

Romans 10 4 P's in a Pod: Predestination, Personal Responsibility, Prayer, Preaching

"Romans: Great News from Rome to the Ends of the Earth"

Chapters 9,10,11 Paul attributes unbelief of most Jews to God's sovereign purpose, but he also ascribes their unbelief to their own blindness and arrogance...God's sovereignty and human responsibility stand in relationship to each in Scripture as an "antinomy" — an apparent contradiction...the Bible holds both of these truths together: 1) the complete sovereignty of God over all history; and 2) the complete responsibility of every person.

BIBLE: 4 P's in a Pod: Predestination, Personal Responsibility, Prayer, Preaching

Does God control everything? Romans 8-11 - Sovereignty of God over all History.

Everything that happens is under God's direction.

10:1-4 Why was Israel Ignorant of Salvation by God's Righteousness?

- v. 1 Paul's passionate concern for his lost kinsmen.
- v. 2 The Jews have a zeal for God, but their zeal is misguided
- v. 3 They recognized their need for righteousness, but tried to create their own
- v. 4 Once we grasp the radical nature of Christ's work, it is the end of legalism

10:4 How is Christ the end of the law?

1. Direct confrontation to legalistic moralists and religious people
2. Not saying category of law is ended, or that binding nature of the law is ended.
3. Christ ended Law "system" as a way of righteousness, to be acceptable to God.

10:5-8 -The two ways of righteousness in the Bible

- v. 5 Moses (in Leviticus 18:5) tells us that we must obey the entire law to be saved
- vv. 6-8 But Moses (in Deut.30:14) tells us we can get a new life through simple belief

10:9-15-How to become righteous God's way

- v. 9a 1st need: to confess the work of Christ in history

- v. 9b 2nd need: to trust in that work from the heart
- v. 10 (Justification and salvation are essentially the same thing)
- vv. 11-13 This is accessible to anyone and everyone
- vv. 14-15 3rd need: to communicate the message of the good news through people

10:9-13 How to become a Christian?

1. Truth must be known, basic Gospel content:

- a) Jesus' Person. "Jesus is Lord" – supreme authority over the world. 'kurios' Greek OT translation for God's personal name "Yahweh."
- b) Jesus' Work. "God raised him from dead" Life, death, resurrection for our sins.

2. Truth must be believed from the heart - not that the whole heart must be purified perfectly – we trust our whole self to the person and work of Christ as our righteousness.

3. Confess with the mouth - not a separate action from believing from the heart - Hebrew "parallelism" not two separate things to do. NOT a "work" to be saved, or "magic words."

4. Equally possible and available to anyone (v.11) and to everyone (verses 11-13)

Harry Ironside, pastor of the Moody Church in Chicago > invited Gypsy Smith Traveling Evangelist from Gypsy Background > Message of Gypsy stories
After message on Gypsies > Gave Invitation > Many CAME FORWARD
Ironside "Perhaps they came forward because they wanted to become gypsies"

GOSPEL > Objective Truth, Facts of History, Person and Work of Jesus Christ
UNLESS THE FACTS ARE PROCLAIMED > message is not Christianity
TRUE FAITH CAN ONLY BE BUILT UPON TRUE GOSPEL FACTS

10:14-17 What about evangelism?

"Sent" v.15 Messengers must be sent – "apostello" ("sent") - Christ through his church sends out missionaries, preachers, and lay people to be messengers of that apostolic word.

"Preach" v.14c "kerysso" = "herald" - a living "Tweet"! Heralds operated in the streets.

"Heard" v.14b. Faith cannot happen mystically - response to understood Biblical content.

"Believe" v.13. This makes us Christians.

So, evangelism is:

1. Absolutely necessary: “How can they believe without someone preaching to them” v.15
2. Requires a willingness to speak out (preach)
3. Requires not just proclamation but persuasion, getting a person’s understanding (hear)
4. Requires transmission of a body of truth that is not a person’s opinion but the authoritative revelation from Christ and his apostles.

10:16-21 Return to the question: Why did Israel reject God’s way of righteousness?

vv. 16-17 Not all Israel has believed, as Isaiah foretold

v. 18 Did they not hear the message? Of course they did

vv. 19-20 Did they not understand the message? The Jews knew about
the need for righteousness but the Gentiles did not

v. 21 The reason is stubbornness of heart

So why is anybody lost? Is it because they are not elected? No! What accounts for the lost is their rejection of the gospel... We are not responsible for our acceptance of the gospel, but we are responsible for our rejection of it. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Why do you think that people more concerned about religion and righteousness might be more prone to miss the gospel?... Religious people are either:

a) offended by the gospel (“You mean you could be a criminal and believe in Jesus and be saved? — that’s too easy!”)

or else b) they run the gospel through their own works-righteousness grid and reinterpret it to fit in. Thus, they think they have already heard the gospel.

“Why do people hate Christianity today? It is because of grace. Grace means that God saves the undeserving. Grace saves the “nobodies.” Grace saves the ignorant. Grace saves those who are not even seeking God...How the natural man hates that! If God would only take note of who we are...our superior and advanced intelligence, or at least credit us for trying. Instead, he insists that we come with no claims on his favor at all. What is our problem? Is it that we have not heard the gospel? No, we have heard it...Is it that we have not understood it? No we have understood it all too well. That is why we are angry with those who have received it, and with God...Our problem is that...we have rejected grace. It is because we will not bow our stiff, disobedient, and obstinate necks to the gospel.”

James Boice

10:18-21 Why is Israel inexcusable?

1st Question: Didn't they hear the gospel? (v.18)

Answer: Of course they did (v.18) Gospel was widespread as God's creation declaring glory of God all over world (Psalm 19) Wherever Jewish community existed, gospel preached

2nd Question: Well, didn't they understand it? (v.19)

Answer: It is possible to be exposed to the gospel and not really understand it. But they did understand - Deut. 32:21 - only the Gentiles did not understand.

3rd Question (implicit): Then why didn't they believe.?

Answer: Gentiles had found God, though they did not seek him (v.20), quotes Isaiah about how God held out his hands to Israel but they did not respond because of obstinacy (v.21) Thus Israel is not to be excused for their refusal.

“The relentless logic of Paul's case for evangelism is felt most forcibly when the stages are stated negatively and each is seen to be essential to the next. Thus, unless some people are commissioned for the task, there will be no gospel preachers, unless the gospel is preached, sinners will not hear Christ's message and voice, unless they hear him, they will not believe the truths of his death and resurrection; unless they believe in these truths they will not call on him; and unless they call on his name, they will not be saved.” John Stott

1980 BUS stop at Masaka, Uganda > bus stopped in front of me > doors opened
HIDEOUS FEET / lumbered down steps / calves, ankles, feet > like Elephant
Young Woman > face was as Beautiful as her feet were Ugly > RADIANT
Shocking Introduction to Horrible Disease called ELEPHANTIASIS
Thought of Woman as learned about another African with that affliction –
Man in West Africa > became Christian > Also Radiant thru Christ

DECIDED > every person in his village should hear gospel > THRU him
Monstrous Legs > painfully hobbled from hut to hut > shared Word of Life
After Several Months > MISSION ACCOMPLISHED > All Village Heard

Closest Village > 2 miles away > by God's grace this man walked there
Again several months passed > Daily struggled along that 4 mile circuit
All in the NEIGHBORING VILLAGE HEARD God's News of Love for them

Discussed with his pastor and a Missionary Doctor HIS NEW PLAN
Visit NEXT Village > 12 miles away > Preach Gospel of Christ

Step after Step he dragged his Leathery Legs and Gigantic Feet
Along a windy Jungle Trail > He finally arrived under the mid-day sun
BEFORE taking the food & drink they offered > He told them of Jesus
He struggled into that night > Telling every hut in the village about Christ

With no place to stay in the village > He set out for home that very night
Thru DARK NIGHT along a DANGEROUS TRAIL > he walked in the joy of knowing he had
been used by God as a Gospel Messenger

After Midnight the missionary doctor was awakened by a noise on his front porch. The man had returned from his long mission and had come with his bleeding leg-stumps to the door of the dispensary. The missionary called his helpers and they lifted the man almost unconscious, and put him on one of the beds in the little hospital. The doctor said he had seldom seen such a frightful sight as he looked upon those bleeding feet which had come back from such an errand of love and mercy. Unashamedly, the doctor told of how he had bent over those feet to minister to them, and as he cleaned and dressed them, he told how his tears had fallen with the ointment upon them. The doctor ended the story by saying, "In all my life I do not know when my heart was more drawn out to another Christian believer. All I could think of was the verse in the Word of God. 'How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings, that publish peace.'"

Here was a man who had been sent by God to tell the story of what Christ had done for him, and although he had to do it at the cost of such personal agony, yet he had not flinched but had gone through to the end to tell needy people the good news of salvation.

Romans 8:28 – "We know that, for the ones loving him, God works together all things for good..."

Ephesians 1:11 "him who works all things in accord with his purpose"

A. God conforms all events to cohere in his master plan.

1. His plan includes "little things." Ultimately, there are no accidents. Proverbs 16:33 – "The lot is cast into the lap, but the disposal thereof is from the Lord." Even the flip of the coin is part of his plan.

2. His plan includes "bad things." The evil of the world was not God's original design. Death, disease, sin and decay are a temporary result of sin (Rom.8:18-23). God is distressed by our distress (Is. 63:9) and he is grieved by our pain (Lam. 3:22). Therefore, he is weaving into his plan even those troubles and sorrows and pain, because his plan, in the end, will result in glory for him and "good" for his people (Rom.8:28). "Not even a sparrow falls to the ground except by my Father's will" (Matt.10:29). "Whenever evil befalls a city, is it not the Lord who caused it?" (Amos 3:6). "I am the Lord and there is no other... I bring prosperity and create disaster. I the Lord do all these things." (Is. 45:6-7)

3. His plan includes sins. Sins are very major part of “all things.” (If our sins were left out of the plan of God, there’d not be much left!) Psalm 76:10 says of God, “You make the wrath of men to praise thee,” meaning that God will overrule and control things so that even wicked and violent events come out for the good of his people and his glory. In Genesis 50:20 Joseph says to his brothers, “You intended me harm, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of lives.” Joseph is explaining that his brothers’ evil action of selling him into slavery was used by God to do great good.

B. YET all choices are free acts for which we are responsible.

Romans 9:16 – “It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”

Romans 9:31-32 – “Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works.”

“Why does man act the way he does?”...

What the World Says...

1. Contingency – Random, no reason; accidental and haphazard.
2. Determinism - ‘you cannot help it, you are like that...’ Everything is determined and you are not free at all... Biological view > determined by various glands in body
3. Psychoanalysis. Our apparently deliberate actions are in fact determined by motives of which we are unaware...’

“He brings to pass the actions of personal beings in a way that preserves their freedom and responsibility to the full. Is that inconceivable? We can persuade others, yet their freedom is preserved when they do what we persuaded them to do of their free will. Shall not then God be able to do with certainty what we with our little power do with uncertainty? Does God who made the soul know how to move it in accordance with its own nature so that its freedom is not destroyed?”

J. Gresham Machen

His plan works through our choices, not around or in spite of our choices.

Greek “fate” or Islamic “kismet” are quite different from Christian doctrine of God’s sovereignty...Our choices have consequences, and we are never forced by God to do anything other than what we want. But God works out his will perfectly through our willing actions. It is a marvel!

Tim Keller

Long my imprisoned Spirit lay, Fast bound in sin and nature’s night

Thine eye diffused a quickening ray; I woke — the dungeon flamed with light!

My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed thee! -

Charles Wesley, “And Can It Be?” 1738

“If anybody is lost, the blame is theirs, but if anybody is saved, the credit is God’s This antinomy contains a mystery which our present knowledge cannot solve; but it is consistent with Scripture, history, and experience.” John Stott

If we reject the idea of election, then we are forced to eventually say that one of the persons was humbler or more open to the truth or more virtuous in some way. In other words, the real differentiating factor, and the critical cause of one’s salvation over others is something better in you. In other words, you are back into justification by works! Paul already mentioned that the doctrine of election is necessary to preserve the doctrine of justification. Tim Keller