

A Gospel for Those Who Appear Not to Need it

Intro: Israel, like many religious people we may know, seem unlikely candidates for the gospel – yet they were precisely the ones Paul sought and prayed to save – Ro 10

- I. The universal need – Salvation – Ro 10:1
 - A. This is the bottom line, the goal, the reason for the gospel – all the gospel tells us about, all that Jesus did, and why it should be (must be) preached
 1. People get the reason for Christ and the gospel confused with our “perceived needs” sometimes
 2. Luke 19:10 – to seek and save lost
 3. Our desire for self and others need to have the same focus and same urgency – “my heart’s desire and prayer...”
 - B. Israel was NOT what we would have considered the stereotypical candidate for the gospel – very religious, devoted, religious history/tradition – yet Paul saw (and prayed for) their need for salvation

- II. More than externals
 - A. Zeal for God – Ro 10:2
 1. Zeal is about devotion, fervency, a undeterred singleness of focus
 - a. It is sometimes used to express envy and jealousy because of its strong determination and drive to obtain or maintain possession
 - b. It is what the disciples thought of in Jn 2:17 when Jesus cleansed the temple
 - c. What had motivated Saul to persecute the church - Ph 3:6
 2. Zeal for God is a good thing
 - a. He must be #1 when there is NO #2
 - b. But NOT just random devotion, not an unstoppable drive to serve Him based on our own will or to have the single focus of doing what we only feel is His will
 - c. Note that zeal (devotion, dedication, fervency, religious drive; even acts of devotion, worship and service) is NOT an end in itself. Zeal doesn’t PROVE faithfulness or salvation (doesn’t prove you are right with God just because you are excited or committed to it)
 - B. Problem: “not according to knowledge” – Ro 10:2
 1. This is NOT about NOT being zealous or “on fire” – this is NOT a “calm down, don’t be so radical or active...”
 2. This IS about being “on fire” – radically devoted to what is right according to God in His revealed will
 3. Without knowledge based on revelation, we can look devoted to God and seem to be accomplishing a lot for Him, but we are not – Jn 15:5
 - C. Problem: “being ignorant of God’s righteousness” – Ro 10:3
 1. Note Mt 6:33 – seek His righteousness – His quality of being right or just
 2. This is about knowing, understanding, accepting, and applying His standard of what makes something and/or someone good, right, acceptable to God

3. When the standard is not God's righteousness we easily call things right, good, fair, which are not (and vice versa)
- D. Problem: "seeking to establish their own righteousness" – Ro 10:3
1. This is self-justification
 - a. Inventing own standard (or accepting that of others) – less than God's
 - b. Denying there IS a standard
 - c. Thinking that you will be righteous, or can restore righteousness by perfectly keeping a standard – Ro 3:23
 2. Note that the problem is "own righteousness" – as long as we are depending on or leaning on ourselves we will fail
- E. Problem: "not submitted to the righteousness of God" – Ro 10:3
1. We must submit ourselves, not to man and his standards, but to God and His righteousness
 2. It is intimidating because God is perfectly righteous and just – the good news (gospel) is that true righteousness is available through forgiveness in Christ – that's why we look to, call on Him
- III. The solution
- A. Call on Him – Ro 10:9, 12-13
 - B. Believe on Him – Ro 10:10-11, 14a "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?..."
 - C. Hear the gospel message – Ro 10:8, 14b "...And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?..."
 1. Note role of preachers
 2. Note it is "glad tidings of good things" – Ro 10:15
 - D. Obey the gospel – Ro 10:16

Conc: Ro 10:18-21 – will we make the same mistake, or learn from it?