



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Romans 10:5-13

Romans

"Whosoever Believeth"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] It's always nice to be able to put a face with a name, with a voice, or with a book, and we can do that this morning. Dr. Bill McCray is visiting with us, and his wife Marilyn. Some of you know the McCrays. Many of you, or most of you, know the name of Bill McCray from the tapes that we have, from the booklets that he has written, and from other books that he's written. And so we're very pleased to have them with us, and I'd like to have Bill and Marilyn stand up so we can see them.

It's a great pleasure for us to have them here. For many years Bill McCray stood where I'm standing and I sat where he's sitting and I listened to many wonderful lessons in the word of God. We went through the book of 1 Corinthians. What a privilege it is to go through the book of Romans.

And Dr. McCray took us through the book of Romans. It was a great study and it was a very influential study in the lives of many people and in this church. And I can say that in my life my parents, Dr. Johnson, and Bill McCray have had a significant influence, and so it's a privilege to have Bill with us, and Marilyn.

He preached here till 1975 and then got called in north to his homeland in Canada to London, Ontario, where he ministered as the pastor teacher in that church and then went down to Toronto to be the president of Ontario Bible College and Seminary, and he and his wife tour the country doing marriage seminars. We have used his book on

marriage, had been very profitable, so again, Bill, Marilyn, nice to have you with us.

And we are in the book of Romans ourselves, and it is Romans chapter 10 that we are in this morning. We began that last week with verses 1-4 and this morning we continue our study with verses 5-13. "For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascent into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down), or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)' But what does it say? 'The word of God is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' - that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for 'whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

May this Lord bless this reading of His word. Let's bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, it is a great privilege to gather together with the saints on a Sunday morning, open the scriptures, read them together, read Your inherent word, this unique revelation that has been given to Your people. So we count that a great privilege, a great blessing, and then to spend time considering the meaning of this text is further blessing, the blessing that must come from You.

We can devote time to reading and study, but we must be taught, taught by the Spirit of God, and we thank You, Father, for giving Him to Your people, that He resides within us, literally. The third person of the Trinity resides within us. He is the seal on our hearts. He protects us and He guides us. He illuminates our minds to understand

the Scripture and we pray for that ministry this morning, that it will go unhindered, that the Spirit of God would move upon us, that we would put the details of life out of our thinking, that we would focus our minds upon Your truth during this hour. And through out time together, that we will be built up in the faith. We would understand more about You and understand more about Your grace, and be edified by it and become more like Jesus Christ. Bless us to that end, Father.

We thank You for the great blessings we have received in our study of the word of God, and as it has been taught in this place for so many years, through the ministry of Dr. Johnson, the ministry of Dr. McCray, and others, the ministry that still goes on through the tape ministry, as sermons and lessons of those individuals and others are sent out throughout this country and throughout the world, we pray that You would bless that ministry. We pray that You'd bless Dr. McCray and Marilyn in the ministry that they continue to have. And we pray that You'd bless our time together, that it would be rich and that it would be enjoyable, it would be edifying, and in that all the things that we do, you would be glorified, the name of Jesus Christ would be magnified.

So bless us this morning spiritually, bless us physically. We are material creatures that are dependent upon You every bit as much for our material well-being as our spiritual well-being. We draw every breath from You. It's a gift of grace - our employment, our health, everything comes from You. Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of Lights above. So Father, we thank You for the abundance You've given us, but we pray for those who are in need, those who are facing surgery, or those who are recovering from health problems. We pray that You would give healing and encouragement. We pray for our employment. We pray that You'd bless those without it, open doors of opportunity, and encourage them.

And those who have employment and those who enjoy good health and all of the nice things of life, may we understand that it's a gift. And may our hearts be turned to You with gratitude and

appreciation for all that You do and all that You give us, and even rejoice in the fact that when we are deprived of these things and when we come upon difficult times, it is by the good and sovereign hand of a loving God, and You work those things to our good. We thank You for that, praise You for that.

We pray for our nation. We pray You'd bless it. Bless our leaders. Bless our military personnel abroad. We pray that You'd give them safety, protection, and success. Bless this land. May the word of God go out today and may we see great results. We know that Your word never returns void. We pray that You would bless it this morning, where Your word is taught. Bless it in this place as we give attention to it.

Bless us again this evening as we return here to worship our Lord, to remember His first coming and remember that He's coming again. May we live for that day and may we redeem the time, and serve Him faithfully with the time that we have.

Bless us now as we sing our final hymn and use that moment of worship to prepare our hearts for our time of study together. We pray in Christ name. Amen.

[Message] One of our modern maxims is "no pain, no gain." That's true in the gym; it's true in the classroom. But unfortunately, it's been made a basic tenet of religion. We can earn God's acceptance by our labors. And the harder the work, the better we become, like Hercules, who took on 12 labors to gain purification for his sin. He killed a lion, then a monster. He clean the Augean stables, each labor becoming more difficult, until finally he went down to Hades to free Theseus and bring him up. He did the impossible.

It's a myth, of course, but it gives the essence of natural religion. Men think they must work, and sometimes toil, in order to gain heaven. And very often that's what they want. But when we open the Bible, we find something completely different. We find that God has not made salvation hard. He has not given 12 labors to purify - just the opposite.

Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. It is not difficult. Salvation is free, and God has made it available to whosoever believeth. Whosoever - Jew and Gentile; educated, uneducated; moral or immoral - whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. That's good news.

That's the subject of our passage. It is a continuation of Paul's explanation of the general failure of the Jewish people to obtain salvation, that salvation that had been promised to them. We learn the divine side of that from Romans chapter 9, and now from chapter 10 we learn the human side of that failure.

It's due to pride. It was due to unbelief. Paul wrote in verse 3 that they did not know God's righteousness. They did not understand it. They didn't subject themselves to it; didn't believe it. Instead, they sought to establish a righteousness of their own by lawkeeping. That is impossible, and Paul begins this portions of Romans 10 by quoting Moses to show that the requirements of the Law make grace necessary for salvation.

For Moses writes that "The man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness." Moses wrote that Leviticus 18:5, which said that a man will live if he keeps all of God's statutes, all of his Commandments. But Moses also said in Deuteronomy 27:26, "If he doesn't he is cursed." In other words, the Law's demands are absolute and complete. It leaves no room for error, no room for the slightest failure. So if you want to live by lawkeeping, then you must live by it perfectly.

Jewish confidence in the Law was due to failure to take the Law seriously, and it was due to a failure to read it carefully. No one can live up to the Law's standards, and since the Jews were not meeting that perfect standard, they needed a savior and a salvation that is a free gift.

In verse 6 Paul states that God has provided that in what he calls the righteousness based on faith, not based on the Law. Meaning,

righteousness that is received through faith. God doesn't require great physical feats from us in order to obtain His acceptance, simply the faith that receives His gift of righteousness.

Now, to support that, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30:12-14, where Moses said "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead." What Moses was doing with these two questions, who will ascend and who will descend, was discouraging any idea that God's will is hard to find or to understand.

No, he says in verse 8, "The word is very near you." It isn't hidden. God has made it available. So it isn't necessary to do some superhuman act in order to learn God's will and obtain salvation. Now, Moses didn't say to bring Christ down or to bring Christ up. Paul added that by way of application of Moses' statement. Moses was speaking of the Law and Israel's responsibility to know it and do it. But he wasn't giving a legalistic formula for salvation. In fact, all through the book of Deuteronomy, Moses speaks of the grace of God. In chapter 7 he tells them that they were God's elect nation, not due to anything in them, but because of God's love - as simple as that. It wasn't because they were great. They're not great. They're a small nation. They're an insignificant people, but got set His love upon them.

He speaks of grace throughout that book. He tells the people that they had no righteousness of their own. They were inheriting the land because of God's kindness to them and not because of their merit. He speaks of circumcising the heart. In other words, there must be inner life and consecration. And here in Deuteronomy 30:10, just before Paul makes his quote beginning in verse 12, Moses tells the people you will only be able to obey if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.

They were to trust in Him. That would be the beginning of their obedience. God's revelation of Himself and His will was clear. It was not obscure. He brought it very near to them. He had revealed

everything necessary for faith and life. Paul recognized God's grace in that, in that statement of Moses. It is the same with the gospel. God has clearly revealed the way of salvation and brought it near, made it available, and it required turning to the Lord.

So just as Israel was without excuse in Moses' day, Jews and Gentiles were without excuse in Paul's day, as they are without excuse in our day. We cannot plead ignorance. That revelation has been made known. Christ has come down from heaven and He has been raised from the dead. He has brought salvation to man. That truth is accessible; it is near. All a person must do is believe.

So heroic efforts to find the truth and to gain salvation are not necessary. There's no need to get Christ and try to produce salvation. He has already come. But these are just the kinds of things that people think they must do to have salvation - climb up to heaven, go down into the abyss. Man wants to do something. He wants a self-achieved salvation, which is what righteousness based on the law is. It is what Spurgeon called man's strange infatuation with the law. The rich young ruler had that infatuation. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" he asked? What monumental task can I undertake that will put me over the top? Give me one of the labors of Hercules.

Men have done those kinds of things. They have done since labors as that. At the traditional site of Mount Sinai, there's a Greek monastery at the base of the mountain, Saint Catherine's. It's famous for the ancient Greek manuscripts that were discovered there in the 19th century, but from that monastery there are steps cut into the mountain leading up to the top. And the story is that the man who carved those steps carved each of them as into the rock to pay penance for some sin that he had committed. Must have taken his years to complete that task. And you can just imagine when he finished the last step and arrived at the mountain top with sore fingers and bloody knees, he must have sat there and looked down at all that he had done and thought, "I really achieved something. I've got righteousness now."

Or he may have arrived at the top, like Luther did when he got to the top of the Scala Sancta in Rome, Pilot's stairs, he climbed those on his knees with other pilgrims, saying his paternosters as he went on each step. When he reached the top and stood up, he said, "Who knows whether it is so?" After all that he had done, his pilgrimage down to Rome, visiting all of the holy sites, climbing up those stairs on his knees, praying all of the prayers, he still had doubts that he was really achieving righteousness by his own efforts.

Any by God's grace he soon learned that he was not. He took up the book of Romans. He studied the book of Romans. He came to 1:17 and he learned that the righteousness of God is the gift of His righteousness. God has not hidden the truth of salvation. It is not necessary to scale the heights or search the depths for salvation. It is no more necessary to do that than it is possible.

God has already done everything that is necessary for salvation and He has revealed it. The word is near you. It is available for all who believe. It is the word of faith, Paul says, which he and the apostles were preaching. In verse 9 he gives the content of the word they preached. "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." That's the gospel. And that's the response to the gospel that results in salvation.

What is surprising about that statement, though, is the order of the response - confess and believe, rather than believe and confess. Now, it may be that Paul is simply describing a person's response to the gospel as it is observed, because we first learn of that from what a person says from public confession, and that tells us what's already happened in that individual's heart.

But more likely Paul is following the order of the quote from Deuteronomy that he gives in verse 8. "The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart." Not a lot can be made out of the order here in verse 9, because in verse 10 Paul reverses it. "With the heart a person believes, with the mouth he confesses." Both of these are parts

of the same response. The one is the outward expression of the inner condition.

The confession that is made, the content that is given, is that Christ is Lord and that He is alive. He has been resurrected. And both of those statements speak of His person and His work as Savior. His lordship points to His deity. Throughout the Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, the word "Lord" is the name for God. So the Jewish audience would have clearly understood the significance of that name, that Christ is Lord. It was the Old Testament equivalent to Yahweh or Jehovah.

But Gentiles in the audience also would have understood the significance of it as well, because it was used among the Romans to identify a deity. It was used among them in regard to emperor worship. He was called "Lord." He was worshipped as God.

So the audience would have understood the significance of that, and as they read through the letters that were written by the apostles as the New Testament was accumulated, that testimony was given very clearly, because throughout the New Testament this word is used of Christ with the significant of deity.

For example, in Luke 2:11, when the angels announced Christ's birth, they said, "Today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord," meaning Yahweh. In John 20:28, Thomas confesses Jesus as "My Lord and my God!" And literally that is the Lord and the God. Clearly a confession of Christ deity. In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, Paul speaks of idols as false gods. "There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him." That is a Trinitarian statement in which Paul extinguishes Christ from the Father while maintaining the deity of both - two persons of the one God, one creator.

In Philippians 2:6-11, Paul explains Christ's incarnation and His exaltation, that He existed in the form of God from all eternity. He became a man and He has been highly exalted since His death and his

resurrection so that "every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He's Lord. Paul doesn't use that word in Romans 9:5, but he clearly affirms the deity of Christ there when he spoke of Him as overall "God blessed forever."

And there are many other passages that teach the deity of Christ. This is part of the gospel. And it must be. We cannot have a Savior unless He is God. Only in that way in such a person could his sacrifice have sufficient force to atone for our sins. It is His deity that gives infinite value to His sacrifice.

But He also had to be a man in order for His sacrifice to be suitable. Only a man could be a substitute for mankind, and that is what the confession points to in its second part, the Lord's humanity and His sacrifice for us on the cross. God raised Him from the dead, Paul says.

He was raised from the dead because He died for our sins. Christ's saving work was done at the cross. That is where sin was paid for and justice was satisfied. Paul didn't preach a dead martyr. He preached a living Savior. Christ not only died for our sins, He was raised from the dead. He triumphed over all of the forces of evil. In fact, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:17 that if Christ was not raised from the dead then our faith is futile and we are still in our sins.

Now why is that? If atonement was accomplished at the cross, why is the resurrection necessary? Because a dead Christ would mean an unaccepted sacrifice, that our sins had not been paid for and there is no atonement. The fact that God raised Christ from the dead is the proof that He has accepted His Son's sacrifice for us, that full atonement has been made, that God is satisfied and we are forgiven. The cross is the place where atonement was made. The empty tomb is the proof that the atonement has been accepted.

And the empty tomb points to our future as well. Because Christ lives, we will live. We are joined to Him as our representative head. We study that back in Romans 5, verses 12 through the end of the chapter. So what He accomplished, He accomplished not simply for

Himself, but for those He represented, for His people. He is the first fruits of many brethren. And because He was raised, His resurrection is certain to become our resurrection. And because He is a resurrected living Savior, He now leads us and He protects us, ensuring that in the end we will all enter safely into His heavenly kingdom.

So what more needs to be done? What more do we need to do to add to the salvation that has already been accomplished in Christ? Well, obviously because it's been accomplished, there's nothing that we need to do, nothing that we can do. God has done it all. There is nothing that we can add to the work of Christ. It is a finished work. We can simply receive it by believing in Him.

But to do that, a person must believe rightly. What this confession proves is that faith has content. It's not enough to believe. It's not enough to have conviction about something. We must believe the right thing. We must believe the truth. There's no salvation in a false Christ and there are many of them that are being proclaimed today.

The Jesus of the Scriptures is the God man who died for our sins and was raised from the dead. And Paul explains this further in the way to salvation in verse 10. "For with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." Righteousness or justification and salvation are essentially the same thing. And while the heart and mouth are distinguished, they cannot be separated.

John Murray, in his commentary on the book of Romans, wrote, "Confession without faith would be vain. But likewise, faith without confession would be shown to be spurious." The believing heart will confess. It will make its faith known. The Bible does not give any support for secret disciples. Genuine believers confess their faith publicly.

Now there are various ways in which we do that. We confess Christ by associating with believers in public worship, by attending church, being part of the believing community, publically associating

with Christians in this way, in the way you're doing right now. We give expression to our faith by observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.

Neither of these save a person, but they express a person's salvation. They give testimony to it. Baptism is a public confession of faith. When an individual is baptized before the congregation, he or she is making a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ, and by that act is testifying to his or her union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We're testifying in that act that we are new creatures in Him, born again and justified. Now, we can only be born again once. We can only be justified once, and it's forever. And so baptism takes place only once, not a repeated ordinance.

We do the same in the Lord's supper. It symbolizes our participation in Christ's life and it testifies to our constant dependence on Him. By taking the Lord's supper every week, we give testimony that we are trusting in Christ and depending on Him. And we do that every day, and so that ordinance is repeated, because we are constantly always dependent upon Him for our spiritual life and well-being. So we confess Christ in these ways.

And of course we confess Christ in our conversation with others by giving the gospel to those we know, to those we have met. Christians tell other people about the Christ, the salvation that is in Him through faith in Him and faith alone.

That's what we're commanded to do and Paul will, in the verses that follow, verses 14 to the end of the end of the chapter, will lay great stress on the need to go out and preach the gospel, as the church has been commanded to do.

Sometimes we fail to do that. Sometimes we hesitate for various reasons. Perhaps out of fear of what the world will think of us, because we're afraid of being embarrassed or scorned by those around us. There are reasons for that, that fear, that attitude, that disposition. And one, and perhaps the most important reason for such failure, is a

failure to appreciate the very subject that we are studying, the grace of God and the person of Christ and all that He has done for us.

In verse 12 Paul speaks of the riches that are abounding in Christ for the believer, that have been given freely to us, freely to us but at great cost to Him, at the cost of His infinite eternal life. But through that great sacrifice that He made, we have forgiveness, we have eternal life, we have the Holy Spirit. We have unimagined glory before us and we have joy, peace, the fruit of the Spirit within us at the present time, which is just a foretaste of what is to come.

And understanding of that, an understanding of the grace of God, and an appreciation of salvation, of all that's meant in that great word, gives us courage. It gives us enthusiasm to proclaim the gospel to others.

When the old bishop Polycarp was being led to the arena to be thrown to the lions, two of the Roman officials who accompanied him tried to persuade him to deny Christ and call Caesar lord. "Save yourself," they said. But Polycarp refused. He said, "For 86 years I have served Christ and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my king who saved me? Bring what you will." He saved me. That's what we confess. That's the gospel.

In verse 11, Paul gives more scripture to support it. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." That's Isaiah 28:16. It's the passage that Paul quoted at the end of Romans 9 where Christ is called a stone. Isaiah speaks of Him as a tested stone. Israel stumbled over Him because they were seeking righteousness of their own making, righteousness by the law. They weren't looking for Him. They stumbled over Him.

But those who don't, those who trust in Him, Paul says, Isaiah says, are not disappointed. Notice, it's "believes in Him." Saving faith is not just in a confession of truth. That is essential. That is important. But it's not in simply a confession of truth. It is faith in a person. That faith involves knowledge. It involves understanding what the gospel is, what it means. It involves assent or agreement with that truth. But it

also involves trust, which Calvin defined as a firm and effectual confidence.

Our confidence is in the doctrine. It is in the truth that is given to us, but that truth reveals the person in whom our confidence is placed, a person who is alive, a person who is the Savior, who is the Son of God, who will never disappoint the believer.

To be disappointed also means to be ashamed. And that word speaks of what occurs when the guilt of sin is exposed. It produces shame. But the believer will never experience that. That's the promise. Now, that's a promise that might not be terribly impressive to people today, because the problem we have in our day and age is people feel very little or no shame for their sin. They have no sense of guilt. We live in a shameless society, very much like Jeremiah preached against in his day. In Jeremiah 6:15, he writes that the sins of the false prophets were great. He deals with those throughout the book, but then he says, "They were not ashamed/They did not even know how to blush."

People don't blush much today. Cheating is common. Immorality of the worst kind is out of the closet and excused, even justified and encouraged. That doesn't change anything. Sin is what it is and God is holy. He will deal with it in the day of judgment, and then men will blush and weep and mourn for their sins.

But not those who believe. They will not be ashamed. They will not be disappointed. No believer will come to the end and discover that the blood of Christ was not sufficient for him or for her. The promise is for whoever believes. So not only is the gospel near, not only is salvation easily accessible, but as John Stock put it, it is also equally accessible to all who believe.

This is what Paul explains in verse 12. Jew and Gentile alike receive salvation through faith. There is no distinction, he says. Now this is a great statement of grace, because for centuries it seemed as if there were a distinction and the advantage was with the Jews. Paul listed the privileges that set them apart from the nations in 9:4, 5, "the

adoption as sons, the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law, the temple service," and others. Many blessings that they had.

The Gentiles had none of these. They had natural revelation, which they had rejected, but they were strangers to the blessings, outside the covenants, living in spiritual darkness, sin and ignorance, lost and helpless. But through His death and resurrection, Christ has ended the Law and opened up salvation to all the nations, making it available to both Jew and Gentile alike.

So God's grace is worldwide in its scope. It goes beyond a nation and out to the nations. That is the width or the breadth of God's grace. But in that we also see the depth of God's grace. Because there is no distinction, not only ethnically, but also ethically, morally, because all are sinners.

The Gentiles were notorious for their sins, for their depraved behavior. Paul exposed that very clearly in Romans chapter 1. He began with their great apostasy of rejecting the revelation of the Creator to worship the creature, and as a result of that, God gave them over to the foolish thoughts of their mind, the darkness of their mind, and it transformed itself into their behavior, corrupt behavior of all kinds.

And as Paul listed that indictment or made that indictment against the Gentiles, no doubt the Jews were saying, "I agree completely. They are dogs. They are outside of the covenants. They are unworthy of salvation." And then in chapter 2 he directs his attention to the Jew and says, "But you're no different. The difference between you and the gentile is you're hypocrites. That's your great sin."

All are fallen. All need a Savior equally. And God has been equally gracious in giving His Son for both, for all who trust in Him. Paul explains further, there's no distinction, for the same Lord is Lord of all. There's one God over all. Because there's one God, there's one way to God. There's one way of salvation. The Lord that he refers to here is Christ. He's identified him in verse 9 as Lord. He is God. And

He saves all the same way, with the same invitation. He is abounding in riches for all who call on His name.

That's the teaching of Scripture. That's what the Old Testament taught. This isn't a novelty dreamed up by Paul. This gospel that he preached was not invented by Paul. It was preached by the other apostles and they didn't dream it up. And so he again supports his claim by quoting Scripture, by proving it from the word of God. He quotes the prophet Joel in verse 13. "For 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

Peter quoted that same text on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Because Joel prophesized that God would pour out His spirit on all mankind with the result that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved, Joel 2:23. God has made the gospel and grace and salvation accessible to all who will believe. He has not made it difficult. He has not given us a heavy task to perform; just call on His name.

From the early chapters of the Bible, we read of people doing that. Genesis 4:26, "Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord." They began to acknowledge Him and worship Him. In the New Testament, that term, that expression, refers to trusting Him, calling to Him for salvation, calling on His name. The name represents the person, who He is, what He would do. So calling upon His name meant calling upon Him. The name Lord designates Christ as God. The name Jesus means "the Lord is salvation." So calling on His name is calling for Him to save.

Peter gives us a good example of doing that, of calling on the name of the Lord. In Matthew 14, when Christ came to the disciples, walking on the Sea of Galilee, Peter got out of the boat and began to walk to Him across the water. You know the story. You know what happened, how he took his eyes off Christ. Suddenly, he looked around, he saw the waves, the storm, and immediately he sank. He was in danger of drowning when he called, "Lord, save me," and Christ

did. The text says immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him.

Christ saves all who call to Him immediately, whoever that may be. There is no distinction among men. And there is no conflict in Paul's teaching. In chapter 9, he taught, "It does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy." He has mercy on whom He desires and He hardens whom He desires. Salvation is all of God, It is His prerogative. It is not influenced by our will. But man is responsible to believe in order to receive God's salvation.

It's interesting and I think very instructive to notice how Paul moves so freely from divine sovereignty and salvation in chapter 9 to human responsibility here in chapter 10. He saw no conflict between the two, and there is none. Man is responsible to believe. And man's response to faith is the way God's choice and election is achieved. The elect are not simply chosen to salvation. They are chosen to salvation through faith. They are chosen to believe. The elect believe. And so if you want to know are you one of the elect, you don't reason through it in your mind and try to figure the eternal counsel of God. That's beyond us. You simply believe. And that's the proof. And God offers salvation freely to whoever believes. God has not made it hard. He has made His grace in the gospel accessible to all who will.

So to borrow from Moses, do not say in your heart, "I may not be elect. God has passed me by. He's made salvation impossible for me." No, election does not make salvation impossible. Election makes salvation possible. Apart from that, none would be saved. The word is near you. You don't have to do the impossible. You don't have to scale the heavens or search the depths to find it. It is in Christ. So if you desire it, then call on the name of the Lord. Pray, "Lord, save me," and He will. "Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."

There was a time when mankind was pure, when the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. They were in a state and a period of innocence. But they sinned and fell and lost their

innocence. They tried to fix things by covering over their nakedness and hiding their shame with figure leaves, but it didn't work. God found them out. He exposed their guilt. And at the moment when one might expect judgment to fall, the Lord did an amazing thing. He killed animals and made garments of skin for Adam and Eve and He clothed them. He hid their shame.

He did more than that, though. He promised to send a Savior who would remove their shame, take away their sin, and make them altogether righteous. Christ did that at the cross. He paid for our sins with His own death, so that everyone who believes in Him receives God's righteousness, receives God's forgiveness, just as those animals were slain and through their death provided a covering for guilty, naked people, so the death of Christ has provided God's people with a covering of righteousness, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, which we receive through faith alone.

We often sing about that in our hymns, and one of the great hymns of the faith is that by Zinzendorf. "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness/My beauty are, my glorious dress/'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed/With joy shall I lift up my head." Can you lift up your head? Or are you weighed down with the shame of your sin? If so, look to Christ. Believe in Him. Call on His name. He died in the place of sinners, so that all who do that, whoever they may be, whether they be the most flagrant of sinners or the most self-righteous of individuals, whoever that individual may be, those who call upon His name will be saved. May God help you to do that, to look to Christ for salvation and help all of us who have believed in Him, who've come to know Him as our Savior by God's grace, rejoice in what we have in Christ, the riches that we have in Him, and appreciate the grace that brought us into that, and serve Him faithfully and go forth from this place to be clear, bold witnesses for Him. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we do thank You for Your goodness and Your grace. Come to this text of scripture which reminds us of that, the breadth of that grace, the depth of that grace that is extended to the

undeserving. It's You and Your grace have brought that gospel, that word of hope near to us. It's not far off. We don't have to search high and low for what You've given in Jesus Christ. It's near to us. All we must do is receive it, trust in Him.

We thank You. We who have believed have done so, because we give You the credit, You the praise. It's a gift from You. We thank You for Christ. We thank You for the gift of life in Him. We thank You for the faith that You've given us through the Holy Spirit that's brought us into union with Him. We pray that our lives will be lived to Your honor and glory, and we pray these things in Christ name. Amen.