

# Romans 10:1-4 Commentary

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## ROMANS ROAD to RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 1:18-3:20	Romans 3:21-5:21	Romans 6:1-8:39	Romans 9:1-11:36	Romans 12:1-16:27
SIN	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION	SOVEREIGNTY	SERVICE
NEED FOR SALVATION	WAY OF SALVATION	LIFE OF SALVATION	SCOPE OF SALVATION	SERVICE OF SALVATION
God's Holiness In Condemning Sin	God's Grace In Justifying Sinners	God's Power In Sanctifying Believers	God's Sovereignty In Saving Jew and Gentile	God's Glory The Object of Service
Deadliness of Sin	Design of Grace	Demonstration of Salvation		
		Power Given	Promises Fulfilled	Paths Pursued
Righteousness Needed	Righteousness Credited	Righteousness Demonstrated	Righteousness Restored to Israel	Righteousness Applied
God's Righteousness IN LAW	God's Righteousness IMPUTED	God's Righteousness OBEYED	God's Righteousness IN ELECTION	God's Righteousness DISPLAYED
Slaves to Sin	Slaves to God			Slaves Serving God
Doctrine				Duty
Life by Faith				Service by Faith

Modified from Irving L. Jensen's excellent work "[Jensen's Survey of the NT](#)"

**Greek:** [Adelphoi, e men eudokia tes emes kardias kai e deesis pros ton theon huper auton eis soterian](#)

**Amplified:** BRETHREN, [with all] my heart's desire and goodwill for [Israel], I long and pray to God that they may be saved ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. ([ESV](#))

**ICB:** Brothers, the thing I want most is for all the Jews to be saved. That is my prayer to God. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**NIV:** Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ([NIV - IBS](#))

**NKJV:** Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

**NLT:** Dear friends, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is that the Jewish people might be saved. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** My brothers, from the bottom of my heart I long and pray to God that Israel may be saved! ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Brethren, the consuming desire of my heart and my supplication to God on behalf of them is with a view to their salvation.

**Young's Literal:** Brethren, the pleasure indeed of my heart, and my supplication that is to God for Israel, is -- for salvation

### Summary of Romans 9-11

Romans 9	Romans 10	Romans 11
Past Election	Present Rejection	Future Reception
God's Sovereignty Israel's Election by God	Man's responsibility Israel's Rejection of God	God's Ways Higher God Not Rejecting Israel

- R **Ruin** (Romans 1:17 – 3:20) – The utter sinfulness of humanity
- O **Offer** (Romans 3:21-31) – God's offer of justification by grace
- M **Model** (Romans 4:1-25) – Abraham as a model for saving faith
- A **Access** (Romans 5:1-11) – The benefits of justification
- N **New Adam** (Romans 5:12-21) – We are children of two "Adams"
- S **Struggle w/ Sin** (Romans 6-8) Struggle, sanctification, and victory

#### Related resources...

- Summary on the Attributes of God
- Spurgeon on the Attributes of God
- Israel of God - Is God "Finished" with Israel in His prophetic plan?
- [Off Site - Table Comparing/contrasting Israel & Church](#)
- [Off Site - Does the Church Fulfill Israel's Program? - John Walvoord](#)
- [The Jewish People, Jesus Christ and World History - S Lewis Johnson](#)
- [Timeline of Jewish and Gentile History According to Daniel](#)
- [Daniel 9:24 Commentary](#) - Discusses Timing of End Time Events
- [Daniel 9:25 Commentary](#)
- [Daniel 9:26 Commentary](#)
- [Daniel 9:27 Commentary](#) - Discusses Revealing of the Abomination of Desolation
- [God's Plan for Jerusalem](#)
- [Jeremiah 30 Commentary](#) - Discusses Time of Jacob's Distress
- [Jeremiah 31 Commentary](#) - The New Covenant to Israel and Judah
- [Jeremiah 32 Commentary](#)
- [Jeremiah 33 Commentary](#)

- [Joel 1 Commentary](#)
- [Joel 2 Commentary](#)
- [Joel 3 Commentary](#)
- [Luke 21:20-24 Commentary](#)
- [Matthew 24:15 Commentary](#) - Discusses Revealing of the Abomination of Desolation
- [Matthew 24:16-20 Commentary](#)
- [Matthew 24:21 Commentary](#) - Discusses the Great Tribulation
- [The Israel of God - Galatians 6:16](#)
- [The Jewish Problem-David Baron](#)
- [The Messianic Hope](#)
- [Western Wall-"Wailing Wall"](#)
- [Zechariah 12 Commentary](#) - Discusses Reaction of Jews to Jesus' Return - Zech 12:10-14
- [Zechariah 13 Commentary](#) - Discusses the Saving of 1/3 Remnant - Zech 13:8-9
- [Zechariah 14 Commentary](#) - Discusses Jesus' Return as Victorious Warrior and Reigning King - Zech 14:4

**Are you confused about God's plan for Israel?** Then I highly recommend Tony Garland's 12 Hour Course on **Romans 9-11** in which he addresses in depth the question of **What Will Happen to Israel?** ([click](#)) or see the individual lectures below)

- [Romans 9:1-5 Paul's Sorrow Concerning Israel](#)
- [Romans 9:6-13 Children of the Promise](#)
- [Romans 9:14-24 The Potter and the Clay](#)
- [Romans 9:25-33 A Remnant Will be Saved](#)
- [Romans 10:1-13 The Righteousness of God](#)
- [Romans 10:14-21 Has Israel Not Heard?](#)
- [Romans 11:1-6 God Has Not Cast Away The Jews](#)
- [Romans 11:7-15 Life from the Dead](#)
- [Romans 11:16-24 Two Olive Trees](#)
- [Romans 11:25-36 The Salvation of Israel](#)

Note that when you click the preceding links, each link will in turn give you several choices including an **Mp3 message** and brief transcript notes. The Mp3's are long (avg 70+ min) but are in depth and thoroughly Scriptural with many quotations from the Old Testament, which is often much less well understood than the NT by many in the church today. Garland takes a literal approach to Scripture, and his love for the Jews and passion to see them saved comes through very clearly in these 12 hours of teaching! Take your home Bible Study group through this series if you dare. Take notes on the tapes as the transcripts are a very abbreviated version of the audio messages. This course is highly recommended for all who love Israel! I think you will agree that Tony Garland, despite coming to faith after age 30 as an engineer, clearly has been given a special anointing by God to promulgate the truth concerning Israel and God's glorious future plan for the Jews. Garland has also produced more than 20 hours of superb audio teaching in his verse by verse commentary on the [Revelation](#) (in depth transcripts also available) which will unravel (in a way you did not think was possible considering the plethora of divergent interpretations) God's final message of the triumph and return of the our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords! Maranatha!

**BRETHREN, MY HEART'S DESIRE AND MY PRAYER TO GOD FOR THEM IS FOR THEIR SALVATION: Adelphoi, e men eudokia tes hemes kardias kai e deesis pros ton theon huper auton eis soterian:**

- Ro 9:1, 2, 3-See notes
- Exodus 32:10,13; 1Samuel 12:23; 15:11,35; 16:1; Jeremiah 17:16; 18:20; Luke 13:34; John 5:34; 1Corinthians 9:20, 21, 22
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Denney** writes that Paul "cannot enlarge on this melancholy situation without expressing once more the deep grief which it causes him. ([Romans 10 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**John Witmer** - Having stated the fact of Israel's stumbling in the preceding verses, Paul now explained the reason for that stumbling. But first, in words reminiscent of the opening verses of chapter 9, the apostle expressed his deep personal spiritual burden for the salvation of the people of Israel. ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#))

**Matthew Henry** introduces this chapter noting that "The scope of the apostle in this part of the chapter is to show the vast difference

between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith, and the great pre-eminence of the righteousness of faith above that of the law; that he might induce and persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, aggravate the folly and sin of those that refused, and justify God in the rejection of such refusers."

Paul is passionate for he knows their plight having been in their position prior to his conversion (and not even realizing his great need!).

**Brethren** (80) ([adelphos](#) from collative **a** = denoting unity + **delphús** = womb) is literally one born from same womb and so a male having the same father and mother as reference person. Figuratively, **adelphos** as in this verse refers to physical Jews but not to those who had yet been circumcised in heart and were Paul's Jewish brothers in Christ. Paul explained the distinction between one who is a Jew outwardly (physically) and yet not a Jew inwardly (by circumcision of his heart)...

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. (See notes Romans 2:28; 29)

**Brethren** is an expression of affectionate interest and indicates Paul's emotional attachment to those who were his physical brethren.

**My heart's desire...my prayer to God** - Paul's desire translated into action. He didn't just "care," he prayed! And he prayed very specifically - for their salvation. Note the repetition of the possessive pronoun "**my**" -- far from being detached, Paul is personally, passionately and intimately involved in his pleading for his fellow Jews. Would it be that **all** believers (many believers already are so involved) would be so passionately, personally pleading for the the lost.

**Guzik** observes that "Paul again feels compelled to relate his heart regarding his fellow Jews. Paul does not rejoice that they have stumbled at that stumbling stone (Romans 9:32)."

**Heart** (2588) (**kardia**) does not refer to the physical organ but is always used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God.

**MacArthur** commenting on **kardia** writes that "While we often relate **heart** to the emotions (e.g., "He has a broken heart"), the Bible relates it **primarily to the intellect** (e.g., "Out of the **heart** come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders," Mt 15:19). That's why you must "watch over your heart with all diligence" (Proverbs 4:23+). In a secondary way, however, **heart** relates to the will and emotions because they are influenced by the intellect. If you are committed to something, it will affect your will, which in turn will affect your emotions." (Drawing Near. Crossway Books)

**Desire** (2107) (**eudokía** from **eu** = well, good + **dokeo** = think) defines the state of being kindly disposed, and so refers to benevolence, good will, or pleasure. Paul is saying my earnest and sincere wish. **Vincent** says it is more literally "the good will of my heart.". Young's Literal rendering is interesting - "*the pleasure indeed of my heart*".

**Eudokia** - desire(2), good pleasure(1), good will(1), kind intention(2), pleased(1), well-pleasing(2).

Matt. 11:26; Lk. 2:14; Lk. 10:21; Rom. 10:1; Eph. 1:5; Eph. 1:9; Phil. 1:15; Phil. 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:11

**Charles Hodge** - The word **desire** means either "good pleasure," "sovereign purpose" (as in Matthew 11:26; Luke 2:14+; 2Th 1:11; Ep 1:5+; Eph 1:9+), or "benevolence" — "kind feeling or desire" (Php 1:15+). The latter sense suits this passage best. Paul assures his brothers according to the flesh that all his feelings towards them are kind and that he earnestly desires their salvation. He had no pleasure in contemplating the evils which hung over them. ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

**Wayne Barber** explains that that **eudokia** is derived from "**eu** which means well or good and **dokeo** which refers to a person's thinking." Paul is literally saying, "My thinking towards you is good." Can you imagine if you were a Jewish person reading this letter from Paul? You would think he was undermining everything you ever believed. That is what he is accused of in Acts. That is why he was put in prison in Caesarea and sent to Rome. He was accused of tearing down Judaism. He is saying, "I am not tearing it down. I am just trying to explain to you what I myself did not understand." He says, "My thinking towards you is good. There is nothing wrong with it."...Can you get the picture? Here is a burdened man. He used to be as blind as they are. God choose to remove the blinders from of his eyes and now he looks at his kinsmen according to the flesh (Jews) and realizes what they are doing will never get them into the kingdom of God. What they are doing can never be approved by God. Righteousness comes by faith in Christ Jesus. They have rejected the very Source of all that righteousness. So therefore he says, "I pray that you might be rescued (salvation = soteria = rescue, deliver), that you might be delivered. You are in grave danger, both spiritually and eternally. My prayer is that you would be rescued from this danger that you are in." (Romans 9:30-10:5:Righteousness Precious Possession)

**Matthew Henry** comments that Paul clearly and deeply expresses "The strength and sincerity of his desire. It was his heart's desire;

it was not a formal compliment, as good wishes are with many from the teeth outward, but a real desire. This it was before it was his prayer. The soul of prayer is the heart's desire. Cold desires do but beg denials; we must even breathe out our souls in every prayer. The offering up of this desire to God. It was not only his heart's desire, but it was his prayer. There may be desires in the heart, and yet no prayer, unless those desires be presented to God. Wishing and woulding, if that be all, are not praying.

**My prayer to God** - As Vincent rightly observes, this phrase implies communion with God.

**For them** - **For (huper)** means on their behalf, specifically on behalf of his fellow Jews who were still only Jews outwardly (physically) and not yet inwardly (hearts uncircumcised, not born again).

**Barnes - My heart's desire** - The word "desire" εὐδοκία eudokia means benevolence, and the expression, "my heart's desire," means my earnest and sincere wish. **Prayer to God** - He not only cherished this feeling, but he expressed it in a desire to God. He had no desire that his kinsmen should be destroyed; no pleasure in the appalling doctrine which he had been defending. He still wished their welfare; and could still pray for them that they might return to God. Ministers have no pleasure in proclaiming the truth that men must be lost. Even when they declare the truths of the Bible that some will be lost; when they are constrained, by the unbelief and wickedness of men, to proclaim it of them, they still can sincerely say that they seek their salvation. ([Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary](#))

**Prayer (1162) (deesis)** refers to urgent requests or supplications to meet a need and are exclusively addressed to God. **Deesis** in the New Testament always carries the idea of genuine entreaty and supplication before God. It implies a realization of need and a petition for its supply.

**Deesis** was used by the angel who assured the godly father of John the Baptist,

**Do not be afraid** (command to stop fearing indicating he already was fearful), **Zacharias** (means "Jehovah remembers"), for your **petition (deesis)** - specifically their need for God to open his wife's womb) has been heard, and your wife **Elizabeth** (means "my God is an oath") will bear you a son, and you will give him the name **John** (means "Jehovah has shown grace")" (Luke 1:13+).

Luke uses **deesis** again of the disciples of John the Baptist, who were said to "often fast and offer **prayers (deesis)**" (Luke 5:33+).

In **Paul's letter to the saints at Philippi**, he wrote these encouraging words...

I **thank** (eucharisteo > Eucharist used of Lord's Supper when believers give thanks to God in remembrance of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice on the cross) my (reflects Paul's deep intimacy) God in all my remembrance of you, always offering **prayer (deesis)** with joy in my every **prayer (deesis)** for you all, in view of your (joint) participation (with me) in the gospel from the first day (when Lydia opened her home for the preaching of the Word) until now. (see **notes** Philippians 1:3; Philippians 1:4; Philippians 1:5)

In fact Paul used **deesis** two more times in the short letter to Philippi once of their prayers for him and the last use encouraging believers to pray instead of worry...

For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your **prayers (deesis)** and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (see **note** Philippians 1:19)

**Be anxious** (command to stop fretting and worrying - implying you already are - about even one thing) for nothing (absolutely nothing because Nothing is outside of God's sovereign control or too difficult for Him to handle), but in everything by **prayer** (proseuche = the essence of this word for prayer is worship) and **supplication (deesis)** - definite requests issuing as a cry for personal needs) with **thanksgiving** (instead of a spirit of rebellion against what God allows) let your requests (such prayer is the antidote to worry and cure for anxiety) be made known to God. (See note Philippians 4:6) (Be anxious in nothing, prayerful in everything, thankful for anything)

**Deesis** is used to describe the character of our Lord's prayers, the writer of Hebrews recording that...

"In the days of His flesh, He offered up both **prayers (deesis)** and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety." (Hebrews 5:7+)

In a well known verse on the effect of prayer, **James** writes...

**Therefore** (marks a turn from speaking to individuals to the entire congregation - confess is plural), **confess** (Confession cleanses the soul) your sins (paraptoma = slips, false steps, offenses, sins) to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective (energeo = gives us word energy) **prayer (deesis)** of a righteous man can accomplish much (literally "is very strong"; Amplified = "makes tremendous

power available [dynamic in its working]")." (James 5:16+) MacArthur comments that "Weak prayers come from weak people; strong prayers come from strong people. The energetic prayers of a righteous man are a potent force in calling down the power of God for restoring weak, struggling believers to spiritual health. To further demonstrate the power of righteous prayer and provide an illustration that captures the essence of his discussion, James turns to ...Elijah." ([Macarthur J. James. Moody](#))

**For their salvation** - Literally "**unto** (preposition = **eis** = "with a view to") **their salvation**". This expresses the final or supreme purpose towards which Paul's desire and prayers were directed... towards the salvation of his unsaved Jewish brethren.

**Matthew Henry** writes that his "wish (was) that they might be saved-saved from the temporal ruin and destruction that were coming upon them-saved from the wrath to come, eternal wrath, which was hanging over their heads. It is implied in this wish that they might be convinced and converted; he could not pray in faith that they might be saved in their unbelief. Though Paul preached against them, yet he prayed for them. Herein he was merciful, as God is, who is not willing that any should perish (2 Pe 3:9+), desires not the death of sinners. It is our duty truly and earnestly to desire the salvation of our own.

**Salvation** ([4991](#))(**soteria** from **soter** = Savior in turn from **sozo** = save, rescue, deliver) (Click here or here for in depth discussion of the related terms soter and sozo) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction and peril. **Salvation** is a broader term in Greek than we often think of in English. Other concepts that are inherent in **soteria** include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health and well being as well as preservation from danger of destruction.

The idea of **salvation** is that the power of God rescues people from the penalty of sin, which is spiritual death which is followed by eternal separation from the presence of His Glory. **Salvation** delivers the believer from the power of sin (see discussion on Romans 6-8 beginning at Romans 6:1-3)

**Salvation** carried tremendous meaning in Paul's day, the most basic being **deliverance**, which included personal and national deliverance. In Paul's day, the emperor was looked on as a "savior" (soter), as was the physician who healed those who were sick.

It is interesting that Collin's (secular) dictionary defines **salvation** as "the act of preserving or the state of being preserved from harm...deliverance by redemption from the power of sin and from the penalties ensuing from it."

**Salvation** is not just escape from the penalty of sin but includes the ideas of safety, deliverance from slavery and preservation from danger or destruction.

Mankind has continually looked for **salvation** of one kind or another. Greek philosophy had turned inward and begun to focus on changing man's inner life through moral reform and self-discipline. The Greek Stoic philosopher Epictetus called his lecture room "the hospital for sick souls." Epicurus called his teaching "the medicine of salvation." Seneca taught that all men were looking **ad salutem** ("toward salvation") and that men are overwhelmingly conscious of their weakness and insufficiency in necessary things and that we therefore need "a hand let down to lift us up". Seneca was not far from the truth as Scripture testifies

(Jehovah speaking) Is My hand so short that it cannot ransom? Or have I no power to deliver?...Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short that it cannot save...(Jeremiah speaking) 'Ah Lord GOD! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee" (Isaiah 50:2...Isaiah 59:1... Jeremiah 32:17+)

**Salvation** through Christ is God's powerful hand extended down to lost souls to lift them up and this is what Paul prayed for Israel.

As an aside, it is worth noting that God is good to the unsaved by allowing the saved to pray for them. **How many of us are believers today because someone faithfully prayed for us (even without ceasing)?**

Surely eternity future will reveal that someone interceded on our behalf and brought our name boldly before the throne of God pleading with Him to grant us salvation through His dear Son.

Believers are to pray for and witness (proclaim good news with their life and then their lips) to all men and women, knowing that God will not lose any of the elect but will save all those who by grace believe in His Son. If your theology does not reflect a genuine, heartfelt compassion for the lost and for their salvation, then you have strayed from the heartbeat of the God Who...

so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16) (See [How Can I Share My Faith Without An Argument?](#))

And we should **pray for Israel**, even as the Psalmist called for us to...

**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:** "May they prosper who love you. (Psalm 122:6)

Do you pray this prayer dear Gentile believer? I pray you do as I think it is surely in God's will for us to so intercede for His chosen



people that the **remnant** may be saved.

**S Lewis Johnson** writes that "Louis T. Talbot in one of his works tells the story of a person who once said to him, "Do you expect me to love the Jews? Why, they are terrible people." He said he replied, "Yes, they are terrible. In fact, they are nearly as bad as the Gentiles." And he pointed to the way the Gentiles were acting the world over, fighting among themselves in tumults and wars and, in addition, persecuting the Jews all the while. And he added that, even if the Jews were worse than the Gentiles, what of it? We would still pray for them and their salvation.

**Ray Stedman** - In Romans 9 we saw that the great theme was the sovereignty of God and his electing grace. It set forth the fact that not one of us would ever become a Christian, not one of us would ever remotely dream of seeking God, if it were not for the electing grace of God which sought after us first. The call of God awoke us out of the sleep of death, brought us to our awareness of our need, created a hunger in our heart, and set us to looking for him. That is the theme of Chapter 9. By contrast, in Chapter 10 we have the matter of the responsibility and the moral freedom of man set forth. These are two themes that are usually regarded as opposed to one another. You can get into long arguments over this matter of divine election versus man's free will. There has been a great deal of heat (but very little light) that has been evidenced by the arguments that have gone on for centuries over this question. But you will notice that Paul puts them side by side and says that they are both true. I don't think that we will ever begin to understand the workings of God in our world today until we acknowledge that both of these great pronouncements are true: God must call us before we can possibly move toward him; yet, if we do not respond in a responsible decision, we are to blame for not knowing him and for continuing in our lost, fallen condition. Now, I would like to ask you, "Is your life weak, and fruitless, and afflicted with a great deal of casual Christianity?" Well, if it is, the answer is not to try harder, the answer is not to get yourself involved in more programs. The answer to how to make "Christians" Christian is Christ -- not activity but receptivity, not effort but faith. Laying hold anew of the reality of the presence of Jesus Christ is the answer. I recalled the story of Martin Luther - How, as a monk in the Augustinian monastery, he sought to make himself acceptable to God, how he would spend long, weary hours lying flat on his face on a cold stone floor, praying hour after hour, beating his breast, weeping and crying over his sins, trying to discover some way of release and of forgiveness, how he put himself under punishment and made his body undergo suffering in order to do penance for his sins, and how, finally, reading through the Scriptures in this very book of Romans, he was struck by one phrase out of the first chapter -- **the just shall live by faith** {Romans 1:17 [note] KJV}. Those words hit him like a sledgehammer, and he realized that God was saying that it wasn't necessary to do anything. God isn't asking us to do a thing. He is asking us to believe what Christ has already done. Martin Luther stood up and began to walk in the strength of that verse, and it gained power upon his soul and his heart until it gripped him, and he sent it in flaming letters of fire across Germany. It created the Protestant Reformation: **The just shall live by faith** -- not by doing anything! (Read Ray Stedman's full message - [How Far Away is God?](#))

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**Steven Cole** has a pithy introduction to Romans 10 (warning: you may be offended!) - Imagine a dear old lady who all her life has faithfully attended a mainline Protestant Church in her small town in the Bible belt. She has helped with the nursery and children's ministries, worked in the kitchen during socials, and served in the women's missionary society. Everyone who knows her says that she is one of the sweetest persons they know.

She is married to a mean old cuss who has no time for religion. He says that the church is full of hypocrites and do-gooders. Why should he hang out with people like that? He prefers his buddies at the local tavern, who can tell some good off-color jokes, place a friendly bet on a football game, and who swap stories about their latest fishing or hunting adventures. He would rather that his wife not go to church, but years ago he realized that it gave him the freedom to go fishing on Sunday mornings. So he jokes that he's going to baptize a few worms while she gets her religious fix for the week.

If you were to ask her, "On what basis do you hope to get into heaven?" the question would shock her. Why would you even ask? If she could find words to reply, she would say, "Well, all good people go to heaven. I've always tried my best to be nice to others. I've served at church in various ways. And I've usually been able to ignore the mean comments that my husband hurls at me. God knows that I've done the best that I could. I feel that I will go to heaven because I'm a good person."

Lately, her husband hasn't been feeling very well. But like most tough old geezers he avoids the doctor like the plague. But finally he gets worried enough that he schedules an appointment. The doctor runs a few tests and then gently gives him the bad news: "You've got advanced cancer. If you had come a few years ago, we might have gotten it. But there's not much that we can do now. You might have a few months to live."

He goes downhill fast, so they arrange for hospice care. One day, a hospice worker whom he likes is able to share the gospel with him. She tells him that God offers forgiveness for all his sins as a free gift if he will repent of his sins and trust in what Christ did for him on the cross. She leaves him with a Gospel of John. Since he knows his time is short, he devours it. As he reads, God opens his eyes to see his sin and his need for the Savior. He sees that Jesus is God's Son, the Savior of all who trust in Him. He puts his trust in Christ, dies a few weeks later, and goes to heaven.

His wife wouldn't ever say it, but she is secretly relieved that he is gone. He was always so difficult to live with. She continues with all of her religious activities through the church. A few years later, she dies. Because she was trusting in her own righteousness, this nice old lady goes to hell. She had never trusted in Christ as the necessary perfect righteousness that God gives to all who believe.

That story, while fictional, describes one of the most common misconceptions about the most important subject imaginable: How does a person get eternal life and go to heaven? It's a topic where you don't want to be in error! There are no second chances. The Bible plainly says that we die once and then face judgment (Heb. 9:27). There are no makeup exams! And, contrary to popular opinion, God doesn't grade on the curve. It's pass or fail, and to pass you must score 100 percent perfect righteousness. One sin in thought, word, or deed and you face God's eternal judgment!

In our text, Paul is explaining why some very religious people missed salvation. The Jews were about as religious as anyone could be. They were fastidious about keeping the Law of Moses. In fact, to interpret that Law correctly, so that nobody missed it, they devised hundreds of extra laws. Keeping the Sabbath holy wasn't specific enough for them, so they had rules about how far you could walk and about what constituted work on the Sabbath. For example, when Jesus on the Sabbath made clay with His spittle to anoint a blind man's eyes, the Jewish religious leaders accused Him of breaking the Sabbath (John 9:6, 16). They had rules on washing and cleanliness that added to the Law (Mark 7:3). But they missed salvation and even crucified the Savior!

In the larger context, Paul is responding to the question, "If God is faithful to His promises to His chosen people, then why are most Jews rejecting Christ?" And, can we then trust that He will be faithful to His promises to us? In chapter 9, Paul's emphasis was on God's sovereignty. It was never His sovereign plan to save all the Jews. Rather, He always accomplishes His purpose by saving a remnant which He has chosen according to grace. The rest He leaves in their sins and He will be glorified when He judges them. Thus if we're saved, it is totally due to God's gracious election.

But many will sputter, "That's not fair!" So in chapter 10, Paul shifts the emphasis to man's responsibility. He shows that the Jews who were lost had no basis to blame God. Their spiritual pride made them think that their religious practices and good works would qualify them for heaven. But people who think that they are good enough for God get offended if you tell them that they are sinners that need a Savior. And so they took offense at Christ and stumbled over Him (9:33). They were lost because of their spiritual blindness, sin, and unbelief. So Paul is showing us why religious people often miss salvation:

Religious people miss salvation because they think that their good works will satisfy God's demand for righteousness, so they don't trust in Christ for righteousness....Sometimes we see people who are atheists or blatantly anti-Christian and we think, "They will never come to faith in Christ!" But then we see good, nice, religious people and think, "They don't need to come to Christ." Wrong on both counts! Jesus was a friend to the corrupt tax collectors and immoral prostitutes because He knew that they were sick and needed Him as a spiritual physician (Luke 5:30-32). But the religious Pharisees were not good enough to get into heaven by their religiosity. They needed the new birth if they wanted to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). So if you have religious family or friends, don't assume that they're saved just because they're religious. Pray for God to convict them of their pride and self-righteousness, so that they will see their need for salvation. ([Why Religious People Miss Salvation Romans 10:1-4](#))

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[Our Daily Bread](#) has the following devotional entitled "**Heart Desire**" - A Jewish leader was invited to speak at a gathering of Christians in the USA who were celebrating Israel's 50th anniversary. The rabbi saw Christians as friends of the Jews. He declared, "We are safe in America not in spite of Christianity. We are safe . . . because of Christianity."

This statement is a welcome rebuttal to the accusation that the Christian faith is anti-Semitic and even responsible for the death of 6 million Jews during World War II. It's true that some Christian leaders in Germany were guilty of anti-Semitism and cowardice, but they were not the ones who influenced Hitler. He was deeply affected by the writings of the bitterly atheistic philosopher Nietzsche, who hated the Christian faith and advocated the slaughter of the Jews.

Bible-believing Christians are to reflect the attitude of the apostle Paul, who had a deep love for his fellow Jews (Rom. 10:1). He longed for them to discover, as he had, that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Savior of people of all nations. Paul even said that he would be willing to be cursed by God if it would result in blessing and salvation for Jews (Ro 9:3+).

Does your heart ache for the descendants of Abraham? They have a rich Old Testament heritage, but they need Jesus Christ. Pray for them today. --H V Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak  
In living echoes of Thy tone;  
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek  
Thy erring children lost and lone. --Havergal



## Everyone needs to choose Jesus--even God's chosen people

See ([How Can I Break The Silence?](#))

In another devotional from [Our Daily Bread](#) entitled "Your Brother Is Down There" we read the following story - On the east side of London, pipes for a large drain were being laid in a trench. Suddenly the dirt walls collapsed, and several workmen were buried. Amid the great excitement and confusion a crowd gathered. Many bystanders watched as several people tried to rescue the victims.

A woman came over to one onlooker, put her hand gently on his shoulder, and said, "Bill, did you know your brother is down there?" The color drained from his cheeks, then he sprang into action. Throwing aside his coat and leaping into the trench, he grabbed a shovel and worked frantically until the trapped men were finally set free.

What a lesson for all of us! Masses of humanity are trapped in sin and must be rescued. Although we may express with our words a deep concern over their lost condition, our actions may instead be saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Ge 4:9).

God will never accept that attitude. We cannot escape the urgency to aid those who desperately need our help, for "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Ro 10:14).

Join the rescue effort. Your brother is down there! --H G Bosch ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Throw out the lifeline with hand quick and strong--  
Why do you tarry, why linger so long?  
See, he is sinking! O hasten today,  
And out with the lifeboat! Away, then, away! --Ufford

**To be your brother's keeper means you'll be your brother's seeker.**

**Romans 10:2 For I [testify](#) (bear witness) about them that they [have](#) a [zeal](#) for [God](#), but not in [accordance](#) with [knowledge](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))**

**Greek:** [marturo](#) (1SPA) [gar autois hoti zelon theou echousin](#). (3PPAI) [all' ou kat' epignosin](#):

**Amplified:** I bear them witness that they have a [certain] zeal and enthusiasm for God, but it is not enlightened and according to [correct and vital] knowledge. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ([ESV](#))

**ICB:** I can say this about them: They really try to follow God. But they do not know the right way. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**NIV:** For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ([NIV - IBS](#))

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

**NLT:** I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** I know from experience what a passion for God they have, but alas, it is not a passion based on knowledge. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For I bear testimony to them that a zeal for God they have, but not according to a full and accurate knowledge.

**Young's Literal:** for I bear them testimony that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,

**FOR I TESTIFY ABOUT THEM THAT THEY HAVE A ZEAL (heat ardor passion) FOR GOD: marturo (1SPA) gar autois hoti zelon theou echousin (3PPAI):**

- 2Corinthians 8:3; Galatians 4:15; Colossians 4:13
- 2Kings 10:16; John 16:2; Acts 21:20,28; 22:3,22; 26:9,10; Galatians 1:14; 4:17,18; Philippians 3:6
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For (gar)** introduces an explanation. Always pause and ponder this strategic **term of explanation**.

**Charles Hodge** - So far from desiring to exaggerate their evil conduct, the apostle, as was always his custom, endeavored to bring everything commendable fully into view. The word for here has its appropriate meaning, as it introduces the reason for the preceding declaration: "I desire their salvation, for they themselves are far from being unconcerned about divine things." ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

**I testify (give a witness) (3140)** (**martureo** from **martus** = witness, one who has information or knowledge of something and hence can bring to light or confirm something; English ~ martyr) means to give evidence, give testimony, bear record, affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something or provide information about a person or an event concerning which the speaker has direct knowledge

**Godet** - He seems to be alluding to his conduct of former days, and to say, 'I know something of it, of that zeal' ([Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans - Online](#))

**They have a zeal for God** - They had a heated ardor and passion for God. John Witmer says that Israel was called "the God-intoxicated people." (Ibid)

Compare "zeal for your house will consume me" (John 2:17), "zealous for the law" (Acts 21:20), "zealous for God" (Acts 22:3), etc.

**Principle:** Be aware that religious zeal does not necessarily equate with real salvation.

**Charles Hodge** offers a word of the desirable variety of **zeal** noting that "The Jews had great zeal for God, but it was misdirected and consequently wrong in its moral qualities. Zeal, when correctly directed, however ardent, is humble and amiable. When its object is evil, it is proud, censorious, and cruel. Hence the importance of its being properly guided, not merely to prevent the waste of feeling and effort, but principally to prevent its evil effects on ourselves and others." ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

The **TSK** comments that...

By this fine apology for the Jews, the Apostle prepares them for the harsher truths which he was about to deliver.

**Matthew Henry** agrees in essence writing that...

The unbelieving Jews were the most bitter enemies Paul had in the world, and yet Paul gives them as good a character as the truth would bear. We should say the best we can even of our worst enemies; this is blessing those that curse us (see note Romans 12:14). Charity (agape love) teaches us to have the best opinion of persons, and to put the best construction upon words and actions, that they will bear. We should take notice of that which is commendable even in bad people.

**They have a zeal of God.** Their opposition to the gospel is from a principle of respect to the law, which they know to have come from God. There is such a thing as a blind misguided zeal: such was that of the Jews, who, when they hated Christ's people and ministers, and cast them out, said, "Let the Lord be glorified" (Isaiah 66:5); nay, they killed them, and thought they did God good service, Jn. 16:2. (*"They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God."*)

**Zeal (2205)** (**zelos [word study]** from **zeo** = to be hot, to boil [from the sound of bubbling water], figuratively to be fervent or show great enthusiasm; see related studies zeloo; zelotes) was originally a good word which described fervour in advancing a cause or in rendering service. **Zelos** for example gives us our English word **zeal** (zealous - filled with intense enthusiasm) which is generally a "good" word which describes eagerness, earnestness, enthusiastic devotion, single-minded allegiance, fervency, eager desire or ardent interest in pursuit of something, but it can take on a negative connotation when it describes a reaction which borders on extreme or fanatical.

**A T Robertson** comments that **zelos** "In itself it means only warmth, ardour, zeal, but for a bad cause or from a bad motive, jealousy, envy, rivalry results (Robertson, A. Word Pictures in the New Testament)

**William Barclay** makes the point that **zelos** "is a great word which has come down ("degenerated") in the world. Originally it described a great emotion, that of the man who sees a fine life or a fine action and is moved to **emulation** (attempt to match or surpass, typically by imitation). But emulation can so easily become envy, the desire to have what is not ours to have, the spirit which grudges others the possession of anything denied to us. Emulation in fine things is a noble quality; but envy is the characteristic of a mean and little mind." ([The Daily Study Bible on 2 Corinthians](#))

The Lord Jesus spoke of **zeal** in His scathing rebuke of the most zealous group of all declaring...

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves...

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

24 "You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence.

26 "You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

28 "Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. (Matt. 23:15, 23-28).

Paul could readily identify with the Jewish zeal for God and the Law, for as known as Saul of Tarsus he had been a notorious and relentless persecutor of the Christians before Jesus confronted him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-20).

As **Paul** reminded the saints at Philippi...

although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. (see **notes** Philippians 3:4; 3:5; 3:6)

Writing to the **Galatians** Paul declared "I was advancing in **Judaism** ( refers to the Jewish way of belief and life, the religious system held by the Jews, the OT teachings, especially the Law of Moses as well as the need for circumcision and Sabbath keeping) beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions." (Galatians 1:14-note)

#### **BUT NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH KNOWLEDGE: all ou kat epignosin:**

- Ro 9:3; 9:31,32; Psalms 14:4; Proverbs 19:2; Isaiah 27:1; 2Corinthians 4:4,6; Philippians 1:9
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**But not in accordance with knowledge** - The zeal of the Jews was not based on true knowledge. Their zeal was "heat without light".

As **Witmer** says...

The Jews obviously had knowledge of God but not full knowledge. Otherwise they would not have stumbled over Christ by seeking to gain righteousness on the basis of works. (Ibid)

**A T Robertson** adds that...

They had knowledge of God and so were superior to the Gentiles in privilege (Ro 2:9, 10, 11-see notes Ro 2:9; 10; 11), but they sought God in an external way by rules and rites and missed him (Ro 9:30, 31, 32, 33-see notes Ro 9:30; 31; 32; 33). They became zealous for the letter and the form instead of for God himself.

**Wayne Barber** explains that the Greek word for **knowledge**...

is not **gnosis**, the normal word for knowledge, but is the word **epignosis**. Israel could quote what their prophets from the past times had said. They had the facts in their minds. They had learned and studied and knew the Old Testament Law. But they did not have a comprehension of what this really meant in regard to their relationship with God. **Epignosis** is a fullness of knowledge, a knowledge that allows you to participate in

the facts that you can quote.

Many times people walk out of a church service, and can quote the sermon word for word. That is **gnosis**. But you don't have **epignosis** until you have a comprehension of how you are to live in light of what you have just quoted. That is **epignosis**. That is full participation in that which you can quote.

In fact, many Jews can even quote the New Testament. But do they have an understanding of it? No, they do not. They had a **zeal** but they didn't have the **knowledge**. (Romans 9:30-10:5: Righteousness Precious Possession)

**Knowledge** (1922) (**epignosis** [word study] from verb **epiginosko** from **epí** = upon + **ginosko** = to know) is a strengthened or intensified form of **gnosis** and conveys the thought of a more full, larger and thorough knowledge. It also conveys the idea of an intimate and personal relationship than the simple term. Vine says the verb form **epiginosko** suggests generally a directive, a more special, recognition of the object known than **ginosko**.

Earlier in Romans Paul had used the root word **gnosis** in describing his Jewish brethren as those who considered themselves to be...

a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of **knowledge (gnosis)** and of the truth you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal? (see **notes** Romans 2:20; 21)

In contrast to **gnosis**, **epignosis** refers to exact, complete, thorough, accurate, experiential knowledge (see note above for Wayne Barber's illustration of the experiential aspect of epignosis), not just abstract, intellectual, head knowledge of God or even facts about Him. **Epignosis** always describes moral and religious knowledge in the NT and especially refers to full and comprehensive knowledge of God's will that rests on the knowledge of God and of Christ found today in His Word.

**Alford** quotes **Delitzsch** as saying: "When **epignosis** is used, there is the assumption of an actual direction of the spirit to a definite object and of a real grasping of the same: so that we may speak of a false **gnósis**, but not of a false **epignosis**. And the Writer (of Hebrews - referring to He 10:26 [see note])

**Wuest** writes that "the Jew's zeal for God was not conditioned nor characterized by a complete but a partial, insufficient knowledge, which because insufficient, led them astray as to the method whereby they could appropriate salvation. Paul proceeds to show in verse 3 that this insufficiency lay in their ignorance of God's righteousness.

**Hodge** adds that "What the Jews lacked was **epignosis** — correct knowledge and appreciation. The knowledge the Jews had was neither enlightened nor wise — neither right about its objects, nor correct in its character. The former idea is principally intended here. The Jews were zealous about their law, the traditions of their fathers, and the establishment of their own merit. How naturally would a zeal for such objects make men place religion (**Ed**: instead of "relationship") in the observance of external ceremonies and be connected with pride, censoriousness, and a persecuting spirit. However, insofar as this zeal was a zeal about God, it was preferable to indifference and is therefore mentioned by the apostle with qualified commendation. ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

Tragically, many "religious" people make the same mistake that Israel made. They think that their "religious deeds" will gain them merit with God and will save them, but these very practices (just as they did with the Jews) will actually keep them from being saved by the "true knowledge" of Jesus Christ and the "true knowledge" of how one is credited with the perfect righteousness of Christ. Many of these individuals are obviously sincere and devout and even zealous, but all of their sincerity, devotion and zeal will not save their soul for Paul plainly stated

by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight (see note Romans 3:20)

The Jews had some knowledge (**gnosis**) and were intellectually aware of the outward demands of God's law. But they did not have the discerning spiritual knowledge (**epignosis**) that comes only from a saving relationship to God. They had the kind of superficial religious knowledge, about which Paul gave this warning "Knowledge makes arrogant" (1 Corinthians 8:1b). They had knowledge but not the godly knowledge that both comes from and produces humility and holiness. James alluded to the need for a humble heart writing...

putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive (welcome it like a good friend, put out the welcome mat!) **the word implanted**, which is able (has the inherent power or ability) to save (rescue, make whole, heal, protect and preserve) your souls. (James 1:21 [+](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** writes that...

Sincerity, however, is no substitute for truth. The man who sincerely believes in the solvency of an insolvent

bank and puts his money into their hands for safekeeping is soon disillusioned. He learns that sincerity is no substitute for solvency. In spiritual things there is a right and a wrong. And the Scriptures set forth the truth. That which is not in accord with the inspired Word of Truth is fallible and wrong. That which is according to the inspired writings is from God and, therefore, true and reliable.

As R. C. H. Lenski, the well-known Lutheran commentator, has put it, "Take poison ardently; the ardor will as little prevent the deadly effect of the poison as the lack of ardor would."

...So in spiritual things, sincerity in the acceptance of false doctrine will not get us saved. That is the Work of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. And that is why it is so important that we know it and preach it accurately (cf. 1Co 15:1, 2, 3, 4-see **notes** 1Co 15:1; 15:2; 15:3; 15:4)

Beloved, the solution to the salvation question is not a **program**, but a **Person**, the Lord Jesus Christ Who is presented in the Gospel.

**Steven Cole** - Religious people miss salvation because they think that their good works will satisfy God's demand for righteousness, so they don't trust in Christ for righteousness....Sometimes we see people who are atheists or blatantly anti-Christian and we think, "They will never come to faith in Christ!" But then we see good, nice, religious people and think, "They don't need to come to Christ." Wrong on both counts! Jesus was a friend to the corrupt tax collectors and immoral prostitutes because He knew that they were sick and needed Him as a spiritual physician (Luke 5:30-32). But the religious Pharisees were not good enough to get into heaven by their religiosity. They needed the new birth if they wanted to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). So if you have religious family or friends, don't assume that they're saved just because they're religious. Pray for God to convict them of their pride and self-righteousness, so that they will see their need for salvation. Religious people often miss salvation in spite of their zeal for God, because their zeal is not in accordance with knowledge (10:2).

Romans 10:2: "For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge." Paul himself had been more zealous for his Jewish religion than most of his contemporaries, but it resulted in his persecuting the church (Gal. 1:13-14). In our day, Muslims are zealous for God as they understand Him, but their zeal causes them to kill Christians and even family members who profess faith in Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses are zealous for God, but they promote the fatal view that Jesus is not fully God, and so their zeal only increases their condemnation.

We live in a day that disparages absolute truth and doctrinal precision. The cultural belief is that each person should determine his own truth. What's true for you may not be true for me, and vice versa. So we should "co-exist," as the bumper sticker preaches. If that means that we should be civil and polite towards one another, of course that is true. But if it means that it doesn't matter whether you're a Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, or atheist, it is fatally flawed!

Just as it matters greatly whether you take the exact drug that the doctor has prescribed in the exact amounts at the proper times, so it matters eternally whether you believe in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh, died for your sins, and was raised from the dead. If you are zealous for a different "Jesus" or a way of salvation other than faith alone in Christ alone, Paul says that you are to be damned (Gal. 1:6-9).

All roads do not lead to the top. Being sincere or zealous is not enough. Good intentions are not good enough if they are mistaken about the truth of the gospel. Religious zeal must always be tested against the core truth of the unchanging gospel. (Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Romans: Saving Faith [Zondervan], 10:20-25 gives numerous tests of false and true zeal.) ([Why Religious People Miss Salvation Romans 10:1-4](#))

**Romans 10:3** For not **knowing** about **God's righteousness** and **seeking** to **establish** their **own**, they did not **subject** themselves to the **righteousness** of **God**. (**NASB: Lockman**)

**Greek:** [agnoountes \(PAPMPN\)](#) [gar ten tou theou dikaiousunen, kai ten idian \[dikaiousunen\] zetountes \(PAPMPN\) stesai,](#) (**AAN**) [te dikaiousune tou theou ouch hupetagesan;](#) (**3SAPI**)

**Amplified:** For being ignorant of the righteousness that God ascribes [which makes one acceptable to Him in word, thought, and deed] and seeking to establish a righteousness (a means of salvation) of their own, they did not obey or submit themselves to God's righteousness. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ([ESV](#))

**ICB:** They did not know the way that God makes people right with him. And they tried to make themselves

right in their own way. So they did not accept God's way of making people right. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**NIV:** Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ([NIV - IBS](#))

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

**NLT:** For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Instead, they are clinging to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law. They won't go along with God's way. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** They do not know God's righteousness, and all the time they are going about trying to prove their own righteousness they have the wrong attitude to receive his. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to set up their own private righteousness, to the righteousness of God they have not subjected themselves.

**Young's Literal:** for not knowing the righteousness of God, and their own righteousness seeking to establish, to the righteousness of God they did not submit.

#### FOR NOT KNOWING ABOUT GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS: agnoountes (PAPMPN) gar ten tou theou dikaiosuner:

- Ro 1:17, 3:22, 26, 5:19, 9:30-See notes Ro 1:17; 3:22; 3:26; Ro 5:19; Ro 9:30
- Ps 71:15,16,19; Isaiah 51:6,8; 56:1; Jeremiah 23:5,6; Daniel 9:24; John 16:9,10; 2 Cor 5:21; 2Peter 1:1
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### TWO TYPES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**For (gar) (term of explanation)** - Paul explains the "root cause" for the failure of the Gospel among the Jews - It was their ignorance of the righteousness of God and their substitution of man's righteousness.

**James Denney** - All men need and crave righteousness, and the Jews, in their ignorance of God's, sought to establish a righteousness of their own. Their own is the key to the situation. Their idea was that they could be good men without becoming God's debtors, or owing anything at all to Him. Such an idea, of course, shows a complete ignorance of the essential relations of God and man, and when acted on fatally perverts life. It did so with the Jews. When the Gospel came, revealing the righteousness of God -- that for which man must be absolutely indebted to God's grace, and which he can never boast of as "his own" --- it cut right across all the habits and prejudices of the Jews, and they did not submit themselves to it. Paul interprets the position of his nation through recollection of his own experience as a Pharisee -- no doubt rightly on the whole. ([Romans 10 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#)).

**Not knowing** (50) (**agnoeo** from **a** = not + **noéo** = perceive, understand) means to not know, to be unaware of and to be ignorant of, this latter nuance being most applicable to Israel who should have known better since she had the Law and the Covenants, etc. But she refused to think about or pay attention to what had been so clearly stated in the Old Testament. (Note the present tense = continually not knowing)

**Robertson** comments that this is...

A blunt thing to say, but true as Paul has shown in Romans 2:1+ through Romans 3:20+. They did not understand the God-kind of righteousness by faith (Ro 1:17+). They misconceived it (Ro 2:4+).

**Not knowing** of God's method of justification whereby one is declared righteous (to be in right standing before the wholly, Holy Righteous One), that this justification was not possible by works (works of the Law, works of the flesh, self effort, being good enough, etc) but only by grace through faith in the Righteous One.

**Hodge** sums up this passage emphasizing that "The Jews' great mistake was over the method of justification. Ignorance on this point implied ignorance of the character of God, of the requirements of the law, and of themselves. It was, therefore, and is and must always continue to be a crucial point. Those who err here, err fatally; and those who are right here cannot be wrong about other essential truths. ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

**Righteousness** (1343) (**dikaosune** from **dikaio** = just, righteous = root idea of conforming to a standard or norm) is derived from



a root word that means "straightness." It refers to a state that conforms to an authoritative standard or norm and so is in keeping with what God is in His holy character. Righteousness is a moral concept. God's character is the definition and source of all **righteousness**. God is totally righteous because He is totally as He should be. The righteousness of human beings is defined in terms of God's. Righteousness in Biblical terms describes the righteousness acceptable to God and thus which is in keeping with what God is in His holy character. Rightness means to be as something or someone should be.

In short, the **righteousness of God** is all that God is, all that He commands, all that He demands, all that He approves and all that He provides (through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the perfectly Righteous One.).

#### Related Resources:

- [What does the Bible say about self-righteousness?](#)
- [What is righteousness?](#)
- [Why does Christ's righteousness need to be imputed to us?](#)
- [Why are all of our righteous acts considered filthy rags?](#)
- [What does it mean to pursue righteousness?](#)

Wayne Barber explains that...

The word **righteousness** is used 35 times in 30 verses in the book of Romans ([See all uses](#)) and is the word *dikaioisune*. It refers to the standard of conduct that God requires of all mankind. This conduct can only be produced by the Holy Spirit of God. It is not something a man can do in his own strength. The righteousness only comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now why is that? Because Jesus is the only Man Who ever lived righteously on this earth. His righteousness was demonstrated when He came and lived a sinless life and particularly when He died on the Cross for our sin. He satisfied the demands of the law. Remember, Galatians 5:14+ says that the Law is fulfilled in one word. It goes on to say, "And man shall love his neighbor as himself." Not a single person born of woman on this earth can do that. Why? Because we have a depraved nature as a result of Adam. Anything that we call love is conditional and is selfish and manipulative.

But what God does is inherently pure. Therefore, His love, His righteousness was demonstrated when He came and lived that sinless life and when He died for others on the cross. He didn't die for Himself. He took sin upon Himself. He died for those who did not deserve it. When we put our faith into Who He is, Jesus Christ, the God-Man, and we put our faith into what He did for us, and then righteousness, His righteousness, was now written to our account. You cannot be righteous in yourself. To think that you can earn your way into heaven is to put yourself on equality with God, and you cannot do it. The only man who ever did it was the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must put our faith into Him and then His righteousness and His life come to live in us. Now He can produce through us what we could have never done ourselves.

There are two kinds of righteousness that Paul discusses in the last part of chapter 9 and in chapter 10. We just looked at true righteousness, but there is also a kind of righteousness that man foolishly thinks he can produce in the energy of his own flesh. Somehow if he is good enough, then he can gain the approval of God. It is this false righteousness that Israel pursued. They did not pursue by faith the true righteousness that only God can provide. They pursued it by the works of the law. And because they did not seek righteousness by faith, because they thought they could somehow gain the approval of God by their own efforts, they did not attain it. (Romans 10:1-10: Righteousness Precious Possession-Pt2)

The **psalmist** knew about **God's righteousness** proclaiming...

My mouth shall tell of Thy righteousness, and of Thy salvation all day long; for I do not know the sum of them (he knew about God's righteousness but not about the breadth and length and height and depth of it)

**16** I will come with the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of **Thy righteousness**, Thine alone (Whose? not the writer's own but God's righteousness!)

**19** For **Thy righteousness**, O God, reaches to the heavens, Thou who hast done great things; O God, who is like Thee? (Psalm 71:15,16,19)

**Spurgeon** comments that...

**My mouth shall tell of Thy righteousness** - We are to bear testimony as experience enables us, and not withhold from others that which we have tasted and handled. The faithfulness of God in saving us, in

delivering us out of the hand of our enemies, and in fulfilling His promises, is to be everywhere proclaimed by those who have proved it in their own history. How gloriously conspicuous is righteousness in the divine plan of redemption! It should be the theme of constant discourse. The devil rages against the substitutionary sacrifice, and errorists of every form make this the main point of their attack; be it ours, therefore, to love the doctrine, and to spread its glad tidings on every side, and at all times. Mouths are never so usefully employed as in recounting the righteousness of God revealed in the salvation of believers in Jesus. The preacher who should be confined to this one theme would never need seek another: it is the medulla (the inner or deep part) theologae, the very pith (core, essential part) and marrow of revealed truth. Has our reader been silent upon this choice subject? Let us, then, press him to tell abroad what he enjoys within: he does not well who keeps such glad tidings to himself.

**The determination avowed.**

- a. To recount the instances of the divine faithfulness in his deliverances.
- b. To recount them publicly: My mouth, etc.
- c. Constantly: All the day.
- d. The reason assigned: For I know not, etc.

"Eternity's too short to utter all thy praise."  
Therefore I begin it now, and will continue it.

**Psalm 71:16 I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only.** Man's righteousness is not fit to be mentioned -- filthy rags are best hidden; neither is there any righteousness under heaven, or in heaven, comparable to the divine. As God Himself fills all space, and is, therefore, the only God, leaving no room for another, so God's righteousness, in Christ Jesus, fills the believer's soul, and he counts all other things but dross and dung "that he may win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith." (see note Philippians 3:9)

What would be the use of speaking upon any other righteousness to a dying man? and all are dying men. Let those who will cry up man's natural innocence, the dignity of the race, the purity of philosophers, the loveliness of untutored savages, the power of sacraments, and the infallibility of pontiffs; this is the true believer's immovable resolve: "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." For ever dedicated to thee, my Lord, be this poor, unworthy tongue, whose glory it shall be to glorify Thee.

The **resolution**: I will go.

The **reservation**: Thy strength only -- Thy righteousness only.

**Psalm 71:19 Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high.** Very sublime, unsearchable, exalted, and glorious is the holy character of God, and his way of making men righteous. His plan of righteousness uplifts men from the gates of hell to the mansions of heaven. It is a high doctrine gospel, gives a high experience, leads to high practice, and ends in high felicity.

**Who hast done great things.** The exploits of others are mere child's play compared with Thine, and are not worthy to be mentioned in the same age. Creation, providence, redemption, are all unique, and nothing can compare with them.

**O God, who is like unto Thee.** As Thy works are so transcendent, so art Thou. Thou art without compeer, or even second, and such are Thy works, and such, especially, Thy plan of justifying sinners by the righteousness which thou hast provided. Adoration is a fit frame of mind for the believer. When he draws near to God, he enters into a region where everything is surpassingly sublime; miracles of love abound on every hand, and marvels of mingled justice and grace. A traveller among the high Alps often feels overwhelmed with awe, amid their amazing sublimities; much more is this the case when we survey the heights and depths of the mercy and holiness of the Lord.

**Jeremiah** prophesied of the **Righteous One** writing "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as King (in His Messianic Kingdom, the Kingdom of God on earth) and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved (this speaks of course about His second coming to set up His Millennial kingdom), and Israel will dwell securely (this promise shall be fulfilled to Israel [those who of Israel who believe in Messiah] in the **Millennium**); and this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'" (Jeremiah 23:5,6)

Israel was ignorant of God's way of making people right with Himself, not because they had never been told, but because they refused to learn, as Paul had alluded to earlier in a chapter addressed especially to the Jew...

Or do you think lightly of (kataphroneo - look down upon) the riches of His kindness and forbearance (anochē) and patience (makrothumia - "long burn"), **not knowing** that the kindness (chrestotes - idea that He furnishes what is needed = not an apathetic response to sin, but a deliberate act to bring the sinner back to God) of God leads you to repentance (metanoia)? 5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the **righteous judgment of God**, (see **notes** Romans 2:4; 2:5).

There is an ignorance that comes from lack of opportunity, but Israel had had many opportunities to be saved. In their case, it was an ignorance that stemmed from willful, stubborn resistance to the truth. They would not submit to God. They were proud of their own good works and religious self-righteousness, and would not admit their sins and trust the Saviour. Paul had made the same mistake before he met the Lord (see notes beginning at Philippians 3:1).

- [Righteousness - Girdlestone's Synonyms of the Old Testament](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Righteous Righteousness](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Righteousness of God, the Righteousness Imputed Righteousness](#)
- American Tract Society [Righteousness](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Righteousness](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Righteousness](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Righteousness](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Righteousness](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Righteousness](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Righteousness](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Righteousness Righteous, Righteousness](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Righteous, Righteously Righteousness](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Imputed Righteousness Righteousness](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Righteousness](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Righteousness](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Right and Righteousness](#)

#### **FRUITS OF Righteousness:**

Deuteronomy 6:25; Joshua 22:31; Psalm 1:3; 15:1-5; 24:3-5; 101:3,4; 106:3; 112:4-8; Proverbs 2:5-20; 10:2,16; 11:5,6,18,19,30; 12:28; 13:6; 14:34; 21:3; 29:7; Isaiah 28:17; 32:16-18; 33:15-17; 55:12,13; 58:6-14; 62:1; Ezekiel 18:5-9; 33:15; Daniel 12:3; Hosea 10:12; Malachi 3:3; 4:2; Matthew 5:20; 12:35,50; Mark 3:33-35; Luke 3:10-14; 8:15; John 3:21,33; 8:47,49; 13:35; 14:21-24; 15:4,5,8,12; Acts 9:36; 11:29,30; 19:19; Romans 5:1-5; 6:19-22; 7:4-6; 8:4-6; 14:17-19; 15:1-7; 1 Corinthians 4:19,20; 12:3; 13:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 7:10,11; 9:10; 10:5; 13:5; Galatians 4:6; 5:22,23; 6:7,8; Ephesians 1:13,14; 5:9; Philippians 1:11,27-29; 2:13; 3:12-14; 4:11-13; Colossians 1:12,13; 3:3,5,9-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:3,9,10; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5; 1 Timothy 2:9,10; 5:9,10; 2 Timothy 2:22; 4:6-8; Titus 2:2,11,12; 3:14; Philippians 1:5,6; James 1:27; 2:14-26; 3:11-18; 1 Peter 3:1-11,14; 4:2; 2 Peter 1:5-9; 1 John 2:3-6,10,11,24,29; 3:3,6,7,9-11,14,17-24; 4:4-21; 5:1-5,10,13,18; 2 John 1:9; 3 John 1:11; Revelation 2:2,3,19

**Steven Cole** - Religious people often miss salvation because they do not know about God's perfect righteousness and so they seek to establish their own righteousness (10:3).

Romans 10:3: "For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." Paul does not mean that the Jews did not know that God is righteous. Anyone familiar with the Old Testament would know that. He means that the Jews did not understand God's saving righteousness, namely, that He imputes righteousness to the one who believes in His appointed substitute. The ESV and NIV both capture the sense of the genitive. Rather than being possessive (NASB), it is a genitive of source: "being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God" (ESV). Paul explains this with regard to his own conversion (Phil. 3:9), "not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."

This perfect imputed righteousness was revealed to the Jews in Genesis 15:6, "Then he [Abram] believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." Paul cited that text in Romans 4:3 and expounded on it in that chapter. So the ignorance of the Jews was not due to lacking information. It was willful ignorance stemming from their pride in keeping the Law. The Pharisees

proudly thought that they were keeping the Law because they didn't murder (unless they had "good" cause, as when they murdered Jesus!) and they didn't commit adultery. But Jesus convicted them by showing that God looks on the heart (Matt. 5:21-30). To be sinfully angry with your brother is to murder him. To lust after a woman in your heart is to commit adultery with her.

And so the problem with the religiously proud Jews was, "they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." To do so, they would have had to admit that they were sinners and that their good works could never justify them. They would have had to admit that all their good deeds were as filthy rags in God's sight (Isa. 64:6). James Boice (Romans: God and History [Baker], 3:1161) uses the analogy of a woman who is dying of a disease and refuses to go to a doctor because she insists that she looks fine when she puts on her makeup. Yes, her face may look fine with her makeup on, but she needs to deal with the internal disease. Yes, religious people may look good with all their good deeds. But if they do not submit to their need for God's perfect righteousness credited to their account, their good deeds are just makeup.

Thus religious people often miss salvation in spite of the prayers and concern of godly people for their salvation. They miss salvation because their zeal for God is not in line with knowledge. They miss salvation because they do not know about God's righteousness and so they seek to establish their own. ([Why Religious People Miss Salvation Romans 10:1-4](#))

#### AND SEEKING TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN: kai ten idian zetountes (PAPMPN) stesai (AAN)

- Romans 9:31,32; Isaiah 57:12; 64:6; Luke 10:29; 16:15; 18:9, 10, 11, 12; Galatians 5:3,4; Philippians 3:9; Revelation 3:17,18
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### SEEKING SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**Seeking** (2212)(**zeteo**) implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. The most common sense of this word is to "seek". Webster says that to seek means to go in search or quest of, to look for, to try to discover, to search for by going from place to place. To inquire for; to ask for; to solicit; to endeavor to find or gain by any means.

**Establish their own** - Or set up their own. The picture is of a righteousness which is in "competition" if you will with God's! Truly the height of arrogance!

**Wayne Barber** explains that...

The word **seeking** is **zeteo** (2212)([4 uses in Romans](#)), which is very similar to the word we looked at for zeal. It means to strive with everything in your body. When you are running a race, you are striving. You are pulling with everything you have got. They were striving. They still are.

What were they striving to do? He said they were striving to establish their own righteousness. Now the word **establish** has the idea to confirm something in its place. They came up with the **Mishnah** ([see note](#)) and the **Talmud** ([see note](#)) with 613 laws. Now, you think Ten Commandments is difficult. No man can live to them, but they added 613 ([613 - Mitzvot](#)) more and came up with their own standard. They sought to establish their own standard. This is why Paul said in Philippians 3 that according to the law he was found blameless (see note Philippians 3:6). What law? You see, they were establishing their own law by which they would justify themselves and obligate God to approve of what they did. That is what works does. That is what religion does. And so therefore, they were seeking to establish their own.

As a matter of fact, they had these boxes ([Tefillin or phylacteries - one for the upper arm, one for the forehead](#)) they wore on their head. To show you how they were establishing that law, the more you obeyed those laws, the bigger the box. The bigger the box, the heavier it got and the more your head was pulled over. They would have to hire people to walk around and hold their head up. Oh, these spiritual folks! Seeking, striving to establish their own righteousness.

Now folks, I want to tell you something. If you think that joining a church is going to get you into heaven, you are establishing your own rules. You have come up with your own standard. It won't work. It is only by faith in Jesus Christ, the immovable Rock Who will eternally stand before men. You have to deal with Him and decided whether you are going to put your faith in Him and His righteousness or seek after it in your own power.

That's what Israel did. In doing so they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. The word "subject" is hupotasso. They were not willing to place themselves up under what God required. Instead, they

came up with their own system that they sought to establish and that is the bedrock of their religion even today. It came right out of Israel. That is what people are doing today. You cannot earn your way into heaven. It is by faith in Christ Jesus. (Romans 9:30-10:5:Righteousness Precious Possession)

**Vincent** comments that their establishment of their own **righteousness** indicates "their pride in their endeavor. They would erect a righteousness of their own as a monument to their own glory and not to God's."

**Their own** - Their own righteousness. There is a righteousness which is according to God and a righteousness that is according to man. Paul refers here to the latter type of righteousness ("their own"). It is a works based, legal ("manmade") righteousness, which is best known as self-righteousness. As such, it represents man's futile efforts to work out accomplish under the law a character in one's persona which hopefully will be pleasing to God. The **Pharisees** are the prototype of self-righteousness.

**Matthew Henry** writes **their own righteousness** refers to "a righteousness of their own devising, and of their own working out, by the merit of their works, and by their observance of the ceremonial law. They thought they needed not to be beholden to the merit of Christ, and therefore depended upon their own performances as sufficient to make up a righteousness wherein to appear before God.

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION THE SUBTLE TRAP OF LEGALISM

Tragically, believers can also fall into this same trap in the practice of their daily sanctification (listen to Pastor Ray Stedman's excellent message on [Legalism - Mp3](#)) [or read the [Transcript](#) - but you will miss the inflection and passion of his verbal delivery]). They would fully agree they could have done nothing to enter the Kingdom of God other than come in by grace through faith. But once they are in the Kingdom, they often fall into the subtle trap of beginning to try to keep rules and regulations, in an attempt to make themselves (they think) more acceptable to God. Even "good things" like quiet time, Bible memorization, Bible study, witnessing, etc. can be twisted and turned into a fleshly attempt to "grow in grace" (the ultimate paradox...growing in grace by self effort!). We as believers can then become like the Jews, seeking to establish our own righteousness, rather than working out our salvation in loving, Spirit-enabled obedience to God's will and word (**Our part** = we work out = Phil 2:12+, **God's Provision** = gives us the desire and power = Php 2:13NLT+) (See "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" 100/100). We must continually remember that we entered by grace, we stand by grace, we run by grace, we grow by grace, and we shall finish by grace. There is no other way than by amazing grace, God's unmerited favor. And guess what? Grace does not stop with our glorification! Paul makes the most amazing, even somewhat incomprehensible statement that "in the ages to come He might show **the surpassing riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:7+) Play [I Can Only Imagine](#) (LOOK AT THE VIDEO PICTURES -- YOU WILL SOON FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY ARE SHOWING -- AND I PROMISE YOUR EYES WILL NOT BE DRY!!!) and take a moment to just imagine **surpassing riches of His grace THROUGHOUT ETERNITY!!!**

**John** in describing the bride of Christ wrote...

And it was given (it to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev 19:8+)

So John teaches that clearly saints do **righteous acts**, but they are not self-righteous acts but are "Spirit wrought" righteous acts, acts done in saints who are abiding in the Vine, walking in the Spirit, etc.

In contrast **Paul** teaches that...

by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin (one purpose of the Law is to awaken our sinful hearts to the reality of sin and thus point to our need for a Savior!). (see notes Romans 3:20)

**Paul** goes on to explain the right way to righteousness writing...

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested (not a precept, but a Person), being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (i.e., the Old Testament pointed to the Righteous One, Christ Jesus) (see notes Romans 3:21)

In Isaiah God gave a clear estimate of the value of one's own righteous acts...

I will declare your **righteousness** and your **deeds**, but **they will not profit you**. (Isaiah 57:12)

In a verse familiar to most Christians Isaiah wrote (in the context of asking "shall we be saved")...

For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and **all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment**

and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:6)

In the NT the ignorance of Israel continued, as indicated by the interchange between Jesus and a certain lawyer who was wishing to justify (declare righteous) himself (Luke 10:29+)

Jesus saw through all attempts of the Jews seeking to establish their own righteousness as shown by His interchange with...

the **Pharisees**, who were lovers of money, (who) were listening to all these things (Jesus had just warned *You cannot serve God and mammon*"), and... were scoffing at Him. And He said to them, "You are those who justify (declare righteous) yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God. (Luke 16:14-15+)

And who can forget the classic contrast between the **Pharisee** and the **Publican**

And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. 11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. 12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13 "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, **be merciful** (be propitious - see note Hebrews 2:17; related to the word for the "mercy seat" sitting on the Ark of the Covenant, where the High Priest sprinkled blood on the great Day of Atonement that God might be "satisfied" or propitiated, this ritual pointing to Christ, our perfect propitiation - see 1 John 2:2+) to me, the sinner!' 14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house **justified** (**declared righteous**) rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. (Luke 18:9-12+)

When the Spirit opened Paul's eyes to see the way to God's righteousness he wrote

But whatever things were gain to me (included man made righteousness), those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law**, but that (righteousness) which is through faith in Christ, **the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith** (Philippians 3:7-9+)

**THEY DID NOT SUBJECT THEMSELVES TO THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: te dikaiousune tou theou ouch hupetagesan (3SAPI):**

- Job 33:27; Lamentations 3:22; Luke 15:17, 18, 19, 20, 21
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **FAILURE TO SUBMIT TO GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Paul explains that Israel does not have an "information" problem but a moral (heart) problem.

**Not (ou)** signifies absolute negation. They "absolutely did not subject themselves" is the idea.

**Matthew Henry** - The nature of their unbelief. They have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God, that is, they have not yielded to gospel-terms, nor accepted the tender of justification by faith in Christ, which is made in the gospel. Unbelief is a non-submission to the righteousness of God, standing it out against the gospel proclamation of indemnity. Have not submitted. In true faith, there is need of a great deal of submission; therefore the first lesson Christ teaches is to deny ourselves. It is a great piece of condescension for a proud heart to be content to be beholden to free grace; we are loth to sue sub forma pauperis-as paupers.

**S Lewis Johnson** - The apostle now explains what the error of the Jew was, but he does it negatively. He tells the Romans how not to be saved in his review of the failure of Israel. Their mistake lay in seeking to establish their own righteousness by good works before God and in failing to receive as a free gift the righteousness of God. They did not realize that they were sinners and could not



earn a righteous standing before God. In this they were ignorant of God's righteousness. The Jews, like a wrecked auto by the sign of a steep curve in the road ahead, were a warning to all that salvation is impossible to religious, zealous people who think that they do not need a Redeemer, but can stand by their own good works. The Jews are the living illustration that men may come to grief over Jesus Christ, if they fail to see why He had to come (cf. Gal. 2:21). Luthi has some good words here -- "It is as if, having received the gift of 'Moses and the prophets,' they have refused to allow God to give them the Redeemer in Christ. At the point where God intends the very best for them, they turn down His offer. They will not 'submit to God's righteousness' (Ro 10:3). The Jews are afraid of the new wine, which is evidently too strong for them: they prefer to stick to the old order of things. They have found pearls of God in the Law and the prophets, but now that God wants to give them the one pearl of great value they draw back their hands." (Johnson adds) "They loved their legal righteousness and set about establishing their own righteousness out of pride and arrogance."

**Subject** (5293)(**hupotasso** [word study] from **hupó** = under + **tasso** = arrange in orderly manner) means literally to place under in an orderly fashion. **Hupotásso** means to submit (to yield to governance or authority), to place in subjection, to put oneself under orders, to obey. This use is in the **passive voice** with a middle sense which signifies the **voluntary subjection** of oneself to the will of another, in this case to the will of God regarding the Gospel way of obtaining righteousness.

**Hupotásso** was a military term meaning to draw up in order of battle, to form, array, marshal, both troops or ships. **Hupotásso** meant that troop divisions were to be arranged in a military fashion under the command of the leader. In this state of subordination they were now subject to the orders of their commander. Thus, it speaks of the subjection of one individual under or to another. **Hupotasso** was also used to describe the arrangement of military implements on a battlefield in order that one might carry out effective warfare!

In **Leviticus** God explains...

I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or **and here we see their failure to submit to God**) if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity (God is saying they must undergo a spiritual circumcision, by grace through faith, the way of salvation which was available even in the Old Testament), ([Leviticus 26:41](#)) (see related study on **Circumcision** including circumcision of one's heart)

**Nehemiah** agrees that the problem with Israel was not God's fault writing...

However, Thou art just in all that has come upon us (70 years of Babylonian captivity; destruction of Solomon's temple after departure of God's Shekinah glory); for Thou hast dealt faithfully (Faithfulness = His attribute), but **we have acted wickedly.** ([Nehemiah 9:33](#))

In **Daniel's** prayer, in the context of Judah's exile in Babylon, this great saint confesses...

Moreover, we have not listened to Thy servants the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. 7 "**Righteousness belongs to Thee, O Lord, but to us open shame**, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of their **unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee** 8 Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because **we have sinned against Thee**. 9 "To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for **we have rebelled against Him;** ([Daniel 9:6-9](#))

People cannot come to Jesus without the right "information" about the gospel but "information" alone is not enough to save anyone! There must be a radical submission to the righteousness of God, manifest in the Righteous One Christ Jesus, this submission being accompanied by a putting away of our own worthless righteousness. In short as Jesus Himself declared one must

"repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15)

The godly Presbyterian preacher, [Robert Murray McChesney](#), was passing out tracts one day and handed one to a well-dressed lady. She gave him a haughty look and said,

"Sir, you must not know who I am!"

In his kind way, **McChesney** replied,

"Madam, there is coming a day of judgment, and on that day it will not make any difference who you are!"

Israel's rejection by God was not due to arbitrary divine election, as though He had withheld His grace from His chosen people. He blessed Israel with

adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises (see notes Romans 9:4)

Of all people on earth, Israel was "entrusted with the oracles of God." (see note Romans 3:2) In short, Israel was responsible for her rejection by God, Who made every effort to bring her to Himself. The tragedy in the history of Israel was squandering the immeasurable privilege of having directly received the very Word of God, first His written Word and then tragically His living Word, God's only Son, Jesus Christ.

To sum up this verse, Paul describes the righteousness provided by God, which is a righteousness that cannot be earned by man's attempts to keep the law or perform "good" works. Only faith in Christ's righteousness is able to impute His perfect righteousness to a sinner's account, and this was a truth to which most of Israel failed to submit. Remember that not all in Israel failed to submit, for there was always a believing Jewish remnant (note).

## Righteousness - God's or Man's

**Christianity** is unique and is distinctly different from **Judaism** and every other world religion ("-ism") by virtue of the fact that Christianity alone recognizes that the righteousness God demands cannot be earned, but must be received as a free gift by grace through faith. God's way versus man's way - human pride stumbles over this humbling truth.

As **Wayne Barber** says "Righteousness is not an attainment, it is a provision. It is what God gives to us as a result of placing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian life is a relationship, not a religion. In a religion, you work for God, hoping He will bless it. In a relationship, you are walking moment by moment in this intimacy of knowledge with God through His Son Jesus Christ, trusting in Him, depending on Him for everything. (Romans 9:30-10:5: Righteousness Precious Possession)

THE ANCIENT LAW DEPARTS

by Sebastien Besnault

**The ancient law departs,  
And all its terrors cease;  
For Jesus makes with faithful hearts  
A covenant of peace.**

The Light of Light divine,  
True brightness undefiled,  
He bears for us the shame of sin,  
A holy, spotless Child.

His infant body now  
Begins our pains to feel;  
Those precious drops of blood that flow  
For death the victim seal.

Today the Name is Thine,  
At which we bend the knee;  
They call Thee Jesus, Child divine!  
Our Jesus deign to be.

**Romans 10:4 For [Christ](#) is the [end](#) of the [law](#) for [righteousness](#) to [everyone](#) who [believes](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))**

**Greek:** [telos gar nomou Christos eis dikaiosunen panti to pisteuonti](#). ([PAPMSD](#))

**Amplified:** For Christ is the end of the Law [the limit at which it ceases to be, for the Law leads up to Him Who is the fulfillment of its types, and in Him the purpose which it was designed to accomplish is fulfilled. That is, the purpose of the Law is fulfilled in Him] as the means of righteousness (right relationship to God) for everyone who trusts in and adheres to and relies on Him. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. ([ESV](#))

**ICB:** Christ ended the law, so that everyone who believes in him may be right with God. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

**NIV:** Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. ([NIV - IBS](#))

**NKJV:** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

**NLT:** For Christ has accomplished the whole purpose of the law. All who believe in him are made right with God. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** For Christ means the end of the struggle for righteousness-by-the-Law for everyone who believes in him. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For the termination of the law is Christ for righteousness to everyone who believes.

**Young's Literal:** For Christ is an end of law for righteousness to every one who is believing,

## FOR CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS: telos gar nomou Christos eis dikaiosunen:

- Ro 3:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; 8:3,4; Hebrews 9:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14; 10:8, 9, 10, 11, 12,14
- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The Greek word order is striking in this passage, as the first word is "**end**" (telos), which could be read as follows "**for the end of the law (is) Christ**".

**The end** ([5056](#)) (**telos**) means an end, term, a termination, a completion, a consummation, a goal achieved, a result attained, or a realization.

How is **Christ the end of the law for righteousness**? Vincent summarizes three possible answers...

**#1. The aim** (or goal = that to which the law leads). Either that the intent of the law was to make men righteous, which was accomplished in Christ, or that the law led to Him as a pedagogue (Gal. 3:24).

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified (declared righteous) by faith. (Galatians 3:24)

**Ed note:** To the **Colossians** Paul declared that...

in Him (Christ) you **have been made complete** (and that) ...things (such as food or drink or festivals or new moons or a Sabbath days) ...are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the **substance belongs to Christ**" (Colossians 2:10,17-note)

Everything about the Jewish religion pointed to the coming Messiah—their sacrifices, priesthood, temple services, religious festivals, and covenants. Their Law, the Temple ceremonies, the sacrifices, etc were all "WORD PICTURES" given by God to tell His chosen people that they were sinners in need of a Savior. But instead of letting these "PICTURES" and the Law bring them to Christ (see Gal 3:24), they **worshipped** their Law and **rejected** their Savior! The Law like the tabernacle, temple, and sacrifices was a signpost, pointing the way. It was a means to an end, not the end itself. It could never take them to their destination. The Law cannot give righteousness but only lead the sinner to the Savior Who Alone was the source of God pleasing righteousness (see 1 Corinthians 1:30 below).

**#2. The fulfilment**, (Christ fulfilled the Law) as Matthew 5:17 (note)...

(Jesus declared) Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

**#3. The termination.** ...The last is preferable. Paul is discussing two materially exclusive systems, the one based on doing, the other on believing. The system of faith, represented by Christ, brings to an end and excludes the system of law; and the Jews, in holding by the system of law, fall short of the righteousness which is by faith. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament)

**Garland** agrees with **Vincent's** proposal that **interpretation #3** is the most viable, writing...

The immediate context, and the fact that the Mosaic Covenant was broken and has become obsolete (Jer

31:31, 32; Heb. 8:13), favor understanding Telos to mean that the law has been terminated or abolished as a means of righteousness. ([Notes](#))

**Denney** agrees that Paul's intended meaning is interpretation #3, the idea of **termination** writing that...

The sense required—a sense which the words very naturally yield—is that with Christ in the field, law as a means of attaining righteousness has ceased.

The moment a man sees Christ and understands what He is and what He has done, he feels that legal religion is a thing of the past: the way to righteousness is not the observance of statutes, no matter though they have been promulgated by God Himself; it is faith, the abandonment of the soul to the redeeming judgment and mercy of God in His Son...

Nomos (Greek for "law") without the article is "law" in the widest sense; the Mosaic law is only one of the most important instances which come under this description; and it with all statutory conceptions of religion, ends when Christ appears.

It is quite true to say that Christ consummates or fulfills the law (**Interpretation #2**)...

Quite true also that He is the goal of the OT dispensation (**Interpretation #1** - the "aim"), and it is designed to lead to Him (Mt 5:17, Gal 3:24); but though **both are true and Pauline**, these ideas are irrelevant here, where Paul is insisting, not on the connection, but on the incompatibility, of law and faith, of one's own righteousness and the righteousness of God. ([Romans 10 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#)) (Bolding added)

**John MacArthur** explains that "Paul cannot be speaking of Christ's historical fulfillment of the law (**Interpretation #2**), as important as that truth is. Christ did indeed historically fulfill the law and the entire Old Covenant by His perfect, sinless life—whether anyone believed in Him or not. But that accomplishment does not provide anyone else with saving righteousness. Rather, as indicated at the end of verse 4, Paul is saying that belief in Christ as Savior and Lord brings to an end the sinner's futile quest for righteousness through his own imperfect attempts to fulfill the law (**Interpretation #3**). When a sinner receives Christ, he also receives the gift of Christ's own righteousness."

**S Lewis Johnson** adds that...

The expression, **Christ is the end of the law**, is a notoriously difficult one, because the term **end** may be given several different senses. Perhaps, since there are several meanings that are in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures, it would be helpful to set forth some of the suggestions.

First, some have taken the word "end" in the sense of the goal (**Interpretation #1**). That is, Christ is the goal of the Law. The Law was intended to point forward to Him by acting in its office of convicter of sin (cf. Ro 3:20). In that sense it was the slave guardian that led men to Christ (cf. Gal. 3:24).

Second, it has been taken to mean end in the sense of antitype (**Interpretation #2**). In this context it would mean that all the types of the Old Testament pointed on to Christ. He is the One to whom the Levitical cultus pointed, being the burnt offering, the peace offering, the meal offering, the sin and trespass offerings, the Passover, etc. (cf. Heb 10:1). It is true that the Old Testament is full of illustrations of the coming Redeemer; they pointed on to Him.

Third, most of the commentators have taken the word "end" in the sense of termination, finish, wind-up (**Interpretation #3**). The old order, the legal age, is done away in Christ, even as a hypothetical means of salvation (no one could be saved by the Law, for all men are sinners, Christ excluded; cf. Gal. 3:10, 11, 12). The new order of the Spirit is here. This is likely the force of the text. Righteousness is only available in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice. That was something that the rich young ruler had to learn (cf. Mt 19:16-26). The passage is the counterpart of Ephesians 2:8-9. The coming of Christ told the story of redemption needed and redemption provided, for why was the fountain filled with blood, if we do not need washing?

**Paul's message** in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Roman province in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey) on the Sabbath helps us understand Christ being the "**end of the Law for righteousness**", for Paul declared...

"Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him (Jesus) forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who **believes** is **freed** (KJV = "are justified" = **dikaioo** = declared righteous) from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses (What the law could not do -- justify a person, or declare him righteous -- faith in Jesus Christ can do). (Acts 13:38,39)

Paul is preaching that when they place their faith in Christ, God will bring about a change in their relation or

standing before Him. **Justification** has to do with relations that have been disturbed by sin, and these relations are personal. It is a change from guilt and condemnation to acquittal and acceptance. A related but not identical term is **regeneration** which has to do with the change of the believer's nature. **Justification**, has to do with the change of the believer's standing before God. Regeneration is subjective while justification is objective. Regeneration has to do with man's state, while justification has to do man's standing.

**Guzik** adds a qualifying comment regarding the **law** noting that...

Jesus is the end of the law for those believe. The law ends for the believer in the sense that our obedience to the law is no longer the basis for our relationship with God. **The law has not come to an end in the sense of no longer reflecting God's standard or no longer showing us our need for a Savior.**

**Charles Hodge** has an excellent summary of the three possible meanings of **the end** (note that Hodge's points #1, #2 and #3 correspond exactly to those of Vincent mentioned at the beginning of this note) writing...

**#1. "The object to which anything leads."**

Christ is in this sense the end of the law, inasmuch as the law was a schoolmaster "put in charge to lead us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24), and as all its types and prophecies pointed to him: "These are a shadow of the things that were to come" (Col 2:17-note; He 9:9-note). The meaning and connection of the passage would then be: "The Jews erred in seeking justification from the law, for the law was designed, not to give justification, but to lead them to Christ, in order that they might be justified."

**#2. The word may be taken in the sense of "completion" or "fulfillment."**

Then Christ is the end of the law because he fulfills all its requirements, all its types and ceremonies, and satisfies its penal demands. (Mt 5:17-note, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them," Ro 8:4- note.) The philological ground for this interpretation is slight. 1Ti 1:5 is compared with Ro 13:10-note in order to prove that the word **telos**, here translated **end**, is equivalent to the (different) Greek word rendered "fulfillment." This interpretation is scriptural but is not consistent with the meaning of the word (**Ed**: In the present context)

**#3. We may take the word in its more ordinary sense of "end" or "termination" and understand it to mean, "he who terminates or puts an end to."**

The meaning and connection would then be: "The Jews mistake the true method of justification, because they seek it from the law, whereas Christ has abolished the law in order that all who believe may be justified." (Compare Ephesians 2:15 [note], "by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations"; Col 2:14 [note], "having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us ..."; Galatians 3:10, 12; Ro 6:14-note; Ro 7:4, 6-note and the general drift of the former part of the letter.)

This interpretation amounts to the same as the preceding interpretation, though it differs from it in form. Christ has abolished the law not by destroying but by fulfilling it. He has abolished the law as a rule of justification, or covenant of works, and the whole Mosaic economy, having met its completion in Him, has by Him been brought to an end. In Luke 16:16 it is said, "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John"; then, in one sense, they ceased, or came to an end. When Christ came, the old legal system was abolished, and a new era commenced.

The same idea is presented in Galatians 3:23, "Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law"; but when Christ appeared, declaring, "Believe and you will be saved," we were no longer under that slavery. It is clearly taught in Scripture that those who are out of Christ are under the law, subject to its demands and exposed to its penalty. His coming and work have put an end to its authority; we are no longer under the law but under grace (Romans 6:14); we are no longer under the system which says, "Do this and live," but under that which says, "Believe, and you will be saved." This abrogation of the law, however, is not by setting it aside but by fulfilling its demands. It is because Christ is the fulfiller of the law that He is the end of it (**Ed**: Thus Hodge links interpretation #2 with interpretation #3). It is the latter truth (**Ed**: Interpretation #3) which the apostle here asserts. The word **law** is obviously used here, as generally throughout this letter, for the whole rule of duty prescribed to man, including, for the Jews, the whole of the Mosaic institutions. That law referred to here has been fulfilled, satisfied, or abrogated by Jesus Christ. ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

**Wiersbe** - Christ is **the end of the Law** in the sense that through His death and resurrection, He has terminated the ministry of the Law for those who believe. The Law is ended as far as Christians are concerned. The righteousness of the Law is being fulfilled in the life of the believer through the power of the Spirit (Ro 8:4-note); but the reign of the Law has ended (Ep 2:15-note; Col

2:14-note). "For ye are not under the Law, but under grace" (Ro 6:14-note).

**Christ is the end** - Writing to the church at Corinth **Paul** explained that in Him came perfect **righteousness**, something not available to sinners through the law...

no man should boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and **righteousness** and sanctification, and redemption (1Corinthians 1:30)

Christ is the termination of the Law for all to believe...

- Instead of the temple, our focus is to be Christ.
- Instead of Moses, Christ.
- Instead of Aaron, Christ.
- Instead of the Law, Christ.
- Instead of ceremonies, Christ.
- Instead of worship localized in a building, Christ.

**Wayne Barber** explains Christ as the end of the law for righteousness...

Now, if you are thinking somehow that you are pretty good for God, then I want you to understand something. There has only been one man to do what you are attempting to do and that man was the God-man, Jesus Christ. If you think you can be righteous as a man according to the law, then you are putting yourself on the same level as Jesus Christ. He was the end of the law for righteousness to those who believe. In other words, He did what no other man could do.

There are many who are still in that mind set. I know we are talking about Israel and I know we are talking about justification by faith alone, but take it over into Christianity and understand something. Flesh is flesh (see note on **flesh**), I don't care if you are lost or you are saved. It is just as unapproved by God before you are saved as it is after you are saved. Do we have that in our minds?

How many people today are doing exactly what Israel was doing? They think, "The more we do, the more in favor we will be with God." But all our righteousness is filthy rags in His sight. Flesh is wicked. It is wicked. It is wicked. Whether it is religious or whether it is rebellious.

Romans 4:2, 3 (notes) says

For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God." Why? "For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and [by faith] it was reckoned to him as righteousness.'"

Going back to Ro 10:5 (note) we read,

For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

Do you know what he is doing? He is going back to the great Lawgiver himself quoting Leviticus 18:5 which says, "So you shall keep my statutes and my judgments." This is what condemned Israel. Moses went up and said, "My people say whatever You tell them, they will do." They celebrated, entered into covenant with God and condemned themselves because they couldn't do it.

You see, that is what the Law is for, to condemn us and make us ready for grace which frees us. It says, "So you shall keep my statutes and my judgments by which a man may live if he does them." If you do them, you can live. I am the Lord. I tell you what, folks, if you are going to try to earn your way into heaven, then you better obey every one of the laws that He has given not one at a time, but all of them at the same time. Now make up your mind. Which way would you rather go?

Israel had and still has blindness thinking that they can earn their way into the Kingdom of God, but they cannot. You see this same mindset in Israel, just as much today as you did back in Paul's day. In Ro 8:3 (note) Paul writes,

"For what the law could not do weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh."

In other words, He judicially dealt with it on the cross.

Well, the bottom line is there are two kinds of righteousness. That is the understanding I want you to take



away. Israel's problem was they were blinded to God's righteousness. That is what He requires, what He approves and what only He can give when a person puts their faith in God, the God-Man. They didn't understand that. And in fact, they crushed the "Stumbling Stone". They put Him on the Cross. But He is the Rock of offense. His life and His death pulled the trigger on the fact that now the door is open to the Gentiles and in turn sealed the doom of Israel. Jesus now stands before them like bedrock and they must deal with Him for righteousness comes no other way. That is the way it was in the Old Testament and that is the way it is in the New Testament. There are two kinds of righteousness—the kind I produce and the kind God produces when I put my faith in Christ.

If you are trying to somehow be approved by God and are ignoring the fact that you have a relationship with Him moment by moment, you have completely missed out on what Christianity is all about. Coming to church on Sunday and on Wednesday will not do it. It is moment-by-moment, hour-by-hour, day-by-day, "I need Thee every hour" type of attitude. Walking in the intimacy of a relationship with Him. Out of that relationship by faith comes righteous works which were predestined before the foundation of the world that we might walk in them (Ep 2:10-note). You can't plan them. They are produced by the Holy Spirit of God in your life as you walk in surrender and by faith with Him (see Walking in the Spirit beginning in Gal 5:16-note).

Do you know how you know when you are doing it right? In Galatians 5:14 Paul writes

And the law is fulfilled in one word.

How do I know when the law is being fulfilled in my life? How do I know when that character is in my life? It says, "by one word." Then it gives a phrase, "that you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Do you want to know when you are walking in intimacy with God by faith, and He is producing His righteous character in you? It is in your relationships, folks. It is whether or not your relationships are godly. Jesus said it in John 13:35

By this shall all men know that you are My disciples by the fact that you love one another.

Galatians 5 goes on to say,

And the fruit of the Holy Spirit working in your life is love. (Gal 5:22-note)

A righteous love that He approves. (Romans 9:30-10:5:Righteousness Precious Possession)

#### TO EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES: *panti to pisteuonti* (PAPMSD):

- [Romans 10 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Everyone (pas)** is singular referring to each and every one individually. We must each make a personal decision for Christ.

**Hodge** paraphrases this passage and then explains the meaning (note especially his caveat regarding the abolition of the law)...

**So that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.** The general meaning of this clause here is: "*So that, or in order that, every believer may be justified*." Christ has abolished the law in order that every believer may attain righteousness, which is unattainable by the law. The law is abolished by Christ not as a rule of life but as a covenant prescribing the condition of life (Ibid) (**Ed note:** In fact all who by grace through faith are now in the New Covenant, the law is actually written upon their hearts. So under the New Covenant, not only do we as believers have the "law" within [He 8:10-note], but we also have God's Spirit within, Who gives us the desire and the power to obey the law. See God's promise regarding the New Covenant in Ezekiel 36:26,27). ([Romans 10 Commentary Online](#))

**Believes** (4100) (*pisteuo* from *pistis*; *pistos*; related studies the faith, the obedience of faith) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of. *Pisteuo* is in the **present tense** which signifies this is their "lifestyle" - they continually believe (not in their own power but enabled by the indwelling Spirit).

**Vincent** notes that *pisteuo* "means to persuade, to cause belief, to induce one to do something by persuading, and so runs into the meaning of to obey, properly as the result of persuasion."

**Biblical faith** is not synonymous with mental assent or acquiescence which by itself is a superficial faith at best and not genuine (saving) faith. For example, the apostle **John** distinguishes two types of believing using the same verb *pisteuo*, a **genuine belief**

leading to salvation and a **superficial profession** which is not saving belief.

**John 2:22** When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they **believed** (pisteuo) the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

**Morris** in [Defenders Study Bible \(notes in right column\)](#) writes "Note the superior category of faith of the disciples to that of the "many" in John 2:23 who **believed** "when they saw the miracles," but soon fell away. The disciples did not believe because of the miracles but because of the Scripture and Jesus' words. It is far better to place one's faith in God's Word than in signs and wonders."

**John 2:23** Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many **believed** (pisteuo) in His name, beholding His signs which He was doing.

Note that **their "belief"** was associated with His signs

**John 2:24** But Jesus, on His part, was not **entrusting** (pisteuo) Himself to them, for He knew all men

**Morris** (ibid) writes "Although many in the Jerusalem crowd **'believed** in his name when they saw the miracles" (John 2:23), Jesus did not **"believe"** in them because He knew their hearts and knew their outward faith in Him was only superficial

**John 2:25** and because He did not need anyone to bear witness concerning man for He Himself knew what was in man.

**Dr Charles Ryrie** ([The Ryrie Study Bible](#)) notes that

The contrast is between people who **put their trust** (pisteuo) in Jesus, and Jesus, who does not **put His trust** in people because He knows their motives and thoughts. Enthusiasm for the spectacular is present in them, but Jesus looks for genuine faith.

**J Vernon McGee** adds that...

A great many folk read that and say, "My, isn't it wonderful that people were believing on Him." But it wasn't wonderful, friend, because theirs was not saving faith at all. They merely nodded in assent when they saw the miracles that He did. So notice what follows.

The language that is used here (John 2:22-25) is saying that He did not believe in them. You see, they believed in Him, but He didn't believe in them. In other words, to put it very frankly, their faith was not a saving faith, which He realized, of course. He knew what was in their hearts.

This is always a grave danger today for those who say they believe in Jesus. What do you mean when you say you believe in Jesus? Do you mean that you believe in the facts of the gospel?

**The important question is:** Do you trust Him as your Savior Who died for your sins? Was He raised for your justification? Is He your only hope of heaven?

This crowd was interested, and when they saw Him perform miracles, they believed. They had to—they saw the miracles. But Jesus didn't believe in them. He knew their belief was not genuine "because he knew all men." He knew what was in the human heart. He didn't need anyone to testify to Him of man because He knew what was in man.

In other words, the Lord Jesus didn't commit Himself unto the mob there. The great company believed on Him, but He didn't entrust Himself to them. When Nicodemus came to Him at night, our Lord did commit Himself unto him because this man's faith was genuine. It is unfortunate that the movement here is broken by a chapter break. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#)) (Bolding and underlining added for emphasis)

In another example of **believing** that falls short of genuine saving belief John records that when Jesus spoke to the Jews **who had believed** (pisteuo) **Him**" (John 8:31) but as their subsequent actions demonstrated their belief was not genuine for Jesus accused them declaring **"you are seeking to kill Me"** (John 8:40) and after several heated exchanges, these same "believing" Jews "fulfilled prophecy" and indeed sought to kill Jesus, picking

up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple. (**John 8:59**) (**Comment:** These Jews had a profession but not genuine possession in respect to their belief in Jesus).

**Steven Cole** - Religious people miss salvation when they do not trust in Christ as their righteousness (10:4). Romans 10:4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." This is a wonderful verse, but unfortunately it is one of the

most disputed verses in all of Paul's letters (Thomas Schreiner, Romans [Baker], p. 544). The problem is that the word "end" (Greek, telos) has different nuances of meaning. It can mean "termination," in the sense that Christ ended the Mosaic Covenant when He inaugurated the New Covenant. It can mean "goal," in the sense that the law existed to point people to Christ (Gal. 3:23-25). Or, it can mean "fulfillment" or "culmination," in the sense that all of the Old Testament types, rituals, and sacrifices pointed to and were fulfilled in Christ (Matt. 5:17).

All of those nuances are true with regard to Christ, but the difficult question is, "Which meaning does Paul intend in Romans 10:4?" Douglas Moo (The Epistle to the Romans [Eerdmans], pp. 637-642) argues that two nuances are intended, namely that Christ is the termination of the Law of Moses and that He is the culmination of all that the Law anticipated.

But Thomas Schreiner is probably correct when he argues that based on the relationship between Ro 10:3 & Ro 10:4, it means "termination" in an experiential sense. In other words, in 10:4 Paul is responding to the specific Jewish error mentioned in 10:3, that they used the law to try to establish their own righteousness. Thus in Ro 10:4 Paul is saying (ibid., p. 547), "Those who trust in Christ cease using the law to establish their own righteousness."

In line with that, Everett Harrison argues (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. by Frank Gaebelein [Zondervan], 10:111), "Paul's contention regarding the Jew (Ro 10:3) is not the incompleteness of his position, which needed the coming of Christ to perfect it, but the absolute wrong of that position, because it entailed an effort to establish righteousness by human effort rather than by acceptance of a divine gift." John MacArthur agrees (The MacArthur Study Bible, New American Standard Bible, Updated Edition [Nelson Bibles], p. 1680), "Paul means that belief in Christ as Lord and Savior ends the sinner's futile quest for righteousness through his imperfect attempts to save himself by efforts to obey the law."

So Ro 10:3-4 are saying that either you are seeking to be right with God by establishing your own righteousness through good deeds and morality (Ro 10:3), in which case you will miss God's salvation, because all such attempts fall short. Or, you will recognize that you need perfect righteousness to stand before God. Thus you will abandon your own attempts to establish your righteousness and trust in Christ alone to be your righteousness (Ro 10:4). His perfect righteousness is credited to your account, so that God declares you to be righteous or justified. God's way of salvation is not the way of the sweet little old lady, the way of being a good, religious person, because you can never be good enough. One sin disqualifies you from getting into heaven, no matter how much you try to counterbalance it with good works. We're all born with the terminal "disease" of sin, which grows progressively worse as we age. Don't be deceived into thinking that the "makeup" of good works will avert the judgment of God, who knows the thoughts and intentions of our hearts.

God's way of salvation is to trust in Jesus Christ so that the righteousness of God is imputed to your account. As Paul put it (Rom. 3:24), "Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Have you received that gift? ([Why Religious People Miss Salvation Romans 10:1-4](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** sums up this section calling us to...

Notice the universality of the offer of salvation in verse four. The apostle writes,

For Christ is the end of the law to **EVERYONE** that believeth.

And the liberality of salvation is affirmed, for he writes,

to every one that **BELIEVETH**.

As **Spurgeon** says,

It is marvelous how fine the wire may be that will carry the electric flash. We may want a cable to carry a message across the sea, but that is for the protection of the wire, the wire which actually carries the message is a slender thing. If thy faith be of the mustard seed kind, if it be only such as tremblingly touches the Saviour's garment's hem, if thou canst only say, 'Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief,' if it be but the faith of sinking Peter, or weeping Mary, yet if it be **faith in Christ**, He will be the end of the law for righteousness to thee () as well as to the chief of the apostles.

And the individuality of the salvation is also set forth, for the word "**everyone**" is in the singular number. The offer is to each of us individually, and may there be the response of the beautiful hymn,

**Rock of Ages, cleft for ME,  
Let ME hide MYSELF in Thee**

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**Christ - The End of the Law - Finished!** - Outside Madrid stands an ancient monastery where the kings of Spain have been buried. The architect designed an elongated arch so flat that the reigning monarch insisted it could not hold the structure above it.

Against the architect's protest, the king ordered that a column be placed underneath the arch as a safety precaution. After the king died, the architect revealed that he had deliberately made the column a quarter of an inch too short--and the arch had never sagged!

Nothing need be, or can be, added to the finished work of Christ on Calvary to sustain the weight of the world's salvation. Our Savior's cry from the cross, "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30), is a translation of a single Greek word which more literally could be rendered as "Ended!" "Completed!" or "Accomplished!"

That one word tells of the greatest miracle our Lord performed, the work of redeeming a lost world. Because our redemption was perfectly finished, it is impossible for us to add even one submicroscopic work of our own to what was already done on the cross.

With utter assurance, then, we can rest our eternal hope on that one all-important word, "Finished!" —Vernon C Grounds [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**We are saved not by what we do but by what Christ has done**

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**Free From the Law**

Free from the law, O happy condition,  
Jesus has bled and there is remission,  
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,  
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

Now we are free, there's no condemnation,  
Jesus provides a perfect salvation.  
"Come unto Me," O hear His sweet call,  
Come, and He saves us once for all.

"Children of God," O glorious calling,  
Surely His grace will keep us from falling;  
Passing from death to life at His call;  
Blessèd salvation once for all.

Once for all, O sinner, receive it!  
Once for all, O brother, believe it!  
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall.  
Christ has redeemed us once for all. --Bliss