

Romans 10 : 1-4 - The Gospel in a Nutshell – 15 April 2012

Well, this morning, as is usual, we will continue our journey, in the book of Romans. So, turn with me, to the Bible and Roman chapter 10 and what a wonderful book this has been to my soul and I pray, it will also be a blessing to yours as well. Let's look at the book of Romans and in particular, Chapter 10 this morning.

A lady, her name is Jane was about to celebrate her 40th birthday. Her husband, John, is a loving man. So, he came to Jane and says "Dear what would you like for your birthday celebrations." She thought for a while and said "Dear, what I really really like is to be six again." And so, her husband plans her birthday as such. He brought her to Universal Studios, treated her to all the nice food, waffles, the hot dogs, the ice cream, the sodas, he took her for all the rides, whether it's a Jurassic Park ride or space ride or what ever ride, he made her feel like six again. It was a very busy day, it was a hectic day and so, at the evening, in the evening, they finally got home, slumped down on the couch and said "Wow, this is quite a day isn't it, dear?" And she said "Yah, it is quite a day, I am really, really tired, I am really exhausted." "But dear, did you enjoy yourself?" "Well, not quite, it's too much for me." "But, I thought you wanted to be six again?" And, with her big eyes, wide open, she said "dear, you fool, I mean size 6, not aged six!"

We need to listen, and we need to understand more carefully. Not only must we understand people more carefully, more important than that, we need to understand God, His ways, His Words, His way of salvation, even more clearly. This morning, we come to versus 10:1-4. But let me begin by reading to you versus 1 and 2. Romans 10:1-2, a great passage of Scripture here, where Paul says,

Rom 10:1-2

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

So, Paul in a nutshell is saying, I am praying, I am desiring that the nation of Israel will be saved and the reason, why they are not saved is in spite of the zeal is they do not have the knowledge, they do not understand, they do not know, the meaning, the way of salvation and life.

So, this morning, we are going to address this simple question, what must a man know, in order to be truly saved, because, salvation does require some knowledge. It

is not knowledge alone that saves you, it's faith in Jesus Christ that saves you, but there are some things you need to know, before you can properly exercise faith in order to be saved. The question today is what must I know in order to be saved. But before we come to this very important question, let me expound to you versus 1 and 2, very simply.

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First of all, Paul says, this is my heart's desire and prayer that Israel will be saved. This verse, reminds us so much of Romans 9:1-3, remember that, some, four, five sermons ago we look at Romans 9:1-3 and how Paul echoed this same sentiment, he said, this is what is heavy upon my heart, this is what I am sorrowful for continually, this is what I am willing to give up my salvation for that Israel might be saved and now again in Romans 10, he repeats the same desire and not only repeats the same desire, he says, I am putting it into action. Not only do I wish and delight and desire Israel salvation, I am going to pray for Israel's salvation.

You say, what's so important about this, pastor? I say, it is important, especially in the light of the context, the passage we have been studying. You see, Paul has been teaching the sovereignty of God, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and whom He wills, He hardens. He talks about the sovereignty of God, he absolutely preaches it. But, Paul doesn't allow the sovereignty of God turned him into a fatalistic man whereby he folds his arms and say "What ever will be, will be, if God has chosen, He has chosen, if God has not chosen, He has not chosen, so we need not do anything about it. No!" Here is a man who believes in the sovereignty of God, but also believes that God does respond to prayer. So, this is my desire, he says, this is my prayer that Israel might be saved.

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We must not today look at Romans 9 in isolation, we must also look at Romans 10, they are side-by-side. Romans 9 tells us about how God is sovereign in the choices that He makes, independent of men. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will, I harden. He is sovereign, His choices are not dependent on men, that's why He sovereign, He is free, unrestrained to make the choices He wants.

At the same time, Romans 10 tells us that a man is not saved because he did not believe in Jesus Christ. So, what I'm saying and what Scripture is saying is that the sovereignty of God is hundred percent true, please do not try to dilute it. At the very same time, the accountability and the responsibility of men is also hundred percent

true, don't try to dilute it. You say, but pastor, hundred plus hundred equals 200. Yes, it is. In my mind, I can't reconcile it, but it is not an issue, nor a problem for God. If any man be saved, both aspects are equally true, don't dilute either form, either way.

A man is saved because God chose him and because he believed in Jesus Christ. And, if a man is lost, is because God did not choose him and this man also did not choose to believe in Jesus Christ. Jacob is saved because God chose him and because he believed in Jesus Christ. Esau, is not saved, because God did not choose him and because, Esau proved himself to be a profane person. Now, that is the balance of Scripture and as Spurgeon says, there is no need for us to reconcile, friend. Sovereignty is taught in the Bible, don't take it out. Accountability and responsibility is equally taught, don't take it out.

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I wish these words will help you somewhat. But you see, when a man truly understands Scriptures, he believes in the sovereignty of God that anyone who is saved, is according to God's mercy. But yet at the same time, he doesn't swing to a wrong extreme where there is no compassion for the lost, where there is no prayer for people to be saved. Paul, believed in prayer. He has compassion for souls. Jesus wept for the city of Jerusalem. So, if you today feel and find that the switch of compassion is turned off within you, you have no prayer for the lost, you have no desire for good to be saved, your theology has gone all wrong, because, that's not Pauline theology. Here, he is a man, who holds the sovereignty and responsibility in good tensions, he doesn't seek to reconcile it, he puts it side-by-side, Romans 9, Romans 10. He believes it, and he is balanced in his theology. So, Paul here says, this is my desire, this is my prayer that Israel will be saved and the reason why they are not saved is even though they have the zeal of God, they do not have it according to knowledge.

What do you mean pastor, by saying that the zeal of God? The word zeal here, is the word, *zelos* in the Greek, which means to be hot, to be bubbling, to be boiling, it speaks of activity, it speaks of fervor, it speaks of passion and the Jews, are a people of passion for God. Right up till today, you would agree with me isn't it that the Jews are a people with a passion for God. God is the center of the culture, God is the center of their nation, very unlike Gentiles. I mean for Chinese, maybe, money is the center of my life, but not for a Jew, God is central. You can go to Israel today and you will

see, is Jewish, passionate religionists. They are passionate, they have a zeal for God, especially in the times, when Paul wrote this epistle.

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The Bible tells us in Matthew 23, that Jesus said

Mat 23:15

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte,

My emphasis here is not on the hypocrites, my emphasis is on how they would compass sea and land to make one proselyte. In other words, they would go to great lengths, to help someone become a follower of Judaism, spare no cost, go to all lengths, compass land and sea. They are really passionate, zealous, diligent in the things of God. Paul says, I bear them record, I see it has first-hand witness. In fact, he himself is someone who is really zealous for God.

In Acts 22, we are told here, you can read the words in white but let me emphasize the words in yellow. Paul says ".. I was zealous towards God, as they all are this day."

Acts 22:3

I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

So, it is very clear, the Jews are truly people, passionate. How passionate are you Paul? Paul says, I am so passionate that beyond measure, exceedingly, I persecuted the Jews Church of God and wasted it and destroyed it. That was my whole obsession of life, during this period of time that those who say they believe in Jesus I am going to throw them into prison, because I am zealous, passionate for my religion.

Gal 1:13

For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it

For my understanding of how to worship God in Philippians 3, he says "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church.. "

Phi 3:6

Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

So, you must give it to them, because that's what Paul says. The Jews, the people of Israel have a zeal of God. Problem? Zeal alone is not enough, Zeal alone, cannot save a man, being passionate, religious about things does not necessarily, confer you salvation. You see, you can be very zealous, passionate, sincere in believing that you are Superman and you can train very hard to be Superman, you can go to the gym everyday, pump iron so that you have wings here and there. You can really train hard and believe that you are, but that doesn't make you Superman. You can jump off the 24th story of a building and you will realize, you are no Superman. No matter how sincere you are, how diligent, or how fervent on zealous you are, it doesn't quite make you a Christian, a believer, a child of God just by zeal.

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There are plenty of people today, who have religious zeal, remember 911, how extremists and terrorists are willing to give their lives, but does that make them saved? No. So, you can have great zeal, but you are not saved, you can be very religious but you may still be lost and the lack of knowledge, has always been the problem of the Jews. You see, the reason is because, this knowledge, is the word "Epignosis". Huh, you say, pastor, you can't be serious, right, I mean, all the people of the world, surely, the Jews have great knowledge! I agree with you, I agree with you that they have knowledge, that Scripture is from God, they have knowledge about the sacrificial systems, they have knowledge about the scribes, they do have certain knowledge, but the key here, is that this is not the knowledge that is spoken of. The knowledge that Paul says is necessary is epignosis. The normal word for knowledge is just, "Gnosis". But, he says here, this is "epi", on top, deeper, further, richer. So, the Jews have a kind of superficial knowledge, but they lack the deep, accurate full knowledge of God and His ways. That is the problem and that has always been the problem.

Rom 10:2

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. (epignosis)

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In Isaiah 1:3 look at these words pronounced by God Himself,

The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel does not know, my people does not consider.

Isa 1:3

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

They don't know, they do know the Bible in a sense, they do know the scribes, they do know the sacrifices, but they don't have epignosis of Me. They don't know Me.

Again, in Isaiah 5:13

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge

Isa 5:13

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

What about Hosea 4:6 ?

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge

Hos 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

So, this is the problem. They have zeal, but they have not the knowledge, the epignosis, the full, deep understanding of God. So, the question here is this, what must a man know to be truly saved. The Jews have zeal, but they lacked knowledge, what kind of knowledge, what is the reality, what is the truth they need to have. They have a form of it, but they missed the core of it. Have you asked yourself this question, if I were to share the Gospel, what is the irreducible minimum, that must be shared?

You see, there are people today can share the Gospel very flippantly. They say, ah!, just come and believe in Jesus and you are fine. Well, according to the Scriptures, there several things, the reality a man must understand first in order to be saved and what, then, the irreducible minimum of the Gospel.

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I love this passage, because, I see in this passage, Paul, giving us the irreducible minimum, he is giving us the Gospel in a nutshell in the verses that you will read. If you are a Sunday school teacher, if you are someone who loves to win souls, if you have someone who is a colleague who is unsaved, a friend who is unsaved, your family, you wish you would reach them for Jesus, my friends, this is a great passage for you, because, in the two verses that will follow, Paul gives us the Gospel in a nutshell, the irreducible minimum. Here it is.

Rom 10:3,4

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

In these two verses, there are three things to me, that speaks of the irreducible minimum of the Gospel. And they are found in these highlighted words.

1. God's righteousness
2. Own righteousness
3. The righteousness of God.

Three things, is the for you to remember and we are going to look at them one by one.

So, if you are to share the Gospel, look at Romans 10:3-4 and be reminded about these three truths that people need to grasp.

1. I believe in this passage we have to grasp, we have to help people see and understand God's perfect righteousness, they must and you will see why in a while because, even man doesn't understand, how perfectly, supremely, infinitely righteous and holy God is, they cannot really come to be saved, because they see no need to come to Jesus to be saved.

The fundamental here is, you must know, help people know that God is perfectly righteous. Now, this is a greatly misunderstood aspect of God, I think. I think, this is an underestimated attribute of God, greatly so. How righteous and how holy is our God? Scripture declares, or rather, look at this phrase, "For, they being ignorant of God's righteousness, " the Jews, can be ignorant of it, so can we, they didn't quite grasp how righteous God is, and I will show you why? But look at what Scripture declares about God's righteousness.

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Psa 145:17 "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

How holy is God? In all His ways and in all His works. He is 100%, He is supremely holy, there is nothing that God does, there is nothing that God wills that is unholy, nothing, all His works, all His ways.

In Psalms 71, we are told, Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high. How high, who has done great things, O God, who is like unto thee.

Psa 71:19 "Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!"

It is so high, nobody can ever approximate it. It's that high.

In the new Testaments, Jesus Himself emphasized this in Matthew 5:48,

Mat 5:48 "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

So, what is God's righteousness ? As I have mentioned yet, it is God's perfect righteousness, He is perfectly holy, there is nothing unholy, unrighteous in Him.

Jesus said "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

The Jews, have underestimated the holiness and righteousness of God. Why? This passage in Matthew 5 tells you exactly why, do you realize that? In Matthew 5:20, you can look at your Bibles, I will just quote it off. In Matthew 5:20, Jesus said, except your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise, enter the kingdom of heaven.

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So, what Jesus is saying is that the standard of righteousness that the scribes and Pharisees have established and taught and lived is in no way, acceptable to God, because, it is so inferior to God's righteousness. The Jews, have applied the Word of God externally, "Thou shall not kill" and you know, what they say, that refers to only the external act. Jesus came along and said, no, the righteousness of God is so high that thou shall not kill is not just about the external action, it is also about the inward attitude, that if you're angry with your brother without a cause, you are guilty. In fact, if you call someone to be angry because of you, you are guilty. The Jews, have believed, thou shalt not commit adultery is only when a man is caught in a bed. Jesus says no, you are guilty of violating the seventh commandment, thou shalt not commit adultery, when you commit adultery in your head.

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The Jews have thought, "Love your neighbor", applies only to the Jews, brothers, sisters. But Jesus said, love your enemies. In six different examples, Jesus is saying, the standards, that the scribes and Pharisees have been teaching you is so inferior. Man, seeing that he cannot reach the high standards of God's righteousness, pulls down the standards to a level he can achieve externally and as a result of that, also, think now that God's standard is as low as theirs. And that, is a big problem. In Psalms 50, we see here,

You thought that I was altogether such as one as thyself.

Psa 50:21 "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself:"

That's the problem of man, we like to think of God based on who we are. This is what I'm like, this is what I am capable of, this is what I have always been thinking, so God, you have got to conform to the way we think. You thought, I was like you. No, you, Israel, people of the world, you must not be ignorant of God's righteousness.

You see, that's the way we see God. We think that God is like us, being able to tolerate some sin, you see.

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I am able to tolerate some sin, you see, I am able to tolerate some sin and so, I think God should be like me, I think that God should be like Santa Claus, very kind. I think

that God should be like that indulgent grandpa, just allow us to go, he would close one eye to our sins. But my friends, Scripture declares,

His eyes are purer than to behold evil and to look upon iniquity.

Habakkuk 1:13

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

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People, today, are shocked that God could wipe out the entire world except Noah's family. They are shocked, how can a God of love do this. The reason, they have failed to understand, God's perfect righteousness. He is supremely holy, and He must judge sin. People are shocked, that Sodom and Gomorrah are wiped out. They are shocked that, Uzzah, when he touched the Ark would be struck dead. They are shocked, that the book of Revelation, tells us of the impending wrath of God upon sin and upon the world of sin and upon sinners. Why do we have that struggle, because, the world by and large failed to understand and see from Scriptures the perfect righteousness of God.

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So, I don't have to be saved, because, God surely will tolerate some of my sins. No, God is supremely holy. I love this text, in Jeremiah 9, it says here

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, there are some of you very wise, PhD, scholars, whatever you have, but not let the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; you might be an influential person, that's not something you should glory about; neither let the rich man glory in his riches, let me tell you what you should glory in, this is The thing in life, let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness; if a man is to be saved, he has got to first see that God is a God of supreme, infinite, absolute, perfect righteousness, in other words, he has got to know about God. You can't have salvation when they do not know anything about God and so, we come to this, why are the Jews not saved ? Because, they had a lack of knowledge, a lack of epignosis, they are ignorant of God's righteousness, they failed to understand just how

righteous God is, they have pulled Him down to a level, they felt that is comfortable for them and as a result, missed it totally.

Jer 9:23,24

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

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Point 1. God's perfect righteousness.

Point 2. Man's pathetic "righteousness "

The second irreducible minimum you need to have, if you got to understand man's pathetic righteousness, and here, I put it in inverted commas because, you know what I mean. What we think is righteousness is not righteousness in God's eyes. There is none righteous, no not one. So, you have got to understand man's pathetic unrighteousness. Somehow, we men think we would do something that God will be pleased and proud of. Aiyoh, you are such a good man, so kind to the old lady, you are so faithful in coming to church, I will have to save you, because I am so proud of you. I am so pleased with you, you know, that's the mindset of men, that somehow, we can of our own works, do things, that would please the supremely Holy God. The reason why we think so is to have failed to grasp just how perfectly righteous God is. And this mindset has been ages long. Man, because of his pride, because he is blinded to God's righteousness, he goes about to establish his own righteousness. He says, I can do it and this is a picture, of men who can do it (he shows a picture of the tower of Babel). This is a picture of the tower of Babel. It stands as a monstrous monument of men's pride,

"I can reach the heavens!"

What does God do?

"I will come down and confound them!"

Man's pathetic "righteousness", that incurable in a sense pride in us, that seems to costs us to think, that I can deserve it. No, you can't, folks.

Sometime ago, it was during Chinese New Year, I brought my family to Universal Studios. Chinese New Year, I wanted to skip all the, you know, I am an anti-traditionalists in a sense, but, decided to spend the time with a break with my family, went to Universal Studios, enjoy ourselves, took all the rides, I really enjoyed the Transformers ones, Wah! real cool. Thankfully, my son could join in with us, he was excited, Wah! there was heat coming out everywhere . And then, we wanted to take a ride on this Jurassic Park adventure ride. And so, we went there and when Shaun was at the entry area, one of the attendants said, "Boy, come" and, he made, Shaun stand beneath this height check device, I am not sure what you call that, but he was called to stand underneath it to see if he meets the height requirements to get on the ride. As he stood there, I am not sure whether I was praying, but I was hoping and wishing that he will make it. But he lacked that five cm, I mean , it's just a little bit, just a little bit, if he woked up the wrong way, his hair maybe taller and he might be able to reach it or if I just got him, thicker pair of shoes he might be able to make it. I mean, can he just jump a bit. And the man said, sorry Sir, he can't get in. I say, please, just five cm, please, just a little bit, can lah, please. I tried my best, ask and he shall be given, mah. (Laughter in the congregation)

Unfortunately, he is not God, he did not answer and being a good Christian, I said alright, we skip the ride then. But at that point of time, I felt, just a bit more. Why he never let me in. And maybe, that's the way we think.

God's righteousness is now dragged down to just 5 cm above our heads, just a bit more, just a little bit more money to charity, just be kinder to your wife, don't kick your dog, don't be such a mean person at work, just a bit more, you will make it. That whole mentality comes about because we think we are just 5 cm away.

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My friends, the bar that God has for entrance into his kingdom is infinitely higher than 5 cm. I don't even know where to start. You can jump your own life, you can never jump to that standard, you see. For all have sinned, all have come short of the glory of God, we never reach the mark. But man, because he thinks he can, keeps trying and that is his pathetic "righteousness". and what develops, is this kind of a mindset that is pictured for us in this diagram.

Anyone knows what this picture is on? It's a story in the Bible, the picture is of, the Pharisee and the tax collector or the publican, it is found in Luke 18. And the story, is a very vivid graphic one, just a few verses, but so pictorial, isn't it.

The Bible tells us, that there were two men who went up to the temple to pray. One was the Pharisee, who said "God, I thank you, I'm not like these men, extortioners, adulterers, wicked people. I fast twice a week, even though I'm still very overweight, I fast twice a week, and I gave tithes of all that I own. Huh!" He has that obnoxious, proud confident look. And then, the second man, is a publican, well-known sinner, not accepted in their society, who came with no other justification than that, God have mercy on me, a sinner.

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Why did Jesus speak this parable? One reason. He spoke this parable unto certain, which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. They were self-righteous, they feel that somehow, their giving of tithes, their fasting, their comparison with others, they are not as bad. So, the name of the game, is to stay ahead of the competition. Well, God has to save some people, and out of this whole wide world, as long as I am in the top 5%, I am fine lah, God has to save me lah. And that is the mindset of man in his self-righteous thinking, comparing one with another, it is not wise.

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What is the verdict of God upon our righteousness? It's a shocking one. It says, in Isaiah 64

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Really, I should have highlighted the word "All", I should have. It is not some of your righteousnesses, it's all your righteousness. You know how shocking this is, because the word filthy here, is not just dirty, or that it is left on the ground. The word filthy, go check out your Bible, the word filthy, is menstrual. A menstruation of a lady. This is a menstrual cloth and you know, to the Jews, menstruation is a period of uncleanness. God is saying, what you thought is pure, acceptable, deserving in your eyes, is absolutely filthy in My eyes. Not just a bit, but all your so-called, righteousness is as filthy rags.

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But you see, man is still pleased to present filthy rags, because, they feel, God's bar is so low, just a little bit more, and we will reach the mark. That's the whole problem.

And that's why, people today who, who are not saved, fail to comprehend, number one, the perfect righteousness of God and failed to see, number two, men's pathetic "righteousness". And that's our problem. I myself, am guilty of this. About 18 or 20 years ago, I came to church, I listened to the preaching of the Bible and I recognized that I am a sinner, I recognized that God is real and I need to be saved. I didn't know how to be saved so, one day I was in the church and I grabbed a piece of tract, a flyer. It looks like this. In those days, our flyers up printed or yellow pieces of paper that looks like toilet paper. I'm not sure, how many of you were old-timers who will still remember it with us. But it was a very, very, cheap simple torn, tattered kind of a tract and it was available. So, I took that one day. I have been attending church, listening to the preaching, I want to be saved, didn't know how to. So, I took this tract and on the, MRT train back home, I decided to take a look at this. It really spoke to me, because I want to go to heaven, I want to be saved, I want to know the true and living God. So, am I going to heaven, this man really look like me, or I look like this man. So, I said, there must be something for me.

I opened this flyer, this tract and page one is a questionnaire. Am I going to heaven?, Well check below, what you think is necessary to go to heaven. So, I looked at this, and I said hah, I think I should be able to get the answers, after all, my own life, I have been answering exams questions, so, this should be easy. So, number 1, obey God's laws and commandments. I say, of course lah, how can you be a Christian, if you are not a good man. So, I ticked number 1. Be sorry for your sins and confess your sins. Of course, ticked number 2. Sincerely do your best. Of course, God sees the heart. Ticked. Turn from your sins and stop sinning. Er, may not be easy, but I will try. I ticked it too. Do good deeds, I will ticked. Give money to the church, or charity, I said no need, because pastor said no need. So, I think it is okay, this one is a trick question, in exams, they always give you trick questions, so, this is a trick question, say no. Very proud of myself. Number 7, water baptism, or holy Communion, pastor also said no need, so, I didn't tick that. Trust in Jesus Christ alone, yes, I need to tick. Jesus saves us. Trust in Jesus as your Savior and also served Him, of course, I need to serve Him. And there is no heaven or hell, this is rubbish so, I don't have to answer that. So, I ticked all of them except three. Question number one, obey God's laws and commandments and so, I turned to the next page and I said, I got it already lah, I am on the way to heaven.

The first page where answers are revealed, says, number 1. Trying to keep the commandments, cannot save us, but shows we are sinners. And I read the verse in James 2:10 on how we are guilty if we just break one law. That came to me as a big surprise, because I was confident that my answers would all be right. But no, you are wrong. You don't get saved by obedience to the law, or by performance of the law. It went on, number 5. No deeds, can take away your sins, because Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, we are saved by grace, through faith, not of works lest any man should boast. And then he repeats, in Titus 3:5, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us. That was the day, I can't remember exactly where I was, probably at Ang Mo Kio MRT station. I can still, somewhat remember that, that was the day, God spoke to me and revealed to me, Jason, your righteousness, is pathetic, you cannot earn your way to heaven.

Time stamp in audio 0:39:24.6.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Proverbs 14:12

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No man is saved today by his works, you can't, is purely by the grace of God.

So, if you are to share the Gospel today, number 1, you have got to help people see how holy God is, absolutely holy and then you got to help people see, number 2, just how sinful and hopeless and helpless we are, on our own. We can never be accepted by our own efforts. But let me share with you, the glory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ because, number 3, this is it. God is so high, man is so far down, but praise the true God, the great chasm, that great gap is bridged by Jesus Christ.

He is the one who provides righteousness. Ho, this is the glory of the Gospel, this will not make sense to you until you see point 1 and point number 2. He is not an additional add on, He is a bonus, He is everything, you see. That's the point.

Remembering, Jeremiah 9:23-24, why do we need to know God and what is it that we glory in, He is a God of absolute holiness, perfection and righteousness, but praise be to God, He is a God who exercises lovingkindness, He is a God of mercy, He is a God of grace. How?, When He, freely gave us righteousness in His Son, that when you cannot earn it, He freely gives it.

Christ, provided righteousness.

Jer 9:23,24

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

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Paul says, the Jews, were ignorant of number 1, God's righteousness, number 2, they were ignorant about their own pathetic "righteousness" and number 3, they were ignorant of the righteousness from God, that is found in Jesus Christ, His Son. Christ, my friend, is the end of the law, the word and, is the word "telos", which means to terminate. Jesus, is the termination of the quest for righteousness by the law. In other words, righteousness today, is achieved, not by performance but in a Person. Jesus, is the end of the law, for righteousness because, the law can never give you righteousness, it can never.

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This is what Paul himself says, in Galatians

Gal 2:16

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, you can't, you can't for, by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

So how, if it is not by performance of the law, so how? It is in a Person and the person is Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, Christ.

, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Gal 2:16

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith

of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

If you want to be saved by the law, you have got to obey, completely, fully, entirely, your entire life, because, otherwise you will be cursed.

Gal 3:10

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Salvation, is not achievable by our obedience to the law, it's not by performance. It is found in the person of Jesus Christ. It says here,

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness.

Where does righteousness come from? Jesus Christ.

1Cor 1:30

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

You see, my friends, only God is righteous. God demands righteousness; man does not have that kind of righteousness, that righteousness is only in God and in His Son Jesus, He gives you righteousness. That's it!. What He demands of you, can only be possible when He gives it to you and when you received it.

Christ, is our righteousness. And then, the great verse which I love, because, it is so beautiful,

For he hath made him, that is Jesus, to be sin for us, who knew no sin, the sinless, perfect, pure, righteous Son of God is now seen as sin. The embodiment, the One who carries the sins of the world, is made sin for us, so that, as He suffers, He dies and as He rises again, He secures the righteousness that only He can give to us ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The most unfair of exchanges took place, when Jesus died and rose again on the cross of Calvary.

That was why, Jesus was born, under the law, Galatians 4:4.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

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He had to live a life that fulfills the law completely and perfectly, that's why, Jesus had to suffer on the cross, by His stripes, we are healed, that is why, Jesus rose again, because when He rose He arose for justification. He is now our righteousness.

The Chinese people have got it right, we have a beautiful word, "Yi" which means, righteousness and this is a beautiful word, because, the concept of righteousness is possible only when the Lamb is upon our life. Righteousness, can never be achieved apart from the Lamb of God. Is the Lamb of God who gives us righteousness.

So, the Scripture declares, for Christ, is the end of the law, for every one, to everyone that believes.

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What does a man need to know in order to believe? He has to know God's perfect righteousness, he has the no man's pathetic "righteousness" and he has to know, Christ provided righteousness. When he sees these things, then by the grace of God, he can properly exercise faith in the provided righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Himself said "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

Mat 9:12

But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

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Actually, what He is saying is that everybody is sick, but only, those who recognize they are sick, only those who recognize their righteousness won't cut it will be those who are saved.

Elsewhere, the publicans and the harlots, go into the kingdom of God before you. Why? Because you are too filled with self-righteousness, you see. One of the great hindrances to salvation today is self-righteousness and the Gospel of Jesus Christ must then be preached in the context that God is perfectly holy, man is absolutely sinful and Jesus paid it all. And everyone who believes in Jesus will be saved.

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So, this is what Luke 18:14 was talking about when Jesus gave the parable of the Pharisees and the publican, that everyone that exalts himself shall be abased and that he that humbles himself shall be exalted.

Luke 18:14

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

My friends, if you today have not come to Jesus Christ, the problem, is that of pride, because, somehow you feel that God can accept you. The answer is no! You need Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter who you are today, you can believe and you can be saved.

Donald Grey Barnhouse, I think, summarizes this beautifully and that is why I quote him.

“Our God is a demanding God... (Added by Pastor : it's true)... His very nature demands of Him that He demand of us more than we can ever supply. (Added by Pastor : God demands something that we in ourselves can never provide, can never match up to the requirement of His righteousness is a righteousness equal to His own. He could never accept human righteousness as a compromising payment. Perfection demands perfection;

That is why, salvation must be by grace and why works are not sufficient. The glory of grace, is that our God is not only a demanding God, He is a supplying God. Never, has He required anything of us, that He has not furnished us as a gift of His sovereign grace. His demands of righteousness, has been fully met by that which was manifested for us in Christ.

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Time stamp in audio 0:49:18.1.

This, in a nutshell, is the irreducible minimum of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ, is the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believes. My friends, whoever you are today, regardless of your backgrounds, regardless of the sins of the past, this is the promise of God, Christ, gives you His perfect righteousness, when you know how holy God is, how sinful we are, and how Jesus paid it all. Cast your dependence on the finished work of Christ on the cross and you will be saved.

Time stamp in audio 0:50:01.3.

Let's bow for a word of prayer. What a passage this is, isn't it, Jesus paid it all and all to Him I owe. Ah, my dear friends, can I ask you, if you today have already believe in Jesus Christ, pray, pray right here, right now, think of the people around you, think of your family and friends, pray for them, because I believe if we pray more, more will be saved, because, that's the prayer of apostle Paul. Pray, pray that your parents will come to know Christ, pray today that your colleagues will come to know Christ, pray that God will open your eyes to see how holy He is, how inadequate we are and how Jesus has paid it all.

Pray that God will grant repentance, God will change the heart of stone into a heart of flesh. And as you pray, I want to speak to those today, to those who has yet to believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior. My friends, in Romans 9:33, the Bible says, whosoever believes in Him, shall not be ashamed. You will realize, that there is perfect righteousness in Jesus. You don't have to give yourself an excuse, I am not sure whether I am an elect or whether I am not elect. The Bible says, whosoever believes, shall be saved.

You have been attending church for a long while, you have been hearing the messages, you have been hearing, the righteousness of God as proclaim, in the book of Romans, this is God's Word! Friends, why are you waiting, why are you holding up against God. He demands a righteousness, you can never arrived at, it is given in His Son, receive His Son, Jesus Christ, He died and paid for all your sins. Humble yourselves, submit to the righteousness in Jesus Christ. He that believes in Him, will not be condemned, but he that believes not is condemned already.

Friends, He that has the Son, has life. I pray, I implore you, I beg you today, to come to Jesus Christ. Would you make that decision today. In the quietness of your heart, choose to depend, choose to believe, choose to receive all that God has given in Jesus. Father, we thank You this morning, thank You, we glory that we can know You, to know You, as You reveal Yourself and not to imagine a God, out of our own futile imaginations. Thank You that we can know You that You are God that exercise judgment, righteousness, loving kindness. Thank You, You are perfect, thank You, You are love, before time, You, gave us Your Son, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. I pray today for all my friends are gathered here, that they would see Jesus and believe in Jesus. God, grant to your people, repentance. Lord, take away the heart of stone and make it a heart of flesh. Lord, by Your Spirit, give new life. May souls be saved today unto Your glory and honor. Thank You, we ask and pray all these humbly, in Jesus name, amen. God bless.