

**Welcome - (~2 min)****Opening prayer – (~1 min)****Opening Comments – (~2 min)**

- The reason these last verses of chapter 9 are tied to chapter 10 is because in these verses Paul draws a contrast between two cultural views of God.
- There was the Jewish way.
- As William Barclay puts it, “Fundamentally, the Jewish idea was that a man, by strict obedience to the law, could pile up a credit balance. The result would be that God was in his debt and owed him salvation. But it was a obviously a losing battle, because a man’s imperfection could never satisfy God’s perfection; nothing that man could do could even begin to repay what God has done for him”¹
- We saw Paul’s own realization of this in chapter 7 where he shared his frustration at trying to keep the law.
- The Jew spent his life searching for a way of obedience that would set him right with God.
- The Gentiles never had such a search.
- When the Gentiles, seeing the incredible love of God in Jesus Christ, simply cast themselves upon that love with total trust.
- Again Barclay says, “It was as if the Gentile saw the Cross and said, “If God loves me like that I can trust Him with my life and with my soul.”
- So we can see that the Jew wanted to put God in his debt while the Gentile was content to be in God’s debt! Quite a difference in theologies!
- Romans 9:30-32 could be taken as a summary of the previous verses which is true in a sense.
- But they introduce the theme of chapter 10 which is Israel’s present rejection of Jesus Christ.
- Paul continues his discussion of righteousness as he explains Israel’s present rejection, followed by a remedy for that rejection, and then the results of their rejection.
- As we go through these verses we must keep in mind that the gospel’s power to free the found is through the righteousness that comes from God.
- It’s the same today as it was when Paul wrote this letter.

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~52 min)

Week’s Aim: The Gospel’s Power to Free the Found: The Righteousness that comes from God

Start time: _____

Topic for Day 1: Overview - Romans 9:30-10:21

1. Early in the passage Paul states his primary concern. What is it?

(Found in 10:1, “for the Israelites.. that they may be saved.”)

- Again Paul expresses his concern for his people, Israel.
- Paul sets an excellent example of persistence in caring for the lost.
- We need to follow his example and be as persistent in our pursuit of those we know are lost.

2. (+2 min) In 10:8, Paul uses the word "**proclaiming.**" What has he been proclaiming? (See Deuteronomy 30:11-14)

10:8 – "But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming."

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 – "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. ¹² It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" ¹³ Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" ¹⁴ No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it"

- Paul expands on the proclamation statement through the following verses **10:9-13**
- He/they have been proclaiming the gospel message!

3. (+2 min) **What proof does he give that the Israelites have heard the good news?**

- He quotes from **Psalm 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 65:1, 65:2** the words of God to Israel through these writings of David, Moses, and Isaiah to demonstrate the Israelites had heard the message.
- They are without excuse is the implication Paul is making.
- Sounds very similar to **Romans 1:20** "... so that men are without excuse."

(+2 min) **Application 1: What will you apply to your life this week from the sermon?**

(Take time here. Encourage them to take notes. Recommend they do this question when they get home.)

Topic for Day 2: Paul says Israel didn't attain the righteousness that comes from God. - 9:30-33

1. (+2 min) **What did the Gentiles do to receive righteousness?**

- They who "*did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith (9:30)*"
- Paul, in the previous verses, had discussed God having *mercy* on those He chooses.
- At this time, people outside the Jewish race, the Gentiles, weren't seeking God at all.
- In fact, by not seeking God, they certainly didn't seek righteousness, they didn't know they should!
- Yet, God showed *mercy* on them and when they heard the message, by *faith* they *believed!*
- God gifted the Gentiles just as He had some Jews with *faith* to desire and believe in Jesus Christ.
- *Righteousness* used in these verses is synonymous with *salvation* or to be more precise, *justification*.
- What an amazing instance of God in His *grace* – He sought them without them even knowing it!
- He has done that with us and continues to seek out people of His choosing.
- That is how His *grace, mercy, and love* are expressed!
- So the Gentiles in Paul's day did the same thing as we do in our day --- nothing but for the *grace* of God

2. (+2 min) **Paul says the Israelites pursued righteousness, so what caused them to not receive righteousness?**

- In our passage this week, Paul gives seven reasons for Israel's failure to obtain righteousness but in verses **32-33** there are three of the reasons.
- **1st reason:** The Jews spent much effort to be righteous but without proper focus of their faith.
- Paul says they pursued righteousness by trying to keep the law and that failed.
- They would try to offset a sin with a good deed and that didn't work.

- From Paul we know good works cannot reconcile the simplest breach of God's law
- Only Christ kept the law perfectly and He is the One they stumble over
- **2nd reason:** They didn't obtain righteousness is because of their traditions
- They held to their traditions and didn't take the time to search the Scripture to verify whether or not Jesus was who He said He was!
- God wasn't trying to make this difficult – His purpose wasn't to cause people to fail or stumble!
- His purpose was to change their thinking that righteousness could be attained by their works!
- So instead of permitting their religious privileges (Rom. 9:1-5) to lead them to Christ, they used these privileges as a substitute for Christ.
- **3rd reason:** they "*stumbled over the 'stumbling stone'.*"
- A message for us to be careful we don't do similar things because of our privileges and traditions.

3. (+3 min) **Who is the "stumbling stone?" Why do you think He was given this title?**

- **Part 1:** Jesus Christ was the stumbling stone – referenced in **9:33** Isaiah had predicted this would happen in **Isaiah 8:14; 28:16**.
- **Part 2:** The *stone* is one of the characteristic references of the early Christian writers.
- In the Old Testament there is a series of rather mysterious references to *the stone*.
- In **Isaiah 8:14** it is said that God shall be for a *stone of offence* and a rock of stumbling to the house of Israel.
- **Isaiah 28:16** God says that He will lay in Zion for a foundation *a stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation*.
- In **Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45**, there is a reference to a mysterious *stone*.
- In **Psalms 118:22** the Psalmist writes, "*The stone the builders rejected has become the cap stone.*"
- When Christians began searching the Old Testament for forecasts of Christ they came across these references to this wonderful *stone*.
- They identified Jesus with this *stone*.
- In **Matthew 21:42** Jesus associates Himself with *builders stone*
- Paul took this passage of Isaiah to mean that God had intended his Son to be the foundation of people's lives, but when He came the Jews rejected Him.
- Because they rejected Him, that gift of God meant for their salvation became the reason for their condemnation.
- They had stumbled over the One God sent to save them.
- Thus He is has proved Scripture correct and He became *a stumbling stone*
- But there is an up side to this, because of the Jew's rejection of Him, which God knew they would do, the door was opened to the Gentiles!
- We will see in later chapters God's purpose for in bringing in the Gentiles.

4. (+2 min) **Can you share an instance where Christ was a stumbling stone for someone? Explain.**

- This is a personal question and it seems best to wait for volunteers.
- It is a good idea to announce before asking this question to ask that people be careful to not mention other denomination, pastors, TV evangelists, etc.. Those comments typically turn into bashing and that is not the purpose of this question/study.
- Allowing for silence is ok – typically after about 15 to 20 seconds, someone will share.

(+2 min) **Application 2: How might you help someone today who has stumbled, or is stumbling?**

- By this time in our study, people should be familiar with these questions and hopefully, are answering them in some way. You might call on someone you know has an answer. Ask for **what they would do?**

Topic for Day 3: Even though Israel was zealous for God, Paul identifies the flaws in their zeal. - 10:1-8

1. (+2 min) The Israelites were “*zealous for God,*” but they had a problem, what was it?

- Here we see Paul's 4th reason for Israel not obtaining righteousness in 10:1-2
- It was because “*their zeal is not based on knowledge.*”
- A lesson in these verses is that being *zealous* is not sufficient reason to assume you are ok!
- There are many people *zealous* about their religion but their religion is incorrect.
- We see this around the world today and the sad thing is that these other religions are being accepted faster in our country than is Christianity!
- **All** these other religions are based on exactly what Paul has been saying is wrong all along. They are based on works!
- Paul gives us a good principle here “*zeal not based on knowledge*” is a bad thing!

2. (+1 min) Paul says the Israelites “*lacked knowledge.*” What knowledge was he talking about? Explain.

- This *knowledge* was available to the religious leaders through the Scriptures
- The religious leaders were responsible to teach their people but whatever they taught; Paul says was based more on zeal than knowledge!
- The question to us is the same “Is mine/your knowledge base correct?”
- To have a proper knowledge base we **must study the Bible**
- *Leaders this is an opportunity to encourage continued Bible study after the Romans study is complete. One of our objectives for this study was to get people into a daily discipline of study.*
- *It is also an opportunity to remind them to keep the meta-narrative in mind as they study the Bible.*
- Studying the Bible is much more than *reading* the Bible!
- It means we must pray for understanding, we then read it, and re-read it, and meditate or think about what we have read.
- Ask questions: What is being said here? What is being said here that can be applied to my life?
- It is always a good idea to take notes and watch for things that will help you learn.
- Watch for repeated phrases and words, characters, situations, whom is talking to whom.
- We are accountable to use the knowledge we gain as we listen to what others say to verify what is being said seems correct or not.
- If not, ask the person(s) why they think the way they do about what you heard.
- This is a very good learning exercise for you and the person you ask.
- In 10:3 Paul identifies two more reasons for Israel not obtaining righteousness.
- 5th reason is that they established *their own righteousness* – they became in a sense *self-righteous*.
- Due to their lack of **knowledge** they didn't **know** that *righteousness* must come from God!
- Their *self-righteousness* led to an even greater problem which is Paul's next reason.
- 6th reason is that “*that they did not submit to God's righteousness*” but were satisfied with their own!

3. (+3 min) What is the difference between “*righteousness by the law*” verses “*righteousness by faith*”?

- Paul says that *righteousness by the law* requires the person living by the law to keep it (*completely*).

- Regarding *righteousness by faith*, we can go back in our study to **Romans 3:21-22**, "*But now righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.*"²² *This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe* "
- So the *righteousness by faith* is from God and apart from the law!
- In **10:4** we find Paul's **7th reason** for Israel not obtaining righteousness
- They didn't realize Christ fulfilled the law's **purpose!**
- In the Old Testament the law required perfection and blood sacrifices for sins.
- Jesus' blood sacrifice was for our sins and it fully fulfilled the law!
- So according to Paul the Jews were incorrect in six areas: their faith, wanted to do works, a lack of knowledge, were basically self-righteous, would not submit to God's righteousness, and didn't believe in Christ's fulfillment of the law.

4. (+2 min) **What is the good news in 10:8? How are these words an encouragement to you?**

- The good news is that Paul confirms that believers have this gift, "*The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,*" *that is the word of faith*"
- A personal question – encourage participation by a couple of people

(+1 min) **Application 3: What steps will you take today to share "*the word (that) is in your mouth and in your heart*"?**

List them:

- Be sure to have them give you the *steps they will take*" in their answers.

Topic for Day 4: Paul explains how one is moved to receive righteousness from God. - 10:9-15

1. (+2 min) **Using verse 9, explain the significance of each phrase:** (there will be a variety of responses to these phrases so it will be good to hear from more than one person)

"Jesus is Lord" – A sample response: It means that He has rule over your life, that He determines what you do, where you spend eternity, ensures you are saved and secure in your salvation. He is first in your life even before yourself and family.

"believe in your heart" – A sample response: This is a belief that you "know" you have from deep within your being. Not just head knowledge but basing your life on it.

"God raised Him from the dead" – A sample response: Christ was indeed a man. He was killed, He died, He was buried in a borrowed tomb but God resurrected Him from the dead. At that instant death was defeated for all who will believe. Jesus lives and so will all those who believe.

- Paul is saying that God has made His Word clear and available (via mouth/heart) through faith.
- Paul expresses two things a person must do as a believer:
 - 1) We must confess (proclaim) our belief that Jesus is who He says He is to others – an outward confession
 - 2) We must believe it within our hearts – that deep internal belief that Jesus is our Lord and Savior – an internal commitment

2. (+3 min) **We have seen the word "*heart*" used often in this study of Romans. Describe the aspects of the word "*heart*" in each reference: Matthew 6:21, 12:34; Romans 1:21-32; and Galatians 4:6.**

- **Matthew 6:21, 12:34** – *“6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” “12:34 You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks”*
- Jesus spoke these verses and they demonstrate two key points: 1) whatever we truly treasure, that is where our heart will be.
- Heart in this sense is as we have spoken before, it is our essence, our core for emotions, thinking, being
- 2) Our words reveal what is truly in our heart.
- We can do all kinds of things to look good but when the words come out during unguarded times, the truth of our heart is seen.

Romans 1:21-23 – *“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles “*

- Paul is referring to when God allowed men and women to become futile in their thinking and their hearts followed suit and became darkened.
- Their essence became depraved and perverse.

Galatians 4:6 – *“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*

- Believers have been given new hearts through the new birth and now the Holy Spirit lives within us.
- This is true the instant one becomes a believer! What a gift!

3. (+3 min) **Identify the necessary steps for someone to realize their need to be saved.**

- In verses **10:14-15** Paul has identified the necessary steps necessary for the nation Israel to come into that relationships with God whereby they will receive His righteousness.
- However, these steps can apply to individuals also and that is what the question focuses on.
- Paul has spoken the steps in reverse so it is best to unwind the verses to put them in progressive order.
- 1 & 2) A person must be sent to proclaim (preach) the gospel message
- Who are to be sent? And who are to preach (proclaim the gospel)?

Matthew 28:19-20, *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”*

- Jesus' last words to His disciples and to us. Notice it is a command not a suggestion
- Notice also that if we are sent, we **do not proclaim the gospel by ourselves** but He is with us!
- Not all believers are sent to some mission field or faraway place.
- But we are all expected to share the gospel message when the opportunity presents itself.
- The problem doesn't seem to be the "calling/opportunity" but the fact that many refuse the share when the opportunity does present itself.
- This should be part of the normal Christian experience that we share the gospel regularly.
- Something for each of us to think and pray about.
- It's like seeing a drowning person and you are holding a life preserver and won't throw it to the person.
- We wouldn't do that and neither should we avoid sharing the good news of the Bible.
- 3) The person must listen/hear what is being said to him/her.
- 4) They must believe what they have heard.
- 5) They must call on the Lord to save them.

- Paul makes a beautiful summary in **10:15** when he quotes **Isaiah 52:7** *"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news."* And the gospel message is good news.

4. (+4 min) **List the verses that confirm Paul's statements that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles.**

- **10:4** *"Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes."*
- **10:11** *"As the Scripture says, Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame."*
- **10:12** *"For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him."*
- **10:13** *"for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*
- What encouragement these verses should be for every believer and unbeliever for they give hope to both.

(+1 min) **Application 4: If someone asks you today, "what must I do to be saved?" What is a single verse you could recite to them from verses 9-15? What must you do to be prepared to do that today?**

- The best and simplest would be **10:15** *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*
- There will be others so take time to hear them
- Don't forget this is a two part question so be sure to ask the second part – how have/will they prepare?

Topic for Day 5: Paul explains that all Israel didn't accept the righteousness offered by God. - 10:16-21

1. (+2 min) **Where does Paul say faith comes from? Give verse. What does this tell you about the importance of studying the Bible?**

- Paul states this in **10:17** *"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."*
- Here are two important applications from Dr. James Boice. The first is for believers. The second is for those who have not yet called on Christ.
- "First, if people can only be converted by hearing the gospel message, which is what Paul says, those believers must make sure they hear it. It is our responsibility to take the gospel to them and to send others to places where we cannot go ourselves. Do not suppose that what you can do is unimportant or that God is going to save people without human messengers, by a direct word from heaven, for example. All who are saved are saved because Christians have done something to bring the gospel to them."
- Dr. Boice goes on to say, "Second, a word for those who are not yet Christians. If you are not yet a believer in Jesus Christ, you need to understand that our text is true and very accurate when it says that, "faith comes from hearing the message." How do people become believers? It is by hearing the message. So take advantage of the teaching. Listen to it. Open your heart to the words that are being taught."²
- Paul says *"faith comes by hearing."* God planned it that way.
- The message is being taught.
- Our part is to open our ears to the truth of His Word not only to be saved but to be guided throughout our Christian life.
- The Holy Spirit will make His Word come to life for you if you will but trust Him to do so.

2. (+3 min) **The Israelites didn't believe the gospel message. Identify their excuses in the following references: John 6:41, 60; 7:25-27; 8:52; 10:24. You may find other verses using your concordance or other reference.**

John 6:41, 60 – *“6:41 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 6:60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it!”* “

- These disciples are other followers besides the original 12. Followers of Jesus were often called disciples.
- Their excuses were that they didn't believe His claims (41) and they felt His teaching were too difficult (60)

John 7:25-27 – *“At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, “Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? 26 Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from “*

- Here they had three questions: 1) they questioned His authority to even speak; 2) They questioned Him because “they knew Him and where He was from”; 3) and lastly, they lacked the knowledge of the place from which the Messiah would come. They had not studied the prophets of old!

John 8:52 – *“At this the Jews exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death “*

- Here they were denying His deity and authority over life. One would think they would realize Messiah would have authority over life but they didn't. In fact, they accused Him of being *demon-possessed!*

John 10:24 – *“The Jews gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”*

- Many became frustrated with Him because He wouldn't tell them outright who He was.
- You must study Matthew to understand why He did this. It is very interesting.

3. (+3 min) **Who do you think verses 19-20 are talking about? What insights does this give you about God?**

- This is a two part question so be sure to have your group members answer both parts.
- **10:19** says who it is, Israel
- **10:19** – Paul is saying, didn't Israel know about this *whosoever*-plan, this *believing*-plan, this *calling* upon the Lord's name and being saved?
- He is pointing out that they have had constant warnings by their own Scriptures that if they were unfaithful God would extend His *mercy* to the Gentile.
- First Paul uses Moses as a witness (Deut. 32:21)

Deut. 32:21 – *“I will make you (Israel) envious by those who are not a nation (Gentiles); I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding (Gentiles). “*

- Compared with the marvelous place and privileges of the race of Israel, it could be said of every other people, “It is no nation, a nation **void of understanding.**”
- **10:20** – Finally Paul brings Isaiah to the witness stand; and Isaiah gives a double testimony: he is indeed **very bold** in his prophecy of Gentile salvation: first, *“I was found by those who did not seek me;”* second, *“I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.”*
- Now Isaiah speaks God's words that *“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people (Israel).”*

- So what insights do these verses give us about God?
- Some examples: He can use even rebellious people to complete His plans,
- He cares greatly for Israel and will use the Gentiles to bring them back,
- He reveals Himself to those He chooses to,
- He is patient because He held out His hands to a disobedient and obstinate people!

4. (+2 min) **From verses 19-21, who do these verses say is accountable for disbelief?**

- Look at what's been said: first, messengers are sent; second, they proclaim the good news; third, the voice of Jesus is heard in the proclamation; fourth, the sinner believes; fifth, the person calls on Jesus for salvation. So each person is accountable for his/her disbelief.

(+1 min) **Application 5: In verse 21 God says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people." How might you show your gratitude today for how God has held out His hands to you?** (Listen to ways people did this or thought about doing it)

(+2 min)

Closing Comments – (~2 min)

- The closing question is, have you heard and believed the gospel message?
- It is only in the gospel that the voice of God can be heard and His outstretched hands can be seen to welcome, forgive, and cleanse sinners – sinners like us!
- If you are comfortable praying with someone who might not have made a commitment to Christ then you might take this time to offer that to anyone in your group.
- If you are not comfortable doing that, then encourage the person(s) to talk with one of our pastors.
- If anyone is unsure, then now is the time to *make sure* by making a confession and receiving Christ.
- There are only two camps, the saved and the lost. Indecision is a decision, leaving a person in the lost camp!

Closing Prayers – (~1 min)

¹ William Barclay, "The Letter to the Romans revised edition," The Daily Study Bible Series, The Westminster Press, 1975, p. 134

² Dr. James Montgomery Boice, "Romans Volume 3 God and History (Romans 9 – 11)," Baker Books, 1993, p.p. 1267-68