

- God's sovereign plan in election includes our prayers (v1) and our preaching the gospel to the lost (vv14-15). We don't know who the elect are; therefore, we should pray for everybody and witness to everybody. Sovereign election is God's business. Our business is to go into the highways and the byways and to go into all the nations and to preach the gospel to everyone and to pray for those who are without Christ. And we leave the results to God. Once sinners come to faith in Christ, we can be confident that God had earlier chosen them for salvation (1 Thess 1:4-5). A proper understanding of God's sovereignty makes us more dependent upon Him for results. Far from saying that whatever he did made no difference, and that God's elect would be saved whether he preached or not, Paul endured a life of incredible hardship in order to bring the gospel to those whom God had chosen (2 Tim 2:10).
- *The beauty of gospel preaching.* Paul quotes Isaiah 52:7 where Isaiah describes messengers who carry God's message and proclaim peace (between God and man) and salvation.
 - "*Glad tidings of good things*" - The good news is the message of salvation.
 - The one who brings the gospel has beautiful feet; it means his message is welcome and needed. Although the gospel message may be rejected and we may face persecution, God considers our task to be one of 'great beauty.'

4. Israel's Rejection of the Way (10:16-21)

- The gospel message was not welcomed by Israel. What, then, was the real reason for Israel's failure to confess Christ as Lord? Paul builds his case from the OT to show that the Jews' rejection of Christ, as well as the Gentiles' reception of Him, was predicted centuries before in the Scriptures. The prophets foretold this rejection of the gospel by Israel.
- In v16, Paul quotes Isaiah 53:1 to show that Isaiah's declarations regarding the Messiah had been rejected by his countrymen. Because Jesus did not come with splendor and pomp as a temporal prince, He was rejected and put to death. The problem with the Jews' widespread rejection of the gospel was not that they had not heard the message. The problem was that they had rejected the message (John 1:11).
- Faith comes by hearing and believing the simple Word of God. The gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit and is heard. In v18, Paul cites Psalm 19:4 to show that the Jews have heard the gospel. Like all other nations, Israel was given general revelation of God in nature. However, unlike all other nations, Israel was also given the special revelation of God - the Law of Moses (Ps 19:7-11). From the very beginning there was not a single Jew who did not get the opportunity to hear either through the prophecies given through the prophets or later by witnessing the fulfillment of these prophecies in Christ Himself. This makes them more accountable for their rejection of the good news.
- Not only were they not innocent, but Israel was not ignorant (vv19-21).

The Way of Salvation (9:30-10:21)

- In Romans 9, Paul's emphasis was on God's sovereignty. God always accomplishes His purpose by saving a remnant which He has chosen according to grace. In Romans 10, Paul shifts the emphasis to man's responsibility to respond to the gospel. Those who are lost have no basis to blame God.

1. Israel's Rejection of the Gospel (9:30-10:4)

- It is a strange situation. Gentiles (in contrast with the Jews), who have not sought after God's righteousness, have obtained it because they were glad to embrace a "*righteousness which is of faith.*" On the other hand, the Jews (as a people) pursued after the "*law of righteousness*" (the law of Moses). In so doing, they attempted to weave a righteousness of their own (10:3) which fell short.
- True righteousness is not an attainment ("*the works of the law*"); it is a provision ("*by faith*"). The Christian life is a relationship (trusting in God), not a religion (working for God). Because they tried to be saved by their own good works, the Jews stumbled (or, "to dash your foot against a stone"). The stumbling stone is Jesus, "*the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel*" (Gen 49:24). Paul cites parts of Isaiah 8:14 & 28:16.

- Jesus is a stumbling stone and a rock of offense - the "skandalon" or the trigger to entrap them - in their lives (Isa 8:14). They stumbled over the "stumblingstone" because they could not see the simplicity of the gospel.
- Jesus is the "chief cornerstone" which was rejected by the builders, the religious leaders of Israel (Isa 28:16; Matt 21:42-45; Acts 4:8-12).

Jesus is both the rock of salvation for those who build their lives on Him and yet at the same time a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence for those who take pride in their own good works.

- Paul writes (1 Cor 1:23), "*But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness....*"
 - Christ is a stumbling block to the Jews because Israel was looking for a political Messiah who would come riding into Jerusalem triumphantly and deliver them from the yoke of the Romans.
 - The gospel is foolishness to the Greeks or Gentiles because a crucified Saviour confounds their idea of what the Saviour should be. The cross confronts human wisdom, strength, and pride (1 Cor 1:29).

Over against this is the assurance that the one who believes in Christ will never be put to shame - "*shall not be ashamed.*"

- Paul was grieved over the spiritual condition of the Jewish nation. He was burdened in prayer for the salvation of his kinsmen. God's sovereign election in no way negates praying for the salvation of those who are lost. In fact, it should motivate us to pray for the lost because God is the only One who can intervene and overcome the unbelief in the hearts of unbelievers. Prayer is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of sovereign election (cf Dan 9:1-3).

- Paul recognizes that Israel had a zeal for God, but it was a zeal not based on a correct understanding of OT Scriptures. The Jews were sincere & zealous, but they were sincerely wrong (Matt 22:29). Zeal is good but zeal is dangerous if it is not channelled by knowledge (Phil 3:6; Gal 1:13-14). If we are zealous for a different “Jesus” or a way of salvation other than faith alone in Christ alone, Paul says that we are to be accursed (Gal 1:6-9). Zeal must be a reasonable & intelligent principle which can show the support of Scripture for every step it takes. Israel was ignorant of God’s righteousness, the true righteousness that God declares upon a sinner who is born again through faith in Christ. Instead, they established their own concept of righteousness by trying to work their way to heaven.
- Christ is the end (termination) to the law as a way of attaining righteousness. The law ends for the believer in the sense that our obedience to the law is no longer the basis for our relationship with God (cf 6:14; 7:4). This does not mean the abolishing of the law (3:31). The law has not come to an end in the sense of no longer reflecting God’s standard or no longer showing us our need for a Saviour. The moral law of God is still binding on our lives. Paul emphasizes the importance of *“every one that believeth.”* Faith is absolutely necessary, and without it, no one obtains the righteousness of God (1:17).

2. The Way of Salvation (10:5-13)

- Paul contrasts the righteousness based on the law with the righteousness that comes through faith. In v5 Paul recalls from Lev 18:5. Paul is making the point: if you want to gain eternal life by keeping the law, you must obey it perfectly (Jas 2:10). The problem is that none of us has ever kept all of God’s law all the time. In v6, Paul sets forth a righteousness that is by faith. Salvation is not by keeping the law, but by faith in Christ.
- In vv6-8, Paul quotes from Deut 30:12-14. The essence of Paul’s quotation is that God has brought His salvation near us.
 - “Who shall ascend into heaven?... Or, who shall descend into the deep?”* This expression was used by the Jews to denote any difficult undertaking (Job 11:7-8). To obtain righteousness, which is by faith, there is no need to ascend to heaven or descend to the deep or abyss, since Christ has come and been raised from the dead. God has done it all. He sent Christ. Christ died for our sins. God raised Him from the dead. All that we must do is to believe in the gospel.
 - “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.”* We can immediately receive righteousness by faith, by trusting in the *“word of faith,”* ie. the gospel. It is easily obtained, embraced, and understood. Paul is showing that even Moses taught salvation by faith. We can receive it by confessing and believing in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Because God did the impossible, salvation is no longer unreachable.

- VV9-10 gives us the essence of saving faith. The first is heart belief. Mere intellectual agreement with the facts of the gospel is not enough. Paul is referring to a faith that takes hold of the whole of the inner man, the very core of our being. This is accompanied by confession. Outward confession of Christ is the inevitable outcome or character of genuine saving faith. Confession is not something that a person does to be saved. True Christians confess their faith in Jesus Christ to the world.
- Faith in Christ includes 2 salvation facts:
 - The belief that Jesus is Lord – there is no salvation but in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The belief that Christ rose from the dead - He is a living Saviour (1 Cor 15:17).

This saving faith is illustrated by the dying thief on the cross (Luke 23:42-43). This thief repented and he believed in his heart that God would raise Jesus from the dead and with his mouth he confessed Jesus as Lord. Confession is faith made audible. Both the outward and the inward are important. These two together (belief and confession) result in righteousness and salvation. Faith is the root; confession is the fruit.

- Anyone who believes and trusts in Christ *“shall not be ashamed”* (Isa 28:16). This good news applies equally to the Jews and Greeks because the same Lord is Lord of all. In v13, Paul quotes from Joel 2:32. Joel’s prophecy talks about the days of the Great Tribulation. In those days “whosoever” will call upon the Lord will be saved. Salvation is offered to “whosoever” will call upon the Lord (John 3:16). The gospel is for all. There is no difference between the Jews and Gentiles; both are saved by grace through faith. Note the emphasis on human responsibility to believe: *“all that call upon Him”* (v12) and *“whosoever shall call”* (v13). Sinners must call upon Jesus as Lord if they are to be saved.

3. Proclaiming the Way of Salvation (10:14-15)

- The necessity of gospel preaching.* Since the gospel is for all, we must proclaim it to all. The doctrine of election does not undermine evangelism and missions. God chooses who will be saved and He chooses the means through which they will be saved, namely, preaching the gospel to them. Paul strings together a logical list of rhetorical questions to explain the process of how the gospel goes forth. Paul gives the order in the exact reverse of the chronological order. A person cannot believe on Christ if he has never heard of Christ. Men cannot call on a Saviour in whom they have never believed, and to be sure, they cannot believe in a Christ of whom they have never heard. Men cannot hear about Him unless the message of Christ is preached to them. Therefore, the preacher (message) must be sent if sinners are to be saved. Though God’s election is His own free choice and not based on human merit, the elect are not saved without believing the message that is preached by those who are sent.