

# ROMANS

## 9:30-10:5

# RIGHTEOUSNESS REAFFIRMED



*Part 1:*

*Not from  
Works  
of the  
Law!*

# ROMANS

## 9:30-10:5



Today we begin with St. Paul's rhetorical question. It's a question that we have heard in prior chapters (e.g., 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 8:1; & 9:14). Paul uses such a question to introduce a new argument. Here, in 9:30, he employs his rhetorical question to introduce what he affirms with a "*that*" (ὅτι) clause, "*That Gentiles....*"

In reality, the chapter division is poorly placed. It would have been better to have the chapter break between 9:29 and 9:30.

Therefore, what we will be studying today and for the next couple of Sundays applies to the content of what St. Paul will be asserting in 9:30-33.

## Introduction



# ROMANS

## 9:30-10:5



## Introduction

What is Paul's new topic? St. Paul will be diagnosing the problematic attempt to attain God's righteousness via the Law! Therefore, what we will see is Israel's attempted approach to God, rather than a proper response to the Good News of Christ Jesus! As a result, it would be proper for us to entitle 9:30 – 10:15 as *“Returning to God's Righteousness.”*

What will become evident in this section is the return of *“righteousness”* in particular its primacy by the use of *“courtroom”* or forensic language, which dominated Romans 1-4. Two very important words will persist: *“righteous”* (δικαιος) and *“righteousness”* (δικαιοσύνη). Both of these Greek terms accurately reveal to us the framework of forensic eschatological judgment, which also makes its return!

# ROMANS

## 9:30-10:5



### Introduction

Lastly, and very importantly, St. Paul will continue his use of OT catena verses to buttress his argument at virtually every step. In Romans 9-11, Paul uses 35 quotations from the OT. In 9:30 – 10:21, Paul cites the OT ten times in twenty-five verses. He will even emphasize a key point by using the quote from Is. 28:16 in 9:33 and once again in 10:11.

Again, Paul does so to demonstrate that his proclamation of the Good News about God's righteousness and how it is received stands in full continuity with what the Lord has already proclaimed in Scripture, which, once again, has not failed or fallen (9:6)!



# ROMANS

## 9:30-32a



Got Milk  
Righteousness

***<sup>30</sup>What then will we say? [We say] That Gentiles not pursuing righteousness, have obtained righteousness, righteousness that [is] now from faith; <sup>31</sup>however, Israel pursuing a law of righteousness, to [that] law did not attain. <sup>32</sup>Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.***

St. Paul begins with a rhetorical question: “*What then will we say?*” And he responds in the affirmative: “*[We say] That Gentiles not pursuing righteousness, have obtained righteousness, righteousness that [is] now by faith...;*” Paul begins with the Gentiles, as previously. Although, they quickly drop from view as we will see in 10:3. In the Greek, Paul omits the definite article for Gentiles by only using the noun (ἔθνη). Thus, he’s not referring to all Gentiles, but only to those who believe the Good News of Jesus Christ!

# ROMANS

## 9:30-32a



Got Milk  
Righteousness

<sup>30</sup>What then will we say? [We say] That Gentiles **not pursuing righteousness**, have obtained righteousness, righteousness that [is] now from faith; <sup>31</sup>however, Israel pursuing a law of righteousness, to [that] law did not attain. <sup>32</sup>Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.

Paul depicts the Gentiles as “**not pursuing righteousness**” in the context of Is 65:1, which we will discuss (Rom 10:20). It’s not that the Gentiles are failing to follow a moral lifestyle; but rather, they didn’t pursue righteousness in terms of a relationship with God (cf. 1:17). Such Gentiles believe, as Paul asserts, since they now “...**have obtained righteousness, righteousness that [is] now by faith[!]**” They got righteousness...they’ve received righteousness...and the righteousness they have received is by faith (Rom 1:16-17)!



# ROMANS

## 9:30-32a



Got Milk  
Righteousness

*<sup>30</sup>What then will we say? [We say] That Gentiles not pursuing righteousness, have obtained righteousness, righteousness that [is] now **from faith**; <sup>31</sup>however, Israel pursuing a law of righteousness, to [that] law did not attain. <sup>32</sup>Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.*

The proper understanding of this action is that it is received (passively) from God to humanity and is received “*from faith*” (ἐκ πίστεως). This prepositional phrase is critical to one's understanding of the thematic statement of 1:17 and serves to identify faith as the sole (only) source (ἐκ) of receiving from God His righteousness in Christ Jesus!

# ROMANS

9:30-32a



Got Milk  
Righteousness

<sup>31</sup>however, Israel **pursuing a Law of righteousness**, to [that] Law did not attain. <sup>32</sup>Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.

St. Paul now makes a contrast with the blessed Gentiles who are righteous “*from faith.*”

Israel, though, is actively **pursuing** (διώκων), which Paul signals by the use of this active participle. And what is Israel actively pursuing: (νόμον δικαιοσύνης) – “...*a law of righteousness.*”

*How should we apply this term?*

Some think it’s in reference to a “principle” or “rule of order.” Yet, to dismiss the Mosaic Law (10 Commandments) removes Paul’s main argument! So, the Law (νόμος) is Paul’s reference to the commands (demands) of God’s Law!



# ROMANS

## 9:30-32a

<sup>31</sup>however, Israel **pursuing** a law of righteousness, to [that] law did not attain. <sup>32</sup>Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.

Therefore, Paul's argument is that Israel is attempting to seek or is **pursuing** the Law as a way (work) for a right relationship with God. An early Church father, Ambrosiaster, sums this approach quite forcefully:

*"They [Israel] claimed the righteousness which is commanded in the Law, i.e., the Sabbath, circumcision, etc. ... They did not fulfill the Law, and those who do not fulfill the Law are guilty of it."*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ambrosiaster, *Romans* (Bray, *Romans*, ACCS NT 6:259).



# ROMANS

9:30-32a



<sup>32a</sup>*Because why? Because [it was] not by faith, but as from works.*

Without this verse, it's fair to conclude that v.31 would not have been very clear. So, St. Paul continues to explain why Israel did not attain righteousness by actively pursuing it. He establishes his “*righteousness*” contrast, not in terms of Law and promise/Gospel, but in terms of faith vs. works! There's no doubt that this verse stands in agreement with 3:20, 28; 4:2-5; and 9:11b-12. So...the bottom line: *Righteousness is indeed the goal of the Law; however, pursuing that goal via the avenue of works renders the goal unattainable (Rom. 3:23)!*



# ROMANS

## 9:32b-33



A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

<sup>32b</sup>They stumbled over the stone of stumbling,  
<sup>33</sup>as it has been written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a  
stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and the  
[one] believing on Him, never will be put to  
shame.”

In order for Paul to explain, he returns to the OT and specifically to Isaiah (Is 28:16 and 8:14) in which he borrows a metaphor of the Prophet. Remember, St. Paul is under inspiration of the Holy Spirit and a Jewish exegete, so what he does in conflating the two texts of Isaiah is remarkable! In doing so, Paul gives two separate implications; one **negative** and the other **positive**.

# ROMANS

## 9:32b-33



A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

They stumbled over the stone of **stumbling**, <sup>33</sup>as it has been written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.”

## Negative

By combining both Isaiah texts into one, Paul speaks of the same *Stone* being both the object of stumbling/offense AND the object of believing/faith. Note that the placing of the Stone by God does not mean that Israel’s fall was intended by God! Rather, the intent was that the Stone serve as a foundation.

Therefore, Paul uses “*stumbling*” (πρόσκομμα) that depicts HUMAN reaction, not Divine causation!



# ROMANS 9:32b-33

A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

## STONE OF STUMBLING

**JEWS OF  
CHRIST'S DAY.**



**REJECTS JESUS**

**MODERN  
CHRISTIANS**



**REJECTS JESUS**

will stumble on the Stone of stumbling!  
Seeking to establish one's own  
righteousness (*from works*) will result in  
not submitting to the righteousness of God,  
which, through faith in Jesus Christ, comes  
to everyone who believes (10:3-4).

# ROMANS

9:32b-33



A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

They stumbled over the stone of **stumbling**, <sup>33</sup>as it has been written: “Behold, I lay **in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.**”

+ Positive +

Those who are NOT “*pursuing righteousness*” via their works (v.30), the Lord does the action! He places “*in Zion a Stone...and the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.*” This is the positive, the Gospel side, which Paul returns to briefly in 10:4 and expounds upon most fully in 10:6-15. It’s very clear that Paul is referring to Jesus Christ as the Stone and “...*the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.*”



# ROMANS

9:32b-33



A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

They stumbled over the stone of **stumbling**, <sup>33</sup>as it has been written: “Behold, I lay **in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.**”

+ Positive +

Again, God takes the initiative and sends the message (Holy Gospel) of Christ Jesus out to those who are not even seeking it! And the critical role of faith is reinforced by the use of the word: “*believing*” (πιστεύων). An active participle that conveys the thought of having faith, trusting in that which God has done and continues to do or accomplishes.

# ROMANS

## 9:32b-33



A Stone of  
Stumbling  
or  
Believing?

They stumbled over the stone of **stumbling**, <sup>33</sup>as it has been written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and the [one] believing on Him, never will be put to shame.”

+ **Positive** +

Thus this very same Stone, Jesus, The Messiah, The Christ, provides righteousness for the getting *from faith* (v.30) but is a cause of stumbling and offense for those who pursue it “*from works*.” So then, the one who believes, has faith in, trust in, the Stone or Rock placed in Zion (pronounced *See-own*’ and used in a figurative sense for the Church, both Militant and Triumphant) by the Lord as the solid foundation, that one receives righteousness *from faith* and will never be put to shame!



# ROMANS

10:1-3



Restoration  
of  
Unbelieving  
Israel  
Ignored

<sup>1</sup>**Brothers**, indeed the desire of my heart and the supplication to God **on behalf of them [is] for salvation**. <sup>2</sup>For I bear witness about them, that zeal of God they have, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup>For being ignorant of the God of righteousness, and their own righteousness, seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they [have] not submitted.

Paul makes a heartfelt connection with his hearers by the use of a vocative: ἀδελφοί “**brothers!**” However, in contrast to 9:3, Paul isn’t addressing his fellow Jews; but, rather, his audience of believers in Rome...and beyond! Paul will then give the reason for addressing his “**brothers,**” with a “...*desire of my heart and the supplication to God.*” This is much more than an emotional appeal to the Lord. Paul’s desire and supplication permeates his entire being; then he puts all those yearnings into action by proclaiming to God: “...*on behalf of them [is] for salvation.*”

# ROMANS

## 10:1-3



Restoration  
of  
Unbelieving  
Israel  
Ignored

*<sup>2</sup>For I bear witness about them, that zeal of God they have, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup>For being ignorant of the God of righteousness, and their own righteousness, seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they [have] not submitted.*

Paul will now continue in verse 2 by explaining the reason for his desire and supplication of the problem at hand. The Greek word for “*I bear witness*” is a very important verb: μαρτυρεώ.

Sound familiar? It’s from this word we have the English: *martyr*. Essentially, μαρτυρεώ, the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular form, is Paul’s witness, his testimony, and it’s a forensic return of his argument and presumes an awareness of the case that Paul was arguing in 1:18 – 3:31.



# ROMANS

## 10:1-3



Restoration  
of  
Unbelieving  
Israel  
Ignored

<sup>2</sup>For I bear witness about them, that **zeal** of God they have, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup>For being ignorant of the God of righteousness, and their own righteousness, seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they [have] not submitted.

Paul offers a positive testimony, in behalf of Israel, of their zeal for the Lord. The term which Paul uses for zeal is ζῆλον – a noun that literally means burning emotion (inner feeling boiling over, “boiling from heat; (figuratively) something very *fervent* (“red-hot”) as with Spirit-fueled zeal to *serve the Lord*. This root ζῆ (zē-) is used both negatively (“jealousy”) and positively (“zeal”) depending on *the context*. It is metaphorically used of “burning anger, love” – i.e., *to burn (in spirit)*; or “*boiling anger, love, zeal,*” for what is good or bad.

# ROMANS

## 10:1-3



Restoration  
of  
Unbelieving  
Israel  
Ignored

<sup>2</sup>For I bear witness about them, that **zeal** of God they have, but not according to **knowledge**. <sup>3</sup>For being ignorant of the God of righteousness, and their own righteousness, seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they [have] not submitted.

In the OT, we often hear of God being “**zealous**.” During the intertestamental period, the term “zeal” is exhibited by Mattathias during the Maccabean revolt. And in the NT, as we see in this verse, it often has a negative aspect. However, Paul adds an assertion by use of “**knowledge**.” Again, the use of “**knowledge**” (ἐπιγνώσει) is very instructive and important for us! How so? Paul’s description encompasses some of the Jews and, as reflected in 3:20, identifies one divinely intended outcome of a proper “**knowledge**” or “**recognition**” which clearly seeks to encompass all people. Therefore, Paul concludes with:



# ROMANS

10:1-3



Restoration  
of  
Unbelieving  
Israel  
Ignored

<sup>3</sup>For *being ignorant of* the God of righteousness, and their own righteousness, seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they [have] not submitted.

Israel's zeal is misdirected...it is not based on a "*knowledge*" or "recognition" of how God's righteousness is bestowed. They, the Jews, are zealous in pursuing the Law, but they do not understand that Christ Jesus came according to the Law and that they cannot be justified by the Law. This conclusion is very evident from 9:31-33 and defined even more specifically in this verse. You should know that the Greek verb (ἀγνοοῦντες) "*being ignorant of*" is a present active participle, which implies an active "*ignoring.*" They are "*ignoring*" the "*God of righteousness*" (Christ Jesus as the Messiah) and are replacing Him and not submitting to Him with and by their seeking or pursuing of their own righteousness.

# ROMANS

10:4a



*The End*  
(τέλος)

<sup>4</sup>*“For [the] end of the law [is] Christ...,*

*What is the sense of “[the] end of the Law?”*

Keeping and staying in context, the Law is the Mosaic Law and not some generic, humanistic principle. Yet, does “*[the] end*” (τέλος), actually mean that the Law has been terminated?

To say that it is the termination or cessation of the Law would contradict Paul in Romans and even the teachings of our Lord Jesus (cf. St. Matthew 5:17-18; here our Lord flatly rejects the notion of the cessation or end of the Law).

The Law definitely has a role in the life of all believers (of your life!). Paul illustrated this in chapter 7 (vv.14-25) and will clearly assert the very same in 13:8-10.



# ROMANS

10:4a



*The End*  
(τέλος)

<sup>4</sup>“For [the] end of the law [is] Christ...,

There is a more consistent and proper understanding of the *τέλος of the Law* when we see that Jesus Christ is the “*culmination*” of the Law. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law which is biblically sound and an appropriate understanding of the *τέλος of the Law*. The assertion then that Jesus is the goal of the entire Torah (The Law) in terms of its end and purpose certainly includes Jesus fulfilling the Law’s demands (for you!). Therefore, v.5 will emphasize that the Law requires doing! So *τέλος* includes the fact that Jesus brings an end to being under the Law and its lordship (6:14; 7:1), which means the termination of the *condemnation* which results when the Law’s demands are not observed!

# ROMANS

10:5



## A FINAL WORD ON THE LAW

*<sup>5</sup>For Moses writes [of] the righteousness that [is] of the Law, that “The man having done these things, will live by them.”*

Paul wraps up this section by placing a neat “bow” on his conclusion by proving that righteousness does not come from works but from Christ Jesus, in faith, via a final explanation of why. The “bow” that he uses is an OT quote from Leviticus 18:5: *“The man having done these things, will live by them.”*

St. Paul does not cite this passage to show that, according to Moses, life is obtained through doing the Law’s work! Paul’s use of this text conveys that any person who is “*seeking to establish their own*” righteousness by such doing identifies the critical factor at hand. Paul implies that the one who does seek to live before God by means of doing , that is, “*from works*” of the Law!



# ROMANS

9:30–10:5



WRAPPING  
UP

Romans 9:30 – 10:5 dissects an improper approach to righteousness, as does 2:17 – 3:20. Yet, this serves only as Paul’s penultimate goal. It is not the “end” (τέλος) of his argument; rather, Christ Jesus is (see 10:4; 3:21-26).

Next week, as in 3:21-31, St. Paul will turn to elaborate upon the divinely provide route by which the “*righteousness of God*” comes to us (you!). It is through Christ Jesus – the Word of Faith for all (6-15).

ROMANS

10:6-15

# RIGHTEOUSNESS REAFFIRMED

*Part 2:*

*Christ  
Proclaimed*

-

*The Word  
of Faith for  
All!*







**Questions**