

ROMANS

10:6-10

RIGHTEOUSNESS

REAFFIRMED



Part 2a:

*The Word
of Faith for
All!*

ROMANS

10:6-10



The Prologue!

Paul has proven that righteousness via an avenue of works leads to an eternal dead end (i.e., our class last week from 9:31-10:5)! Indeed, all terms related to such an approach (e.g., “Law,” “works,” “doing”) disappear beginning with v.6. This is abundantly clear as St. Paul states in v.4 – *“For [the] end of the law [is] Christ, unto righteousness to everyone believing.”*

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**The
Prologue!**

St. Paul now moves on...completely forgetting about any useless discussion of human-centered or works-based righteousness stemming from the performance of the Law. Instead, he now turns onto an exclusive route, wherein the movement is solely from God to you! In doing so, Paul reveals how God gives you His own righteousness through the Christ/Messiah, who accomplishes salvation for you! In effect, he expounds upon the positive Gospel aspects of v.4 and throughout 10:6-15.

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The Prologue!

It's astonishing (but not really) that Paul carefully affirms each and every one of his assertions by the use of Scriptural support (e.g., *Scripture interpreting Scripture*). Paul will masterfully utilize OT passages in vv. 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 15. By such use, he buttresses his argument at each step! St. Paul will begin this section (vv.6-15) with a quote from Deuteronomy and conclude with a quote from Isaiah. Once again, by no means has the Word of God failed or fallen (9:6).

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10:6-8



Righteousness
from Faith!

⁶However, the righteousness from out of faith thus speaks: “You should not begin to say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to lead down Christ), ⁷or, “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead). ⁸But what says it? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith which we proclaim...,

Paul personifies righteousness, as he has done with “the Scripture” and “the Law”, and now the personified righteousness speaks. And how does it speak? “...*from out of faith...*” that draws its hearers back to 1:17. Therefore, “*from out of faith*” marks a clear contrast with “*righteousness which is from the Law*” (v.5).

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10:6-8



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Righteousness speaks God’s Word! Paul cites Deut 30:12-14; yet, he just doesn’t quote, but provides us an exegetical and Christological exposition that’s quite remarkable! However, Paul actually begins with an introductory clause from Deut 9:4 – *“You should not begin to say in your heart...!* It’s a warning against conceited boasting in one’s merits. Thus, the Israelite, or anyone for that matter, must never say in his heart that due to *“my”* righteousness Yahweh is pleased with and saves me.

ROMANS

10:6B-7



***Don't Say
This to
Christ!***

^{6b}“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to lead down Christ), ⁷or, “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead).

1) In Deut 30:11, Moses is speaking explicitly of “*this commandment*” meaning the Torah. The major point of this text is that it was Yahweh that brought “*this commandment*” down to Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai. Thus, Israel did not have to go anywhere to seek out “*this commandment*” in order to know Yahweh’s will. It was Yahweh who brought the Law to Israel. So Moses’ purpose in Deut 30 was to prevent the Israelites from evading responsibility for doing the will of God by pleading that they do not know the Law.

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10:6B-7



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We must understand that Yahweh has already chosen Israel, redeemed them from slavery in Egypt, and saved them through the Red Sea to be His covenant people...completely apart from their righteousness. With this in mind, the Law was not given to Israel as a means to pursue their righteousness or salvation or to attain a right or “holy” status before Yahweh. Rather, in their obedience to the Law, since Israel has already been saved and justified, they would be blessed by God upon entering the Promised Land (which is the physical context of this section of Deut at the Plain of Moab).

ROMANS

10:6B-7



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^{6b}“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to lead down Christ), ⁷or, “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead).

By contrast, in Romans, Paul has already said that if one seeks to earn *“the righteousness which is from the Law”* (cf. 10:5; also in 9:32), then one self-excludes from any possibility of salvation. Thus, Paul is consistently opposed to anyone who will misuse the Law to gain merit with Yahweh or to keep score with others; any such approach is universally futile and even fatal! The Law is in full force, as is its condemnation, apart from Christ Jesus (e.g., Matt. 5:17-20; Rom 3:19-20, 31; and 7:5, 10-11).

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10:6B-7



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Lastly, Paul uses Moses’ words (Deut 30:12-14) in order to assert that what was true then of the Divine commandments for Israel also stands true in regard to the righteousness of faith. In both, the fundamental point of Moses and Paul remains that it is Yahweh’s action that brings His Word near to man, and His Word is both one of commandment (Law) and of faith (Gospel)!

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10:6B-7



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2) Paul draws specific application from the two clauses used from Deut 30:12-13 that is followed by his interpretive application. These two applications conveys what the *“righteousness from faith”* excludes anyone from saying as found above!

ROMANS

10:6B-7



***Don't Say
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^{6b}“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to lead down Christ), ⁷or, “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead).

Paul’s first Christological application is negative. It isn’t possible for you to “*ascend into heaven*” on your own. This is taken from an OT proverbial language describing the “*impossible*” for any human. Jesus uses this to make a clear Messianic teaching point to Nicodemus in St. John 3:13! God does not expect us to obtain righteousness by going “**up**” to Him...since He already knows that we can not! Since no human can ascend, then it stands to reason that no man can lead Christ down from heaven (cf. St. John 1:1-3, 14)!

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10:6B-7



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6b'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to lead down Christ), 7or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead).

Paul's second Christological application (v.7) is equally negative. Since you and I cannot ascend to bring down Christ from heaven; then it stands to reason that no fallen human being can ***"bring up"*** Christ up from the dead! How so? Mercifully, the raising of Jesus Christ has already occurred by the Father on the great Day of Resurrection (Easter or the Eighth Day; in regard to ***"bring up"*** Christ, see Hebrews 13:20!).

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10:6B-7



***Don't Say
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^{6b}“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to lead down Christ), ⁷or, “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring up Christ out from [the] dead).

Throughout Romans, St. Paul excludes elements from what *“righteousness from faith says”* (v.6a). Even here, while eliminating any notion of even the plausibility of your works toward God in the arena of righteousness, Paul skillfully manages to proclaim the Holy Gospel.

What was and is impossible for you...is precisely what Jesus has done...for you! In doing so, Paul demonstrates the Christ-centered (Christological) reading of the OT.

ROMANS

10:8



*The Word of
Faith Comes
Near to You!*

⁸But what says it? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith which we proclaim...,

Paul will now assert the positive side of “*the righteousness from faith.*” Again, St. Paul uses a rhetorical question to gain your attention; then gives answer. The Greek that Paul uses is found in the Septuagint text of Deut 30:14, though in different order. So let’s take a closer look at verse 8.

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10:8



*The Word of
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Near to You!*

⁸But what says it? “The **Word** is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith which we proclaim....

Paul’s main point is that “[T]he **Word**” has come close and, therefore, “*is near you.*” Paul’s rare use of the Greek noun (τὸ ῥῆμα) for “*the Word*” stems from its Septuagint use in Deut 30:14. We are more familiar with the Greek word for “*the Word*” being ὁ λόγος, e.g., the oral “Word” versus the written “Word.” Both nouns, however, are synonymous for the Hebrew: **rb2D2**, “word” and τὸ ῥῆμα actually dominates in the Pentateuch and in the Septuagint. The commonality resides in the divine origin of both and the fact that both have become “accessible and understandable” because “God has brought them near.” They have been internalized “*in your mouth and in your heart.*”

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*The Word of
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⁸But what says it? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith which we proclaim...,

What exactly does St. Paul mean by the use of the verb “*near*” (ἐγγύς)? As we see in Deut 30:11 and 14, “*this commandment*” was “*near*” to Israel (i.e., in their minds). It’s because Yahweh came down on Sinai and imparted through Moses the things which stand “*written in this book of the Law (Torah)*” (Deut 30:10). It is that “*...word of faith which we proclaim.*”

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10:8



*The Word of
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⁸But what says it? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith which we proclaim...,

Finally, what is this proclamation? Paul very clearly states the object of the proclamation as the *Holy Gospel* (Gal 2:2; Col 1:23; 1 Thess 2:9) or *Christ* (1 Cor 1:23; 15:12; 2 Cor 1:19; 4:5; 11:4; Phil 1:15). You will see in vv.14-15, next week, that Paul will fill out the role and content of the verb “*proclaim*” (κηρύσσω).

Additionally, Paul will also give more details of the process whereby the Word arrived in your nearness!

ROMANS

10:9-10



*The Essential
Content of the
Word of
Faith...for
You!*

⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For in the heart is belief unto righteousness, now in the mouth is confession unto salvation.

But first, Paul will powerfully and concisely encapsulate *“the Word’s”* message in vv.9-10.

In order for Paul to demonstrate how the *“Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”* (v.8), he will use *“mouth”* (στόματι) and *“heart”* (καρδία) in a chiastic manner in vv.9-10:

“mouth...heart...heart...mouth.” The initial order of *“mouth...heart”* stems from the order found in Deut 30:14.

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10:9



*The Essential
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⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved.

The first idea that must be dispelled is the requirement of an oral statement as a human work necessary for salvation! Such a requirement might come to mind; however, the proclaimed Word of the faith has drawn near to you by being proclaimed to you...in your ears (this will be discussed more fully in 10:14-15, 17). As a result, it is now in your mouth and in your heart. This Word of the faith, thus delivered, calls you to “acknowledge” or “*confess*” (ὁμολογήσης) it with your mouth!

ROMANS

10:9



*The Essential
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⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved.

What does ὁμολογήσης mean? Literally, it means to “*say the same thing*” to “*agree in statement*” or “*to acknowledge in public.*” The critical factor is that someone can only “*acknowledge*” or “*confess*” back after it (*the Word*) has been spoken first by someone else (from one of greater authority!). Therefore, this is why Paul begins with how “*the Word of the faith*” comes near to you first; God proclaims His promise, first, in Christ Jesus!

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10:9



*The Essential
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⁹...that if you **confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,”** and **believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved.**

When you have been brought to the point where, by divine initiative and empowerment, you can “*say the same thing in public*” in agreement with God, then can you understand completely the great joy of confession!

To go a little deeper, a better analogy in regard to ὁμολογήσης would be an echo! A canyon, as Coloradans you know what a canyon is, echoing back words previously spoken...does **NO** work!

ROMANS

10:9



*The Essential
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⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved.

Therefore, you are given Gospel assurance by Paul that when you confess: “...*Lord (Yahweh) [is] Jesus,*”...you are indeed saved. Since, you have heard the Word of the faith in your ears, it then creates saving faith in your heart and you then agree (*confess*) to and with God that He did raise Jesus Christ from the dead and that Jesus, the Resurrected One, is your Lord (Yahweh) and Savior.

However, there is a problem! Unlike an inanimate canyon, humans are able to actively resist, refuse, and even contradict what is heard (Paul will address this in vv.16-21)!

ROMANS

10:9-10



***Believing in
Jesus'
Resurrection
Results in
Righteousness
and Salvation!***

⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, “[The] Lord [is] Jesus,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For in the heart it is being believed unto righteousness, now in the mouth it is being confessed unto salvation.

Confessing that Jesus is Lord (Yahweh) and believing that He was raised from the dead results in one of the most wonderful affirmations in Holy Scripture: “...*you will be saved.*” It is very important for you to know that the verb for “*saved*” which Paul uses is a future indicative passive verb (σωθήση). It’s another Divine Passive that is conveying truth: *God will save you!* It is a present blessing with a temporal eschatological sense: the now, but not yet! And what is necessary? That you *confess* the Word with your *mouth*, which is accompanied by believing in the *heart!*

ROMANS

10:10



*Believing in
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⁹...that if you confess with the saying of your mouth, "[The] Lord [is] Jesus," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from [the] dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For in the heart it is being believed unto righteousness, now in the mouth it is being confessed unto salvation.

Now we come to v.10 and notice the chiastic reversal. In addition, Paul adds two complementary results found in **two prepositional phrases**. These two phrases are divinely linked as found in the OT and are regularly used synonymously. Righteousness, then, is not a static quality whereby God exercises justice but a dynamic quality whereby God effects your salvation! Therefore, God's imputation of **His righteousness to you** has already and repeatedly been equated with **His salvation of you!**

ROMANS

10:10



***Believing in
Jesus'
Resurrection
Results in
Righteousness
and Salvation!***

***¹⁰For in the heart is it being believed unto righteousness,
now in the mouth it is being confessed unto salvation.***

What is so intriguing about this verse is Paul suddenly changing the person and voice in his grammar! Paul stops using the “you” in its singular form as the active subject of the verbs (e.g., “you believe” or “you confess”). Instead, both of the verbs become *passive* (“...*it is being believed...*”) and (“...*it is being confessed...*”).

The passive voice enhances *both* the more passive sense of echoing in faith what was proclaimed (v.9) *and* the Divine Passive of “you will be saved (v.9). This is a rhetorical device that Paul uses throughout Romans...*the passive receptive nature of faith!*

ROMANS

10:6-10



Epilogue

As we close this section of Romans 10, we have heard Paul driving home the reality of your salvation by affirming that Yahweh intends to be for all!

Paul will begin this theme in vv.11-13 as we will study next week *“The Essential Content of the Word of the Faith [for Whom?].”* The reply: *For All!*

Paul will, therefore, teach us the Good News of which he is not ashamed; it is the Word of the Living Lord Jesus Christ who seeks to encompass every person and people.

We will also see that St. Paul will continue his use of the OT in order to validate all of his assertions.

ROMANS

10:11-15

RIGHTEOUSNESS

REAFFIRMED



Part 2b:

**The
Essential
Content of
the Word of
the Faith -
*for All!***

