

Romans 9 v.30 – 10 v.11

The apostle takes a fresh step in his argument. Now considers subject from human viewpoint. Therefore there is now stress on man's responsibility. Israel's failure is not due to failure on God's part but on Israel's own attitude of wilful disobedience to the Gospel.

Paradox – Gentiles who did not seek righteousness have found it, while Israel who sought it failed to attain it. Reason – Israel sought righteousness, not by faith, but by works (9:32). The Gentiles used faith and not works, and therefore they attained righteousness (9:30). This confrontation is found elsewhere in Scriptural teaching. Compare Isaiah 28:16 and 8:14 with Romans 9:23.

Pity is that they did not put faith in Messiah and find in Him all available blessing. To some He was a stumbling block. But others claimed the promise that those who believe in Him would not be put to shame. Continuous tragedy is that men stumble at Christ. Reasons are prejudice, sin, requirements, lack of sense of sin, and utter helplessness. If someone chooses to go own way and rely on own efforts, the Gospel will offend. It is perilous to be offended at Christ. To acknowledge Christ means receiving a share of the blessedness, insight, life and hope, value to all problems and mysteries in life, victory.

10:1ff expresses Paul's intense longing again for Israel's salvation. They are so zealous for God, but lack knowledge. Sincerity is not enough. We must be in the right way, rather than unwilling to submit ourselves to God. **For they being ignorant of God's righteousness** (demanded and provided by Him), **and going about to establish their own righteousness** (Romans 10:3). Utterly inexcusable, because Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was able to do what the Law could not do – provide righteousness. N.B. They were not indifferent to righteousness, but they sought it by their own efforts, and not God's way of righteousness.

Amazing that people can read the Bible and all the time fail to see its essential teaching and personal application. Saddening sight – people with an intellectual knowledge of God's Word, but who fail to perceive spiritual meaning. How typical of human nature – to try to engineer own righteousness. C.f. other religions of the world. Secret of all failure is unwillingness to submit to God's Word and will. To submit is the secret of all blessing and power in life. Rebellion and self-dependence means failure.

Israel should not have been ignorant of righteousness by faith because they had the teaching of the Old Testament. The use of the law – not to save, but to discover sin. Paul is basing his argument on Deuteronomy 30, regarding God's righteousness. Deuteronomy 30:11-14 contains Moses' last public exhortation and contemplates the condition of Israel when it had broken the law and was suffering the consequences. Points forward to new covenant. Reference to ultimate gathering of Israel, when God will accept them if they turn to Him with all their hearts. In Deuteronomy 30, God addresses the people on basis of faith, speaking of blessing of those who turn to God

with all heart and soul; Christ has done all the “doing” necessary for men to be saved. All men need to do is to believe. Christ does not have to be brought down from heaven or raised from dead (10:6-7). All has been accomplished. All that is left is acceptance with thanks. Righteousness of God is not distant or difficult but near and easy. Needs to be believed and confessed. **The word of faith** (10:9) involves consent of heart and mouth with reference to the Lord Jesus or Jesus as Lord.

Jesus as Lord is earliest Christian creed. The Greek word κυριος used in 10:9 has three uses. (1) “Sir”, (2) Title of human emperor, (3) Yahweh in Old Testament. “Jesus is Lord” denotes obedience and worship. **No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost** (1 Corinthians 12:3). **Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord** (Philippians 2:11). Therefore this is the earliest Christian creed, with probable reference to baptism. “Heart” is the centre of moral being and includes three elements of intellect, feeling and will. Salvation includes past, present and future. Righteousness is now shown to be based on Scripture. Place of faith is illustrated by quotation from Isaiah – repeating Romans 9:33 – **Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed** (Romans 10:11)

The main elements of the Gospel are all contained in this passage:

1. Substance is “Righteousness” and “Salvation”. Righteousness is rightness with God. Covers past, present and future – justification (past), sanctification (present), glorification (future). Salvation from penalty, power and presence of sin respectively.
2. Foundation is the finished work of Christ, vindicated by resurrection and ascension.
3. Accessibility. All is available and easy for our acceptance of Christ. **The word is nigh thee** (Romans 10:8). No insuperable difficulty to overcome in order to obtain it.
4. Channel is faith. Mercy’s benefits are received through faith. Faith is the hand that receives and the mouth that tastes (v8).
5. Maintenance – is by confession. Great law of spiritual world – the more we confess and profess, the more faith will obtain hold on our lives.
6. Scope is “whosoever”. **The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth** (Romans 1:16).
7. Certainty. No place for fear. **Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed** (Romans 10:11). No cause for shame because such abundant satisfaction for time and eternity.