**The Word is Near You**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 10:1-8**

**Wednesday Evening**

**October 16, 2024**

**Romans 10:1-8**

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. 5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above)

7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

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

**2 Peter 3:8-9**

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Saints, Paul’s concern for the Jewish people is genuine and heartfelt; his longing and prayer is that they might be saved.

**Romans 9:1-3**

1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh…

Saints, Paul worked hard and sacrificed much to teach Jews about Jesus Christ. Because Jesus is the most complete revelation of God.

No one can fully know God apart from knowing Jesus; and because God appointed Jesus to bring God and human beings together, no one can come to God by another path.

The Jews, like everyone else, can find salvation only through Jesus Christ.

**John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

**Acts 4:12**

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Saints, just as Paul did, we should wish that all Jews might be saved. We should pray for them and lovingly share the Good News with them.

In fact, we should ask ourselves, Who do I desire to be saved, and am I regularly praying for them?

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

Saints, the Jews certainly had enthusiasm in their devotion to God and their practice of the law—Paul knew that from his own experience.

However, it was misdirected zeal. The people Paul loved (the Jews) were so busy trying to keep the law that their zeal was actually keeping them from understanding God’s way of salvation.

This was exactly Paul’s state of mind before Christ confronted him. He was so zealous for God and for his religion that he persecuted Christians.

**Acts 9:1-2**

1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

**Acts 22:3-5**

3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, 5 as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.

**Acts 26:4-11**

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5 They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. 7 To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?

9 Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.

11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Saints, his zeal was based on a misunderstanding of God’s word, and so was the zeal of his fellow Jews.

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

Saints, the Israelites did not understand the extent of God’s righteousness, how it would be achieved, and how it would be made available to all people.

**Titus 2:11-15**

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. 15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Instead, they were clinging to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law.

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

Saints, they were not creating some new kind of righteousness; rather, they wanted to achieve God’s righteousness by observing the law and their rituals.

Once their minds were set, they could not see God’s way—that righteousness had been provided for them through faith in Jesus Christ, that the whole purpose of the law had been accomplished in him.

Christ fulfills the purpose and goal of the law in that he perfectly exemplified all that the law requires.

**Matthew 5:17-20**

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

**5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."**

Saints, Paul quotes freely from Moses. The first quote is from Leviticus 18:5, a section in Leviticus that gives God’s instructions to the people for how they should live in the Promised Land.

**Leviticus 18:5**

You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.

Saints, they were to obey the law for it would separate them from the pagan nations around them.

But the statement, the law’s way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands reveals the law’s fatal flaw.

In order to be right with God, one would have to obey the law perfectly, not sinning once—and that is impossible.

**James 2:10**

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Saints, righteousness that comes from the law is the ideal way of life, but it cannot be achieved well enough to merit God’s acceptance.

For that level of righteousness, supernatural help is needed.

**6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above)**

Saints, Moses also wrote about getting right with God through faith.

In verses 6-8, Paul recalls phrases from Deuteronomy 30. The book of Deuteronomy includes Moses’ final speeches to Israel as they were about to enter and subdue the land that God had promised to them many years before.

Moses recited the blessings they could look forward to for their obedience to God, as well as the curses they could expect if they disobeyed and turned away from him.

**7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).**

Saints, at the conclusion of his third address to the people, Moses explained that the people knew what they had to do to please God.

**Deuteronomy 30:11-14**

11 "For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'

13 "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

Saints, the message was as near as their lips and heart.

No one would have to go to heaven or to the place of the dead to get it so that they would know what to obey.

No one has to go up to heaven to bring Christ down as though he had never been incarnated; Christ himself has already come in the flesh.

**John 1:14**

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

No one has to go into the grave to bring Christ up from the dead; Christ has already been resurrected.

**8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):**

Saints, just as God’s message was already clear to the people of Moses’ day, so it is as near as the lips and hearts of Paul’s readers, including us.

**2 Timothy 4:1-5**

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

**Romans 1:16**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Salvation comes from trusting Christ, and it is within easy reach.

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

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**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace!**