

ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional
Study Guide*



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WEEK 15

Romans 10:1-21

Monday

Study: Romans 10:1-4

Reading: Philipians 3:1-21

Memory: Matthew 5:20

Several years ago, I watched a basketball game in which one of the boys who normally sat the bench got an opportunity to play. As he got his hands on the ball he excitedly drove down the court and put the ball in the basket. His excitement was short lived as he soon found out that he had put the ball in the opposing team's basket.

Today, we are going to see how many people try to come to God by doing the same thing. They have a zeal and excitement for finding God and they put their whole heart into what they are doing, yet they do it all in vain because they miss out on God's simple plan of salvation.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul knew that he had been called by God to be a minister to the Gentiles, but that didn't mean that he had forgotten about the Jews. He had a love for his own people and a passion to see them come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior (vs 1). Paul knew all the arguments that the Jews attempted to use for rejecting the Messiah because he had been there once himself. This is why he declared that the Jews had a zeal (an excitement displayed by action) for righteousness. In Philipians 3:1-6, Paul described how he had been one of the most zealous of all the Hebrews in trying to keep the Law until he met the Lord on the Damascus Road and his life was changed. The problem with the zeal of the highly religious Jews was that it wasn't what God wanted. Their zeal was "without knowledge" which meant that they were wasting their lives by sacrificing for an unworthy and unsuccessful cause (vs 2).

They failed to understand the righteousness that God demanded for entrance into heaven, and had determined in their minds that they would earn the righteousness that was required for entrance into eternal life. They established their own set of rules and tried to follow them, thinking that their way would get them to heaven. All the work and effort they did in the name of God was in vain because they did it in their own power and

strength, not realizing that true righteousness can only come from God (vs 3).

Men's meaningless attempts for righteousness on their own account don't have to happen because of the work that Christ did on the cross. When people realize the holiness that God requires for an entrance into heaven, they realize that the only way to complete holiness is through Jesus, not through any work of their own. Works mean nothing before a holy God because He chooses to accept faith as a way to allow all men to receive eternal life (vs 4).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you working hard for the Lord or are you working hard for yourself? These verses were written for the unbeliever, but they are also a good warning to you as a believer. Many people who claim to be religious and perform religious acts are simply wasting their time in light of the big picture of life. They are wasting their time because they are doing it in their own power and strength rather than through God's help. Without God's help, true salvation can not occur. Without God's help your works will be useless. God isn't concerned with how much you do for Him or with how much people appreciate what you do. God is concerned with your trust in Him and obedience to what He wants you to do. Many believers waste much of their lives doing what they call "the Lord's work," but their effort is wasted when they do it for themselves in their own power and strength. Ask God today to show you what He wants you to do and ask Him for the power to accomplish His will for your life.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you the victory over sin.*
- * *Ask God to show you how He wants you to serve Him.*

Thought for the day

Tuesday

Study: Romans 10:5-8

Reading: Deuteronomy 30:1-14, Romans 10:9-13

Memory: Matthew 5:20

When my wife and I were at the hardware store, she reminded me that I needed to look for a screwdriver that would work on some unique screws. The heads of the screws were star shaped and I had tried to loosen them up with the star screwdrivers that I had, but none of them seemed to fit. I assumed I needed to get a different size. My wife told me that the size was right, but the screwdriver needed a special hole in the middle to fit the screws properly. I didn't believe her because I had tried to unscrew them and didn't remember needing a unique screwdriver. I thought I was right, until I got home. I looked at the screws under a bright light and realized that my wife was right.

Today, we are going to see how we can be convinced something is right, but still be wrong. We need to follow the example Paul set before us and carefully study the Word of God to know what God wants.

What Does the Bible Say?

Continuing to emphasize the importance of following Christ instead of the Law, Paul referred back to something that Moses had written in Leviticus 18:5. That verse states how a man would be able to save himself if he follows the whole Law. Salvation by works is only possible if a person can keep the Law perfectly. If a person chooses to live by the Law, he will ultimately be judged by that Law (vs 5).

On the other hand, there is a righteousness which doesn't come by the Law but by faith. Paul illustrated this with another quote from Moses, this time he used a passage found in Deuteronomy 30:10-14. In this passage, God had told the Israelites that He would be with them and would be their God if they would "turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul." God knew they would never be perfect and didn't expect them to be, but He wanted them to turn to Him in faith and worship Him with all their heart. According to Deuteronomy 30:11, this command wasn't impossible to follow or obey, but was visible and attainable by all.

Paul quoted Deuteronomy 30:12 which states that a person doesn't need to go to the end of the earth in an attempt to find out what God desires. Verse 7 in Romans 10 has a similar meaning to verse 6, and is a variation of Deuteronomy 10:13. The point being made was clearly spelled out in Romans 10:8 which began with a quote from Deuteronomy 10:14. The Old Testament Law declares that salvation is not out of the reach of mankind, but it also says that salvation doesn't come from men. The way of God was not only accessible, but the Jews had been surrounded by it. The way of salvation by faith wasn't a new idea, but was clearly spelled out when God gave the Law to the Israelites. Paul was teaching what the Old Testament actually taught, that salvation is by faith (vs 6-8).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How many things would you be able to prove from the Scripture? If someone presents a new idea to you, would you be able to determine what is right and wrong by Scripture? Though we have a high percentage of literacy in the United States, we have a very low percentage of biblical literacy in our churches. Many people get so busy and consumed with the affairs of this life that they fail to study the Word of God to see what it really says. They rely on pastors and church leaders to tell them and when a pastor says something they don't like, they just don't want to listen and will often state, "I don't agree." The problem is that many people disagree with things without any biblical support. This is exactly what the Jews did as they argued for salvation by the Law. They wanted to do things their way without taking the time to see what God really wanted. This is why it is so important for every believer to be like Paul and know what the whole counsel of the Word of God says. Take time to study the Word so that you can have biblical reasons for what you are for and what you are against.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you His Word.*
- * *Ask God to give you the time and desire to study.*

Thought for the day

Wednesday

Study: Romans 10:9-11

Reading: Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:6-11, 2 Corinthians 5:15-21

Memory: Matthew 5:20

When my son and I were on a flight home from Israel, we were getting ready to board the airplane when one of the workers announced that the flight was over booked and they needed a few people to wait for the next flight. As an incentive for people to do this, the airline offered some type of coupon for a discount on future flights. Apparently, no one was interested because they made the announcement again and they upped their offer and were giving a higher discount. Everyone must have been in a hurry that day, because no one took that offer. They finally began offering free future flights and I couldn't resist so my son and I took that offer.

I found that sometimes the airlines do this on purpose to make sure their flights are full, but the problem is, at times, some people have to be turned away and aren't able to make their flights. Today, we are going to see that God never turns people away. The salvation that He offers is to all men, and all men have an opportunity to receive the righteousness of Christ.

What Does the Bible Say?

Knowing what God wants out of men isn't hard for us to figure out. We don't need to search the world for some special revelation, because the Word of God has been given to us, revealing what God desires. One of the things that God desires most is for all men to place their faith in Him. Paul was commissioned by God to spread the news about Jesus Christ and the need for all men to trust in Him. Jesus Christ and His redemption of mankind is what the Old Testament looked forward to. The faith that God wants us to have is expressed with our mouth, and is also believed in our heart. We must truly believe that Jesus Christ came to this earth to pay the penalty for our sin and then rose again victorious over sin. It is this faith that saves us (vs 9).

When a person truly believes and chooses to follow God, his life will be transformed. The result of true belief will not only be the declaration of

righteousness by God, but will also be a righteous life. The decision to place your faith in God isn't something that is to be kept silent, but is to be proclaimed publicly. This happens when we acknowledge that we are sinners and need God's salvation. It is declaring that we can do nothing to save ourselves, but we need God (vs 10).

This salvation wasn't limited to just the Jews, but was offered to all men who would choose to believe. Those who choose to place their faith in Jesus Christ will not be turned away by God. Paul quoted Isaiah 28:16 to prove the point that it had always been this way. The Israelites were originally called to be a light to the Gentile nations so that the nations would want to know their God because of them. The Israelites were called to bring people into the nation of Israel to become spiritual children of God, just as the New Testament church is called to go out and tell people how to become children of God (vs 11).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize that salvation is more than just a private decision? It is a public declaration. Here Paul said that a person must believe and must confess with their mouths. This is in keeping with the idea of baptism that publicly showed a person's affiliation with Christ. There is not a magic set of words or a special prayer, but the emphasis here and in other places in the New Testament reveals that when a person truly follows Christ, it is not just a simple choice of the mind. True belief is followed by action. In this passage, Paul said an internal belief was followed by a public declaration. Those who are truly willing to follow Christ and believe in Him will reveal that belief by their actions.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the person who told you about Christ.*
- * *Ask God to help you boldly share your faith.*
- * *Praise God because He has power over death.*

Thought for the day

Thursday

Study: Romans 10:12-14

Reading: Joel 2:28-32, Romans 10:1-21

Memory: Matthew 5:20

When my children were very young they all loved to splash around in the pool and desired to learn how to swim. As I tried to teach them how to float on their backs, a few of them would panic and starts splashing, which would cause him or her to start to sink. When they wouldn't panic, they stayed afloat much longer.

Today, we are going to see how people strive hard to deliver themselves from hell. Though it's not an exact comparison, they are just like one of my children flailing their arms in the water. They don't realize that their works or position in life mean nothing apart from a faith and trust in God.

What Does the Bible Say?

As we have seen throughout the book of Romans, Paul was combating the Jewish tradition that a person needed to become a Jew in order to be right with God. Becoming a Jew meant that they had to be circumcised and choose to follow Jewish rules and regulations. This is why Paul methodically took time to disprove their theory about salvation. Salvation wasn't only for the Jewish race, but it was for all men. When it comes to receiving eternal life, God didn't give more favor to a person because he was born a Jew, but He views all men the same. The same God who created the Jews also created the Gentiles, and the same sin that separates the Gentiles from God also separates the Jews from God. God gives His abundant riches to all who choose to believe. This means that there are no levels of Christianity like there are different classes in society, but that all who believe have been given great riches by God (vs 12).

In case there was any doubt as to what Paul was attempting to say, He made his point very clear. He didn't do this with his own thoughts, but he once again quoted the Old Testament, this time Joel 2:32 which declared, "everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" This same quote was also used by Peter when he challenged the Jewish people on the day of Pentecost shortly after the ascension of Christ (Acts 2:21). This

message is a message for all ages. All men have an opportunity to be saved (vs 13).

Paul's line of arguing continued as he wanted his readers to understand that an understanding of the truth was necessary for a person to become a true child of God. This meant that a person wasn't saved by his works, position in society, racial background or any other human means. People were and are only saved when they understand the truth about Man, God and Jesus Christ (vs 14).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Have you gained a greater understanding of the mind of God as you have read through Romans? One thing is very clear, and that is that God thinks differently than humans do. Humans often judge a person by how much money they have, their position in life, the type of family they grew up in and a variety of other things. God doesn't view men this way. In fact God puts all men on the same playing field. Who a person's family was or even what good that person has done on the earth means little to God. God doesn't offer salvation to just those who are good and think they prove themselves worthy of earning heaven, but God offers salvation to all men. The requirement is simple, yet at the same time it is very difficult. God requires us to respond in faith and trust to the truth that has been revealed to us. Many people fail to do this because they think that this is too simple and that they need to work to earn the right to be saved. Others fail to understand that saving faith is based on the truth of Jesus Christ who called all men to repent and choose to give their lives as a living sacrifice to Him. God doesn't want your money or your works. He doesn't want to know how good you are trying to be, but He simply wants you. He wants your whole life. Will you give it to Him today?

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for offering you salvation.*
- * *Ask God to help you live a life that is sold out for Christ.*

Thought for the day

Friday

Study: Romans 10:14-17

Reading: Isaiah 53:1-12, Luke 16:19-31

Memory: Matthew 5:20

When I first started getting to know my wife (before she was my wife) in college, I provided her with much humor. She often loved to walk up stairs with me because it was inevitable that I would trip at least once a day (or so it seemed). I think the problem was that I was always in a hurry to get to the top. In that hurry I failed to step on the proper step and would stumble on the stairs. Though it provided a lot of humor for my wife, it did very little for my pride.

Just as reaching the top of the stairs is to be a step by step progression, reaching the point of salvation is the same way as well. Today, we are going to see how salvation is a progression in the sense that the Word needs to be preached, that message needs to be heard, then the message needs to be believed.

What Does the Bible Say?

The Jews thought that salvation would come because of their race and position in life, but Paul spent much of the book of Romans disproving that. Chapter 10 specifically described how faith must precede true conversion. This is emphasized in verse 14 as Paul described how a person must hear the Gospel before he can be saved. He did this by asking questions that had obvious answers. Simply put, God must send someone to proclaim the Word in order for it to be heard, and once the Word is heard, a person must believe (vs 14).

To continue his argument, Paul once again refers back to the Old Testament as he quoted Isaiah 52:7. Though the emphasis in the passage is on the realization that all men can be saved, there is also great importance placed on the one who delivers the message. God has designed the church to be His workmanship (Eph 2:10), and to be the ones who spread and deliver the wonderful message of Jesus Christ. Paul wanted the Jews to realize that he was one of those messengers and that God highly approved of what he was doing (vs 15).

Though Isaiah proclaimed the good news of peace to the Israelites, not all of them believed. Paul quoted Isaiah 53:1 as he described how faith is required for salvation. The context that followed this quote from Isaiah gives a prophecy about the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ. The problem was that many Jews didn't want to listen to the prophets. Though they were Jews, they failed to trust in God and they were never saved. Faith isn't something that comes naturally to men. People just don't believe, but they first must be confronted with the Word of God. As that Word penetrates their heart and life through the power of the Spirit. The Word of God and the Holy Spirit produce faith needed to trust in God (vs 16-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize how important the Gospel message is? It is easy to become like the Jews and want people to conform to your moral standards without the message of the Gospel. Paul made it very clear that in order for a person to believe, they must first hear the Gospel message. Salvation does not come by being good or following a moral code. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God proclaimed. This should remind you of how important it is to be looking for the opportunities that God gives you to share the Gospel. Don't ever undersell the necessity for sharing the Gospel and the power of the Gospel. People can't believe it unless they hear it. Ask God to reveal to you any way where He would like you to be sharing the Gospel in a greater way than you have been.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the person who shared His Word with you.*
- * *Ask God to help you boldly share His Word with others.*
- * *Praise God because He made a way of salvation.*

Thought for the day

Saturday

Study: Romans 10:18-21

Reading: Psalm 19:1-6, Isaiah 65:1-12

Memory: Matthew 5:20

One of the things I appreciated most about the Bible college that I attended was that I was more than just another number. Even as a freshman, I felt that the administration knew who I was and that they cared for me personally. Though my character and attitude needed a lot of help, they were willingly and patiently there to help me through each situation. Even when I ran into college leaders after I had graduated, they took time to talk with me.

Today, we are going to see how God doesn't want us to be just another number. Too many religions are full of numbers, but God wants you to be more than that. He wants you to act and live as His child as a result of the vibrant relationship that you have with Him.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul made it absolutely clear that faith is necessary in order for a person to receive Christ as their Savior. This raises a question that many people still ask today, though the answer has been clearly given in Scripture. Many ask, "If faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, what about those who will never have anyone declare the Word of God to them? Will they be held accountable for their sin?" Paul had already answered this question in Romans 1 when he described how God's truth is evident in and around men, but he answers it once again in this passage. This time, he used a quote from Psalm 19:4 where David declared that the words of God are evident in creation. Psalm 19:1 began David's psalm as he wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork." Though the physical words of God haven't been declared to all men, the message of an ultimate Creator to whom all men will be accountable is evident. Jeremiah stated, "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13) The Gospel wasn't just a local folk tale for the middle east region, but it was and is a worldwide message which can bring salvation to all men (vs 18).

Since God had revealed the truth of Himself not only in nature, but by the Law, how come all Israelites didn't believe? Over 1,500 years before in Deuteronomy 32:21, Moses declared that the Jews would become jealous when the Gentile nations would believe on God (vs 19). Moses wasn't the only one to address the issue, but it was also addressed in Isaiah 65:1 when Isaiah described how those who didn't know God like the Israelites knew God would one day find Him and establish a relationship with Him (vs 20). Though many Gentiles would receive Him with open arms, Isaiah 65:2 described how the Jews to whom He held out His arms to would reject God and follow their own paths (vs 21).

How Does this Apply to Me?

One of the great problems that the Israelites struggled with that we struggle with today is "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:5). This is true not only of false religions, but can easily be said of some people who sit in good, Gospel preaching churches. They feel that their religion is good enough and they never go beyond the outward acts and experience the inward relationship that God wants all men to have. Though there are some like this in churches who are never saved, there are also some who are children of God but let religion take over their lives. They do the acts they are supposed to do and they please the people they are supposed to please, but they often leave God out of the equation. You need to regularly examine your life and evaluate the things that you do to ensure that you have the right purpose and focus in life. Don't allow yourself to become just a religious number, but stand up and make a difference for God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for revealing His plan of salvation to you.
- * Ask God to help you not to become a religious number.

Thought for the day

Sunday

Reading: Romans 10:1-21

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

www.biblegateway.com

Bible Memory

Matthew 5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.