not only that, but Moses had proclaimed God’s Word to them for forty years. No one had any excuses. No one could say, “I wish God had done more to make Himself clear.” God had spoken, and He did not stutter. Paul takes these words of Moses and applies them to the gospel message. If God had spoken through the law, how much more has He now spoken to us through Jesus Christ. In fact, Paul speaks as if “righteousness” is a person. Righteousness speaks! It draws near to us and talks to us.³⁶ Paul contrasts the law and Jesus. Only Jesus Christ can provide eternal life. Only through Jesus can we have a relationship with God.

Now Paul arrives at the apex of this passage. Paul’s words in 10:9–10 are so familiar to most Bible students that we typically breeze right over them. We mistakenly assume that we understand what these verses mean. However, I would suggest that these verses need to be reexamined. Beginning in 10:9 Paul writes, **“ . . . that 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.”** Does this verse strike you as problematic? Clearly, both belief *and* confession are necessary for salvation. Did you know that this is the only verse in the New Testament that includes confession (along with belief) as a condition of salvation? Now, it’s possible that this could be the intent, but elsewhere Paul and other biblical writers affirm faith alone as the sole condition of salvation.³⁷ Nevertheless, this verse has led many scholars and evangelists to conclude that a person, who is either afraid or unwilling to confess their faith in Christ, remains unsaved.³⁸ Yet, this does not seem to be either biblically or practically valid. Rom 10:9–10 are set in a context where Paul shows that “works righteousness” is precisely the problem with the nation of Israel as a whole. The problem is trying to do something to gain the favor of God. Rather than supporting public confession as a work that we must do, the context supports the opposite conclusion. Could there be another way of understanding this troublesome and familiar text? I believe so.

In the book of Romans there seems to be a distinction between justification and salvation (cf. 5:9–10). Justification means “to be declared righteous” in a positional sense. On the other hand, salvation finds its basis in justification, but it goes beyond initial faith. As 1:16–17 indicates, salvation refers to being delivered from wrath on earth, especially in victory over sinful responses. It is common in many Christian circles to speak of the “tenses” of salvation as a way of helping us understand three uses of the terms “salvation” and “save” in Scripture. The “past tense” of salvation speaks of our deliverance from the penalty of sin. The “present tense” of salvation is our deliverance from the power of sin. And the “future tense” of salvation is our deliverance from the presence of sin.³⁹ The key to understanding the theme of Romans is that Paul was writing to tell his believing Roman recipients how one can escape (i.e., be saved from) the wrath of God temporally and eternally. He reminded them that one escapes the eternal wrath of God simply by believing in Christ as Savior. He also taught them that one escapes the wrath of God here and now by living a godly life (cf. 1:18–32). Salvation, then, encompasses the Christian life from “faith to faith” (1:17).

In 10:10 Paul explains what he has said in 10:9: **“for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness,⁴⁰ and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”⁴¹** This verse clearly distinguishes belief and confession. Belief results in righteousness while confession results in salvation. The word “confess” comes before “believe” in 10:9 because “mouth” precedes “heart” in Deut 30:8. But 10:10 brings clarity to the matter. In this verse, Paul gives a brief summary of the letter up to this point: “for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness⁴²” is the imputed righteousness that includes justification and is by faith alone in Christ alone, absolutely apart from works (3:24–5:10). “And with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation” is a summary of the “much more salvation” section (5:10–8:39).⁴³ Thus, 10:10 teaches both that unbelievers gain positional righteousness by believing in Christ and that believers gain salvation from temporal wrath by confessing their faith in Him. This confession is neither a one time act nor an oath; it is a life of obedience.

To summarize: Paul wants individuals to believe in Jesus Christ, specifically, that God raised Jesus from the dead. The resurrection of Christ is an integral element of the gospel. It is also a central truth in the apostolic sermons of Acts.⁴⁴ Christianity stands or falls on the reality of the empty tomb (cf. Rom 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor 15). When one believes in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior, the result is righteousness (i.e., justification). Paul also wants believers to confess their faith in Jesus’ deity.⁴⁵ He expects believers to go public with their faith.⁴⁶ When one confesses Jesus Christ as God in word and deed, the result is salvation from an empty or wasted life (i.e., sanctification).⁴⁷ This is God’s heart: He doesn’t want a saved soul and a wasted life. *God requires heart and lip service.*

In 10:11–13, Paul demonstrates how justification and salvation or belief and confession/calling on the Lord blur together. Paul explains that the gospel is available to everyone in 10:11: **“For the Scripture says,⁴⁸ ‘WHOEVER⁴⁹ BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’”** Again, Paul quotes Isa 28:16. The phrase “will not be disappointed” (or “put to shame”) is a litotes—a way of emphasizing something by saying it negatively (cf. Rom 1:16). It’s an understatement to give added emphasis. Paul means, “Everyone who believes in him will be gloriously honored, wonderfully satisfied, and will find what has happened is more than his wildest dreams of blessing and fulfillment.”⁵⁰ This is a tremendous truth. You will be disappointed in your friends and loved ones. Husbands and wives will be disappointed with each other from time to time. Children will be disappointed in parents, and parents will sometimes be disappointed with their children. Friends will leave us, family members will forget us, and business partners will double cross us. But no one who trusts in Jesus will ever be disappointed. If you put your trust in Jesus, you will never regret that decision. Ten thousand years from now, you will still be glad you trusted in Him. Jesus never disappoints.

Verses 12–13 explain that God’s good news is for both Jew and Gentile. Paul writes, **“For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek;⁵¹ for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for ‘WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.’”** These verses emphasize the truth that God doesn’t play favorites. No group or race or culture has a special claim on God’s grace. Paul makes this clear by using terms like “whoever” and “all.” God is an equal opportunity Savior! His glorious good news is freely offered to all who will simply believe in the Lord Jesus. Additionally, Paul’s use of the phrase, “call on the name of the Lord” parallels “confess” in 10:9–10. The apostle quotes Joel 2:32 which says that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. A study of the Old Testament phrase “calling on the name of the Lord,” reveals that it shares the same idea as confessing Christ. Moreover, calling on the name of the Lord in the Old Testament was something that only Old Testament believers could do.⁵² This is also true in the New Testament.⁵³ Nobody who was an unbeliever would call on the name of the Lord. Calling on the name of the Lord was a public form of worship where the saint identified himself with the one true God in heaven. As the believer calls on the name of the Lord he or she is set free to serve the Lord and grow in Him. *God requires heart and lip service.*

If you are like most Americans, you are most likely familiar with raunchy television talk show hosts such as Jerry Springer, Maury Povich, and Howard Stern. What do these three men have in common? In order to attract more viewers, they must increase the degree of perversion! These hosts showcase some of the sickest most repulsive behavior imaginable. Inevitably, the live fans and those watching via television applaud and glorify sin. These shows are a safe haven for people “coming out of the closet” and publicly exposing their sin. There is no shame or remorse. Everyone is encouraged to go public with their sin.

Don't you think it's high time for you and me to come out of the closet? Isn't it time for us to go public with our faith? Everyone else is coming out of the closet and promoting all kinds of wild ideology. Why not us? If we ever get serious about our belief in Jesus Christ and begin to confess Him publicly as a way of life there's no telling the impact that we may be able to have on our community. We can't afford to be ashamed any longer! Will people criticize us? Yes. Will they possibly reject and persecute us? Yes. But there are people who are looking for truth and they will respect you and me for taking a stand for what we believe. *God requires heart and lip service.* Will you take Him seriously today?

Scripture References

Romans 9:30–10:13

Philippians 3:1–6

Deuteronomy 30:12–24

Leviticus 18:5

Matthew 5:17

Luke 18:9–14

John 6:28–29; 14:6

Study Questions

1. In my Christian experience is Jesus a stumbling stone or a cornerstone (Romans 9:30–33)? Am I standing on the Rock or stumbling over it? How am I presently building my life on the Rock? Is Jesus the cornerstone of my life? If so, how am I standing on Him and building upon Him?
2. How would I describe Paul's attitude toward unsaved Jews (Romans 10:1)? How is my attitude toward unbelievers similar or different? How can I increase my burden for the lost? Who am I currently praying for that needs Jesus? What am I prepared to do about it?
3. How can I be sure that I have a grace-based faith and not a works-based faith (Romans 10:6–8)? Why is it so important to clearly and simply present the gospel? Have I mastered the content of the gospel? Am I able to quickly and easily share Christ with others? When is the last time I have done so?
4. Why is it so essential to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 10:9–10)? How frequently do I confess Christ? With such joy in our salvation, why are so many believers reluctant to confess Christ? Interact with the statement: "There is no such thing as secret discipleship. Either the secrecy destroys the discipleship or the discipleship destroys the secrecy." Why can this be considered a biblical truth?
5. Do I genuinely believe that Christianity is for *all* people (Romans 10:11–13)? Am I convinced that Jesus never disappoints (10:11)? Why or why not? Am I doing everything I can to help people believe in Christ? In what ways am I partnering with my church to share the good news?

Notes

¹ Augustine said that we must pray as though everything depended on God and work as though everything depended on us!

² Charles Simeon, the great British preacher from the early 1800s, lived at a time when the Calvinist-Arminian controversy was particularly bitter. Thus, he warned his congregation of the dangers of forsaking Scripture in favor of a theological system: “When I come to a text which speaks of election, I delight myself in the doctrine of election. When the apostles exhort me to repentance and obedience, and indicate my freedom of choice and action, I give myself up to that side of the question.” Quoted in John R. W. Stott, *Romans: God’s Good News for the World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994), 278.

³ The mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility is found throughout the Scriptures. Concerning the crucifixion of Jesus, Luke records that men were responsible for putting Jesus to death even though He was “delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23; cf. 4:27–28). Regarding Judas and his betrayal, Luke writes, “For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!” (Luke 22:22) A final example which relates to our passage is John 1:12–13: “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.” Verse 12 hits the human angle while 1:13 hits the divine.

⁴ J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Chicago: InterVarsity, 1967), 18–22.

⁵ E.g., The Trinity, Jesus is 100% God and man.

⁶ Packer, *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God*, 22: “An antinomy exists when a pair of principles stand side by side, seemingly irreconcilable, yet both undeniable. There are cogent reasons for believing both of them, each rests on clear and solid evidence but it is a mystery to you how they can be squared with one another. You see that they each must be true on their own but you do not see how they could be true together.” Despite the great gap between our finite mental capacity and the Word’s intimate knowledge, God can communicate with us, and has. But when it comes to equally valid truths that seem to contradict each other, we should not try to force the two ideas together. It is not intellectual suicide to simply believe them both. We do it all the time with the rest of creation. Take flight, for instance. Matter cannot be energy, and energy cannot be matter. Yet light has properties of both energy and matter. Impossible, but true. We do not, however, question the existence of light. Hughes states, “Unexplainable things exist all around us in the world of science and nature so why not in the spiritual realm? Furthermore, our ability to understand God’s truth has been radically affected by the Fall (1 Cor 13:12). When we stand before God in heaven, we will smack our four heads and say, ‘Oh . . . I understand.’ Until then, we must suspend our finite judgment and hold His infinite true intention. It’s all part of understanding who God is and we are. God is beyond us! If anyone completely understands his ways, the Trinity will have to make room for another member.” R. Kent Hughes, *Romans: Righteousness from Heaven*. Preaching the Word (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), Electronic ed.

⁷ Kenneth Boa, *God, I Don’t Understand* (Wheaton: Victor, 1977), 46.

⁸ Schreiner says, “We learn from this that Paul viewed divine sovereignty and human responsibility as complementary rather than contradictory truths.” Thomas Schreiner, *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 531.

⁹ Concerning the section break at Rom 9:30 Moo comments: “. . . a more fundamental break comes at 9:30. (1) The question ‘What then shall we say?’ often marks a new argument in Romans. (2) Paul signals a shift in focus by a shift in vocabulary. The words ‘righteousness’ and ‘faith’/ ‘believe’ are central to the argument of 9:30-10:21— yet they are almost entirely missing from 9:1-29 and 11:1-36. (3) The integrity of 9:30-10:21 is further seen in the similarity of its beginning and ending. In both (9:30-32 and 10:20-21) Paul contrasts the surprising inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God with the exclusion of Israel.” Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*. New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 616-17. He further explains (619–20) the content of the sections of this pericope: “The threefold contrast between two kinds of righteousness stands at the heart of each paragraph in this section: 9:30-33; 10:1-4; 10:5-13. The integrity of this section is further marked by an inclusio: Paul both begins (9:30) and ends (10:11-13) with teaching about the inclusion of Gentiles. Note also the quotation of Isa. 28:16 in both 9:33 and 10:12.”

¹⁰ See Rom 6:1; 7:7; 9:14, 30.

¹¹ Paul uses the word “righteousness” eleven times in this passage: Rom 9:30 (3x), 31; 10:3 (3x), 4, 5, 6, 10.

¹² Michael Eaton, *Romans*. Preaching Through the Bible (Kent, UK: Sovereign World Trust, 2010), 182.

¹³ Stott, *Romans*, 276 comments: “And why do people stumble over the cross? Because it undermines our self-righteousness. For ‘if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing’. That is, if we could gain a righteous standing before God by our own obedience to his law, the cross would be superfluous.”

¹⁴ 1 Pet 2:6–8 also puts these two Isaiah passages together.

¹⁵ “Rock” was originally a title for God (Ps 18:1–2, 31, 46; Deut 32:18; 1 Sam 2:2; Ps 28:1; 31:3; 42:9; 71:3; 78:35), but it came to be a Messianic title (Gen 49:24; Ps 118:22; Isa 8:14; 28:16; Dan 2:34–35, 44–45; Matt 21:42–44).

¹⁶ Lopez rightly comments: “Obedience is not the point here; the point is being rightly related to God. Thus since the Jews did not *seek* God by faith . . . but instead by the works of the law (i.e., the Mosaic Law; cf. 2:12) they stumbled over the stone by rejecting the righteousness offered by faith in Christ (11:11; 1 Pet 2:4–8). Israel missed the principle law of faith (cf. 3:27–28) and established the law of works as a means to be rightly related to God. Therefore, when Christ arrived offering righteousness by faith alone, the Jews were offended.” René A. Lopez, *Romans Unlocked: Power to Deliver* (Springfield: 21st Century Press, 2005), 202.

¹⁷ Ray Pritchard, “Stumbling Stone or Cornerstone” (Rom 9:30–33): www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2006-05-12-Stumbling-Stone-or-Cornerstone/.

¹⁸ Eaton, *Romans*, 183.

¹⁹ “Brethren” (*adelphoi*) is often used by Paul to introduce a new subject (cf. Rom 1:13; 7:1, 4; 8:12).

²⁰ See Paul’s other uses in Eph 1:5, 9; Phil 1:15; 2:13; 2 Thess 1:11.

²¹ I think of George Mueller, a Christian social reformer from the Victorian era. In his journal, he chronicled his devotion to prayer. In November 1844, he began to pray for the conversion of five individuals. Amazingly, he prayed every day until each of the five men was saved. The first of the five was converted after eighteen months; it was five more years before the second was converted, and another six years passed before the third was converted. Mueller kept praying for the other two, until he passed away. Finally, the last two men trusted in Christ at his funeral, a total of fifty–two years later. Is that motivational or what?

²² See Paul’s other uses in Rom 13:13; 1 Cor 3:3; 2 Cor 7:7, 11; 9:2; 11:2; 12:20; Gal 5:20; Phil 3:6.

²³ Gk. *epignosis* = “full knowledge” (e.g., Rom 1:28; 3:20; Eph 1:17; 4:13; Phil 1:9; Col 1:9–10; 2:2; 3:10; 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Tim 2:25; 3:7; Tit 1:1; Phlm 1:6).

²⁴ Lopez, *Romans Unlocked*, 204 explains this phrase: “The term *histemi* refers to ‘put into force’ in a legal way similar to its use, in Acts 7:60 and Hebrews 10:9, of the sacrificial system (BDAG, 482). Since the Jews resorted to the legal system to attain righteousness by works (9:32; 3:20, 27–28; 4:2, 6; 9:11), they obviously misunderstood and therefore rejected the righteousness of God that establishes a relationship solely on the basis of faith in Christ (9:32; 3:21–30). This is not some new doctrine but is well established in the Old Testament (cf. 1:2; 3:21; 4:1–5).”

²⁵ Gk. *hupetagesan*, cf. Rom 8:7, 20; 13:1, 5.

²⁶ See www.jinfo.org/Nobel_Prizes.html accessed 28 May 2011.

²⁷ Cf. Acts 9:1; Gal 1:14; Phil 3:6.

²⁸ Paul emphatically emphasizes the importance of the word *telos* (“end”) at the beginning of the sentence.

²⁹ See Paul’s other uses in Rom 6:21–22; 13:7; 1 Cor 15:24; 2 Cor 3:13; 11:15; Phil 3:19; 1 Thess 2:16; 1 Tim 1:5.

³⁰ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 641. He also includes the notion of “goal” in the meaning of *telos* as well. Lopez, *Romans Unlocked*, 204–5 explains the most plausible option for Christ being the “end” of the Law: “By Christ fulfilling the Mosaic Law He terminated it (7:1–6; Gal 3:19, 23; 4:9–11; 5:1; Mark 7:18–19; Luke 16:16; John 1:17; 2 Cor 3:6–11; Heb 7:12; 9:10). Paul has contrasted in 9:31–32 and 10:2–3 that righteousness comes by faith in Christ not the Law. He fulfilled the Law (Matt 5:17–18). Hence the Law no longer has use in pointing one to Christ since the reality to which it pointed has now arrived. Almost all Bible translations render the word *telos* as *end*. Almost all advocates of this view understand that the Law was never intended to be the means of justification (Murray, *Romans*, 2:50–51).”

³¹ Eaton, *Romans*, 190.

³² Wallace defines this as an accusative or respect of general reference. He translates Rom 10:5, “for Moses writes that, with reference to the righteousness which comes from the law . . .” Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 204.

³³ Walter C. Kaiser, “Leviticus 18:5 and Paul: Do This and You Shall Live [Eternally?]” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 14 (1971): 19–28.

³⁴ The problem with this view is that the law provided for sins that were done unintentionally (Num 15:27–29; Deut 4:42). Moses never implied that a person could keep the Law perfectly—he knew full well that this was impossible. See John F. Hart, “Why Confess Christ: The Use and Abuse of Romans 10:9–10,” *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* 12.23 (Autumn 1999): 27.

³⁵ See Rom 8:13. In this view, 10:5–6 are commentary on 10:4. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 646 writes, “The ‘righteousness of the law’ is nothing but the righteousness of faith, for, rightly understood the law itself calls for faith: ‘the person who does the law,’ mentioned in the quotation from Lev. 18:5, is the person who submits to the law’s deepest demand, ‘circumcises the heart,’ and trusts in the Lord.”

³⁶ Eaton, *Romans*, 191.

³⁷ It is possible that confession is considered identical to faith, not distinct from it. See Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1949), 383–84; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 386; Charles Ryrie, *So Great Salvation* (Dallas: Victor, 1989), 70–73; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 657; Everett F. Harrison and Donald A. Hagner, “Romans” in the *Revised Expositors Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 162–63.

³⁸ Stott equates confession with baptism. Such an interpretation of confession in Rom 10:9–10 is disturbingly open ended, as Stott shows when he goes on to say, “But the Christian’s open confession does not end with his baptism. He must be willing for his family and friends to know he is a Christian, both by the life he leads and by his spoken witness . . . At the same time, he will join a church, associate himself with other Christians . . . and start seeking by prayer, example and testimony to win his friends for Christ.” It is difficult to not consider this an intrusion of works into salvation.” John R.W. Stott, *Basic Christianity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1971), 117.

³⁹ See also John Hart, “The Letter to the Romans,” unpublished class notes (2010 ed.), Moody Bible Institute.

⁴⁰ The word righteousness is the Greek word *dikaiosune* and comes from the exact same word family as the word justified (*dikaiao*). The word translated “righteousness” in Rom 10:10 (*dikaiosunen*) is the noun form of the verb translated “justifies” (*dikaionta*) in 4:5: “But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.”

⁴¹ Edwards points out that Rom 10:9–10 is chiasmic:

A that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus (10:9a),

B and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (10:9b).

B¹ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness (10:10a),

A¹ and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (10:10b).

See James R. Edwards, *Romans*. New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1992), 254.

⁴² In the Chinese language, the word for “righteousness” is the combination of two pictures. On top is the figure of a lamb; directly beneath is that of a person. What a perfect image of the righteousness that Christ alone provides! Whenever the Father looks down at you, He first sees the perfect Lamb of God, “hiding” you. Certainly God is aware of any sin in our lives, but that isn’t what He’s primarily aware of in any believer. What he sees first and foremost is the beauty of His Son enveloping us. See Dwight Edwards, *Experiencing Christ Within* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2001), 100.

⁴³ Steve Elkins, *The Roman Road Revisited* (Dallas: Allie Grace Books, 2005), 135.

⁴⁴ See Acts 2:31–32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 37.

⁴⁵ According to Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 188 the Greek structure favors a definite use of the anarthrous *kurios* meaning, “Jesus is *the* Lord.” That is, Jesus is the Yahweh of the OT. We forget how revolutionary those words were in the first century. In the Roman Empire if a man stood up in a crowd and shouted, “Jesus is God,” no one would pay any attention. But if he shouted, “Jesus is Lord,” he could be stoned to death. In those days declaring anyone but Caesar as Lord was considered treason.

⁴⁶ Hart, “The Letter to the Romans,” states, “Power for Christian living is available from God when I go public with my faith in Jesus.”

⁴⁷ There were some Christians in the Bible that has trouble confessing their faith. Some in Jesus’ day were secret disciples for fear of the Jews (John 7:13). Nicodemus was one of these at first, which is why he came to Jesus at night (John 3:1–2; 19:39). Peter was a closet Christian for a while when he refused to confess Christ, but instead denied Him. Joseph of Arimathea also, was called a “secret disciple” (John 19:38) but when he saw the sacrifice Christ had made for him, Joseph decided to come out of the closet, so to speak, and ask Pilate for the body of Christ. Because of this, Joseph had the incredible privilege of having his tomb be the one that Jesus Christ was laid in and subsequently was resurrected from. God wants to use us for His kingdom and His glory if we will only “come out of the closet” so to speak and take a stand for Christ (Rom 1:16; Mark 8:38; Phil 1:17; Jude 3).

⁴⁸ Paul begins with the verb *legei* (“to say”). Concerning this, Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 532 states, “The present tense may be used to *emphasize* that the results of a past action are still continuing.”

⁴⁹ Paul added the adjective *pas* (“all, everyone, whoever”) when he quoted Isa 28:16.

⁵⁰ Michael Eaton, *Romans: A Practical Exposition*, forthcoming.

⁵¹ This is the major thrust of the New Covenant (cf. Rom 3:22, 29; Gal 3:28; Eph 2:11–3:13; Col 3:11).

⁵² See Gen 4:26; 26:25; 1 Kgs 18:24–27; Ps 14:4; 18:3; 31:17; 50:15; 53:4; 79:6; 80:18; 116:2; Isa 55:6; 64:7; Jer 29:12.

⁵³ Acts 7:59; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Tim 2:22; 1 Pet 1:7.