

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Romans 10

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through Romans.

Paul has shared with the believers in Rome and to us today – the good news.

The Gospel of Grace

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

For it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,

It doesn't matter if we are Jew

Gentile

Or how good we think we are

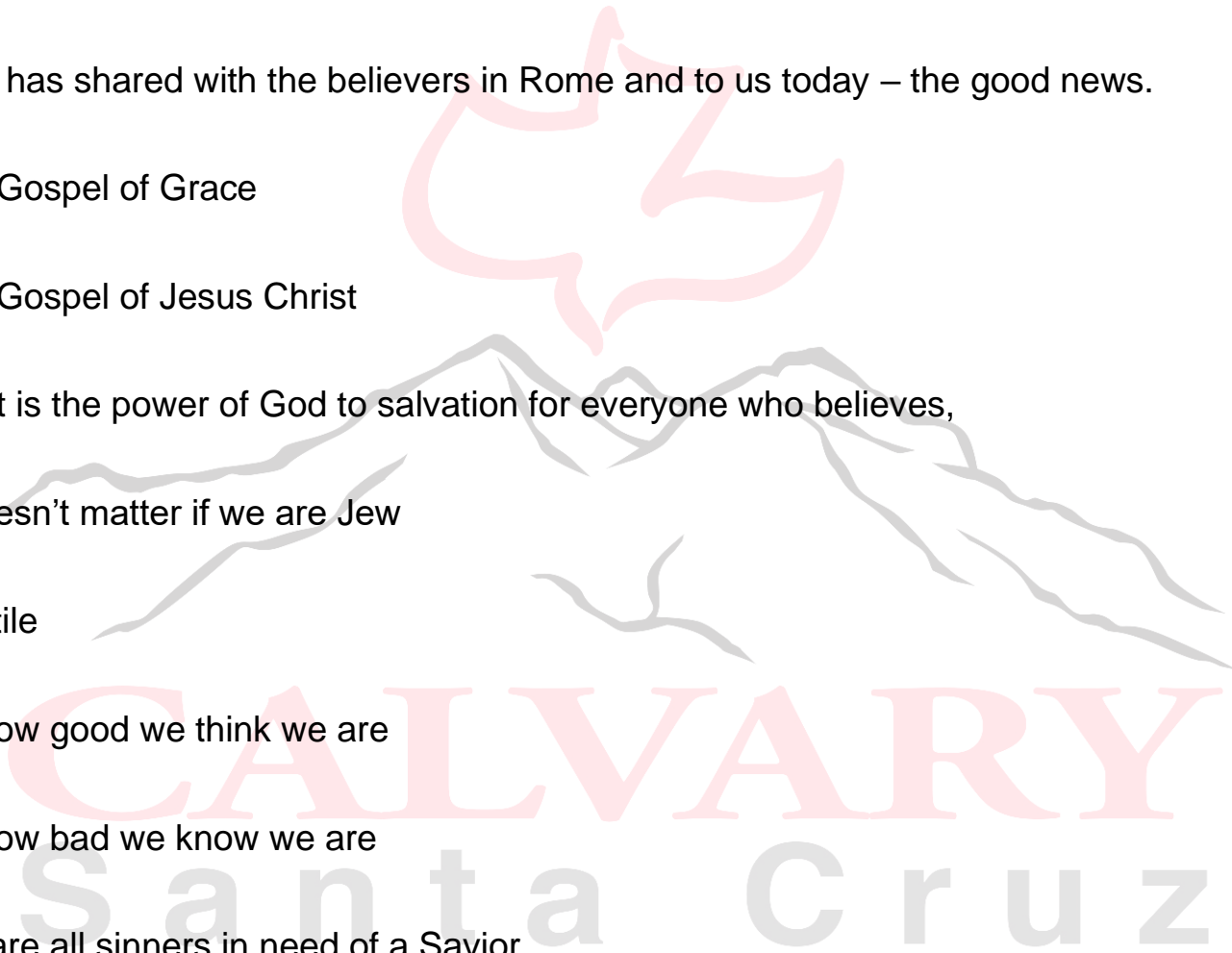
Or how bad we know we are

We are all sinners in need of a Savior

We all fall short of the glory of God

Our self-righteousness - our best fleshly efforts – God sees them as filthy rags.

But God – made one way.



He did all the work but He still gives us a choice –

We can chose to reject Hs grace, to put our trust in our religious work, in our own self-righteousness, in our heritage or even simply come to the conclusion that there is no God.

And so for that individual – God’s wrath is poured on them – God honors their choice.

But for the believer that responds to God’s grace by faith

That trusts in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ upon the cross and in His resurrection, God sees us clothed in Christ’s righteousness – As Jesus has taken the wrath that was reserved for us upon Himself.

God is sovereign, God elects, God calls those that are His and in His sovereignty, He has given us free will.

This morning, we are going to start a new chapter.

God has given Paul a burden for his fellow Jew.

Paul has seen the work of the Holy Spirit among the Gentiles.

Paul wants the same thing for the Jews.

He knows that many Jews are going to be asking questions whether God has abandoned them or forsaken the promises that He made to the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

And so, Paul has been asking and answering these questions that he anticipates from the listeners to his letter.

And he has taken us through a systematic study through the Old Testament regarding God's election and the nation of Israel's repeated rejection of God's grace.

Why does Paul go to great lengths in showing us this?

Because he wants to show us that God's blessings upon the nation of Israel were not because of their heritage or birthright – but by faith.

Let's pray...

Read Text –

At the end of our study last Sunday –

Paul tells us that Gentiles attained righteousness when they were not seeking it.

Because it is by grace through faith

God reaches out to us first – we respond.

The nation of Israel could not attain righteousness when they were actively seeking it.

And the reason that they were not attaining it was because they were trying to do it through religion.

They were trying to do it by placing their trust in their heritage

And because of it -

Jesus became a stumbling block or a rock of offense to them instead of a rock of rest or a rock of refuge.

That was the past –

Remember I said – in CH 9 Paul deals with the Jewish nation past rejection of Jesus Christ,

In Ch10 – Paul talks about their current condition

And so what Paul is going to say is that their present rejection of Jesus Christ – it doesn't need to be a permanent rejection.

That the door of salvation remains open to them.

And his conclusion -

Rejection now, doesn't mean rejection forever.

[Rom 10:1-4 NKJV] 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

Paul is carrying something deep and burdensome in his heart – as he writes this letter.

We saw it at the beginning of CH 9

It was his love for his fellow Jew –

He was willing to do anything for them to come to salvation in Christ.

He cared for them.

God placed a burden on his heart for the Jews and Paul responded to the burden.

In the same way – for the believer, God has placed a burden in our hearts for the lost.

I had you make a note of the phrase my heart's desire – Paul wanted nothing more that to see his Jewish brothers come to salvation in Jesus Christ.

Church – this is where evangelism begins.

Do we care for the lost?

Do we care for the lost in our own communities, within our own families, our neighbors?

Because the truth is that if we really don't care, then we are not going to want to share.

But if we do genuinely care for them –

Then we will feel the need to share our faith with others.

Back in Romans 5 – Paul summarized the Gospel of Grace for us in one verse -

[Rom 5:8 NKJV] 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

You see loved ones, Paul's heart's desire was not due to obligation to share the gospel, it was the response of God's love that drove this desire for the lost.

And that alone should be our motivation to evangelize -

He just didn't simply feel sorry for the Jew or acknowledge that they needed salvation –

Paul did something about

Turn with me to Matt 7

[Mat 9:35-38 NKJV] 35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly [is] plentiful, but the laborers [are] few. 38 "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

When Jesus saw the multitude – does it say that Jesus felt sorry for them?

Oh well!!!! Too bad for them.

No

He was moved with compassion for them

He did something about it

How do we know that He did something for them?

Because in Ch 10 – He sends out the 12

We have another example in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke

Jesus is teaching in a house and four friends bring their paralytic friend –

They carried him on his mat – and when they couldn't get in, they lowered him from the roof,

They were moved to do something – they simply didn't feel sorry for their friend.

We have talked a lot over the last few weeks about God's election and man's responsibility.

But Paul reminds us that in that equation – interwoven in God's election and man's responsibility is that God in His sovereignty has chosen you and me (His church/His bride) to be the instruments that are going to share the gospel.

So – we care

And also we pray – I had you make a note of that as well.

When God put a burden in our hearts – our response is one of prayer.

He puts it in our heart – and we put it back at His feet.

“Lord, give me Your wisdom, give me Your strength, give me Your boldness to do what You have called me to do”

What a testimony of Christian love, to pray for people that had not only rejected the Savior, but also had relentlessly persecuted the apostle Paul.

The term prayer here in the original denotes a persistent pleading, a begging God for something that is urgent.

It would be a term that we would use, for example, if we were on our face before the Lord begging him for our child who had been seriously injured and was on the brink of death to recover.

How often do we pray for a loved one in that manner?

For an enemy in that manner?

For someone who openly mocks us about our beliefs.

Apostle Paul did –

Why? Because it was his heart's desire.

Ed Pena – the instrument that God used to share the gospel to me in 1991 –

My first boss –

I openly mocked him in front of the entire kitchen staff after he repeatedly shared the gospel with me.

Herb, you need Jesus

Jesus loves you

Jesus will be our rest

Jesus will be our peace

And I mocked him

Months later – as a new believer, gathering at Ed Pena’s house with his family for bible study – his wife shared to me that one of Ed’s prayers at every bible study was that God would continue to give him strength and wisdom to continue to share the gospel to this punk kid at work – that he may be saved.

Notice also at the end of verse 1– Paul’s desire and prayer is not asking the Jews to stop being Jews

He is not asking them to set aside the law

He does not want them to convert from one religion to another

He didn’t just pray for health, prosperity, or happiness.

He just wants them to respond to the gospel of grace.

He prayed for their salvation.

The claim of the believer is that the basis of forgiveness and the basis of salvation and the basis of redemption and the basis of reconciliation is Jesus

This is God's doing

This is not my doing

This is not Paul's doing

So we are to pray for our family and friends who are lost

And God will send out those who are going to share the gospel

What begins in our heart by caring, will nurtured in our heart by praying and then we proceed to the next step –

Verse 2 – that is speaking

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

No one knew better than Paul how zealous the religious Jews were.

The Jews had a kind of a zeal for God.

For example when they tithed, they tithed down to the smallest herb.

They tried their absolute best to keep the Sabbath and even all the extra rules that had been added.

The Jewish people knew somethings about God but their knowledge was incomplete.

And because it was incomplete – it was incorrect.

Their zeal was void of a true understanding.

It was void of a genuine knowledge of Jesus.

The same can be said for many cults that exist today.

Is there a zeal among them? Yes

They are out there knocking on doors on Saturday morning

They are willing to talk to people

They are willing to share their publications

They have a zeal – but not according to knowledge.

The word that is used to here for knowledge – is not in reference to a general knowledge – it is in reference to a complete or more thorough knowledge.

They have a zeal about God, about serving Him – but they do not know Him.

Because -

They will deny that Jesus is God in the flesh

They will make the claim that Jesus is the archangel, Michael.

They deny that Jesus dies on the cross, that He physically rose from the grave

They deny that we are saved by grace through faith

They will make the claim that one has to join their organization and believe what the organization says and go door to door.

And that heaven is not really for everyone because earth is heaven.

They have a zeal – they sincerely believe that what they are sharing is right and the bible is wrong.

The Jews were loyal to the law of God.

They believed that Jesus was trying to replace that law rather than fulfill it.

So they were convinced that God was on their side.

As a result of their misguided zeal - it made them bitter enemies of Christ, bitter enemies all who follow him.

Paul before his encounter with Jesus – on the road to Damascus – he was the poster child for one who had zeal without knowledge.

Turn with me to the Gospel of Matthew 23 -

Here in Matthew 23 – Jesus, in rebuking the religious rulers –

He doesn't deny their zeal –

But He does point out that they do it without knowledge.

[Mat 23:23-28 NKJV] 23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin (zeal), and have neglected the weightier [matters] of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 "Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! (zeal)25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish (zeal), but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead [men's] bones and all uncleanness. 28 "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Jesus points out that someone can have a zeal and still be misguided or misplaced if it is not coupled with knowledge.

We have to grasp that –

Zeal is not enough

Good intentions are not enough.

Sincerity is not enough.

The mentality that – God knows we are not perfect and so He doesn't require perfection – He just requires us to do the best we can with what we have – that is not true.

This is what the Jews were doing – they established their own standard of righteousness – and instead of grace, it involved following a list of do's and don't's – trying to make up for all the times they failed to do their best.

And they felt certain that if they can simply do their best – that God would save them.

Just like today – we all have loved ones who believe the following -

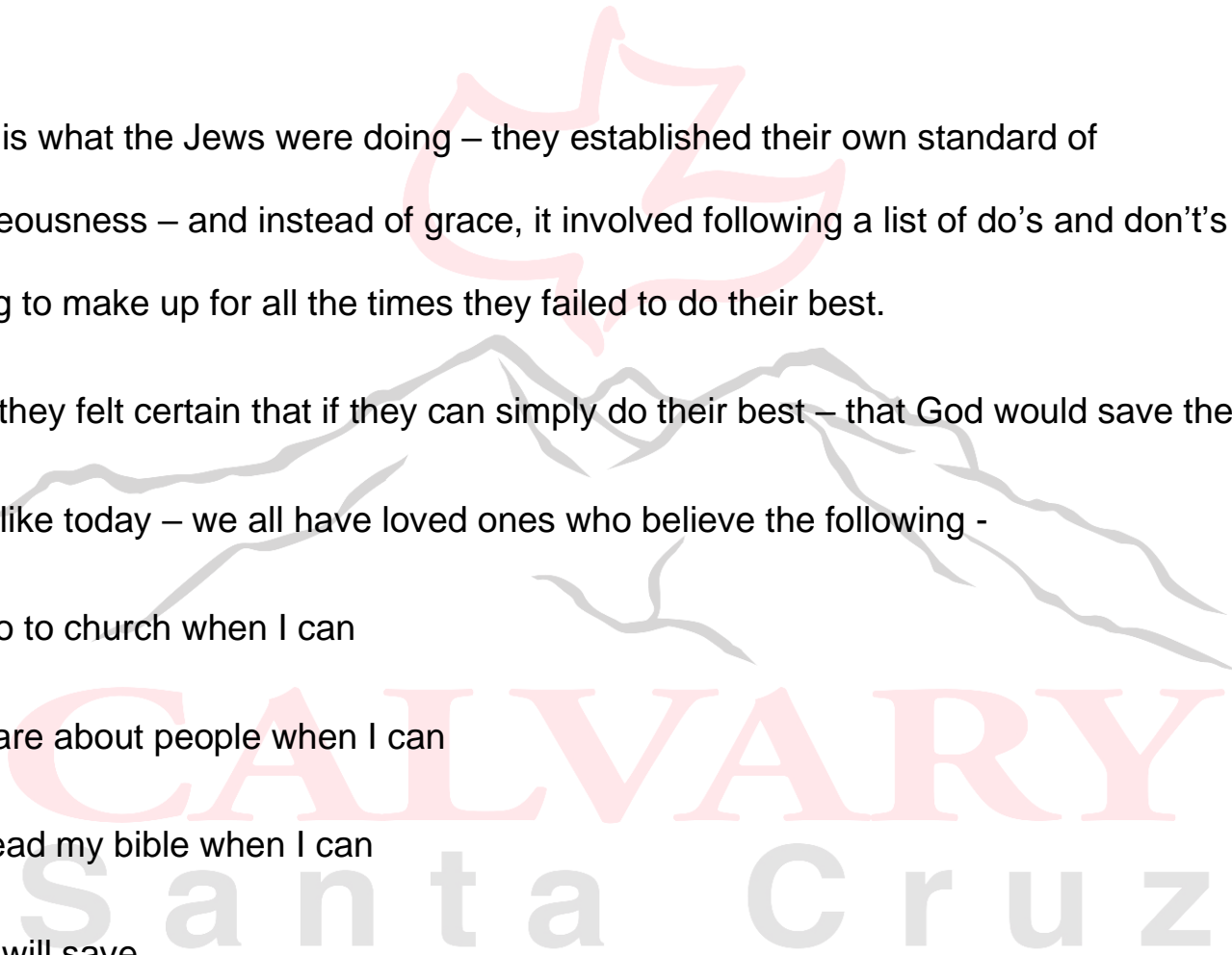
If I go to church when I can

If I care about people when I can

If I read my bible when I can

God will save

Not according to His word.



You see, the way that God deals with the problem of not being able to do the best we can is to provide One person who actually did the best that He can and He arrived at God's standard of perfection.

Jesus Christ.

This is why Jesus is the Door

This is why Jesus is the Way

This is why Jesus is the Good Shepherd

This is why Jesus says [Jhn 10:8 NKJV] 8 "All who [ever] came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

The Nation of Israel was ignorant of God's way of making people right with Himself, not because they had never been told, but because they refused to learn.

They had an ignorance that stemmed from willful, stubborn resistance to the truth.

They would not submit to God.

They were proud of their own good works and religious self-righteousness, and would not admit their sins and trust the Savior.

I had you make a note of the phrase God's righteousness

This is the key word to this verse.

It's all about being "righteous" before God.

Being "saved" requires that we are "righteous" before God.

It requires that we meet God's standards.

Paul is saying that the Jews don't have a full understanding of just how righteous God is and what He requires from us.

The Jews tried to stand on their own righteousness before God.

They felt that they could be considered "right" before God.

They missed the fact that righteous involved faith.

[Rom 1:16-17 NKJV] 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Righteousness doesn't just come from outward obedience, but a heart that trusts in God.

The Jews had the same problem that many today have –

They make up their own definition of what righteousness is

In the end, what you think doesn't count for anything. It's what the judge thinks that is important.

Salvation isn't based on what we think God's standards of righteousness are, it's based on what He thinks righteousness is.

That's why it's so important that we base our beliefs on what God has said Himself. We need to base what we believe on what the Bible says, not what we think and not what some religious person says.

4 For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

This is one of the most overlooked bible verses in all of scriptures – even by Christians.

When we believe in Christ, God accounts His perfect righteousness to us.

So, we cannot become more righteous by our own efforts. Because we're already perfectly righteous.

In fact, if we try to earn points with God by turning back to the law, even our own law, our own set of rules, then we're trusting in self instead of Christ.

Nor can we become less righteous by failing to live up to some standard – because believing in Jesus IS the only standard God is concerned about.

This is what Paul is referring to that Jesus is the end of the law of righteousness.

Paul did not say Jesus was the end of the Law – period!

He said He was the end of the law for righteousness!

In other words, all that the Law of God was meant to be & do is summed up in Jesus.

Believing in Jesus means trusting in Him so completely that His righteousness becomes ours.

What this means practically is that instead of living to BE righteous –

Righteousness will be lived; righteousness will mark our behavior and lifestyle.

Not perfectly, because no one's faith is perfect.

But over time, as we grow in grace & faith, the righteousness of Christ will become more & more evident in us.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Are we willing to pray?

Are we willing to expose the lie?

Are we willing to tell the truth?

The is what evangelism is all about

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

