SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Romans 10

The Word Is Near You — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-09 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Israel had zeal without knowledge and tried to build its own righteousness, but Christ is the end of the law for everyone who believes. The word is near — confess Jesus as Lord, believe God raised Him, call on His name — and God sends people with beautiful feet to carry it, while His hands stay open all day long.

00 The Text

ROMANS 10 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

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

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

6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down),

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 are preaching,

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

13 for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

16 However, ⚠ they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

17 So △ faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

18 But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD."

19 But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, "△ I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU."

20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, "△ I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME."

21 But as for Israel He says, "△ ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO ⚠ A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE."

Marked in the text

- **v1** "my heart's desire and my prayer to God" — Promise / blessing
- **v1** "for their salvation" — Promise / blessing
- **v2** "a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge" — Sin / warning
- **v3** "seeking to establish their own" — Sin / warning
- **v3** "they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God" — Sin / warning
- **v4** "Christ is the end of the law" — God — His character & actions
- **v4** "to everyone who believes" — Promise / blessing
- **v5** "the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law" — Time / place / contrast
- **v6** "the righteousness based on faith" — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU" — Promise / blessing
- **v9** "confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord" — Command / instruction
- **v9** "believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead" — Command / instruction
- **v9** "you will be saved" — Promise / blessing
- **v11** "WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED" — Promise / blessing
- **v12** "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek" — Time / place / contrast
- **v12** "abounding in riches for all who call on Him" — God — His character & actions
- **v13** "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED" — Promise / blessing
- **v15** "unless they are sent" — God — His character & actions
- **v15** "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET" — Promise / blessing
- **v16** "they did not all heed the good news" — Sin / warning
- **v17** "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" — God — His character & actions
- **v19** "I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS" — God — His character & actions
- **v20** "I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME" — God — His character & actions
- **v21** "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS" — God — His character & actions
- **v21** "A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE" — Sin / warning
- **v3** "righteousness" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v1** "heart" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v14** "how" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

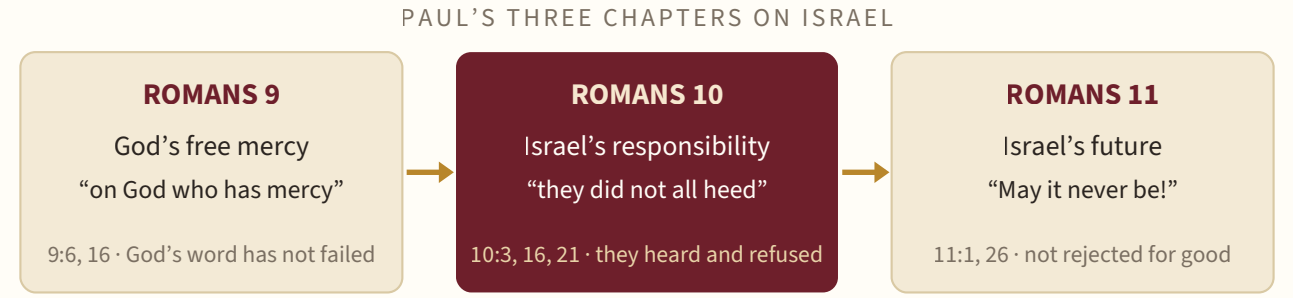
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 10:10

"for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

FIGURE · ROMANS 9–11 — WHERE CHAPTER 10 STANDS



Hinge, 9:30–33: Israel pursued righteousness "as though it were by works" and stumbled over the stone.

Chapter 10 is the middle panel: between God's free choice (ch. 9) and Israel's future (ch. 11) stands Israel's own refusal to submit.

Setting. Paul has just finished the hard chapter on God's sovereign choice (Romans 9) and ended it at the stumbling stone: Gentiles who weren't looking found righteousness by faith, while Israel, "pursuing a law of righteousness," missed it "as though it were by works" (9:30–33). Chapter 10 picks up right there, with "Brethren" and a prayer.

Structure:

- vv1–4 — **Paul's prayer and Israel's problem:** his heart's desire is their salvation (v1). They have zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge (v2). Not knowing God's righteousness, they tried to establish their own and did not subject themselves to God's (v3). Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (v4).
- vv5–8 — **two righteousnesses:** the law's — "the man who practices" it "shall live by" it (v5; Lev 18:5); faith's — no one has to ascend to heaven to bring Christ down or descend into the abyss to bring Him up (vv6–7); "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — the word of faith Paul preaches (v8; Deut 30:12–14).
- vv9–13 — **mouth and heart:** confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, believe in your heart God raised Him, and you will be saved (v9). Heart → righteousness; mouth → salvation (v10). Whoever believes will not be disappointed (v11; Isa 28:16). No distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is rich to all who call (v12). Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (v13; Joel 2:32).
- vv14–17 — **the chain:** call ← believe ← hear ← preacher ← sent (vv14–15). Beautiful feet (v15; Isa 52:7). Not all heeded — "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" (v16; Isa 53:1). Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (v17).

- vv18–21 — **the witnesses:** Did they not hear? They did — Psalm 19:4 (v18). Did Israel not know? Moses: God will make them jealous by a non-nation (v19; Deut 32:21). Isaiah: found by those who did not seek Him (v20; Isa 65:1). And to Israel: "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE" (v21; Isa 65:2).

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95):

- **righteousness** ×7 — vv3 (twice), 4, 5 (twice), 6, 10.
- **believe / believes / believed** ×7 — vv4, 9, 10, 11, 14 (twice), 16.
- **heart** ×5 — vv1, 6, 8, 9, 10.
- **Lord / LORD** ×5 — vv9, 12 (twice), 13, 16.
- **hear / heard / hearing** ×5 — vv14 (twice), 17 (twice), 18.
- **How / how** ×5 — v14 (three times), v15 (twice).
- **saved / salvation** ×4 — vv1, 9, 10, 13.
- **mouth** ×3 — vv8, 9, 10. **word** ×3 — vv8 (twice), 17. **call** ×3 — vv12, 13, 14. **preach / preacher** ×3 — vv8, 14, 15. **faith** ×3 — vv6, 8, 17.
- **says / say** ×9 — vv6, 8, 11, 16, 18, 19 (twice), 20, 21: Scripture keeps "speaking" in this chapter. Ten Old Testament quotations in 21 verses.
- **whoever** ×2 — vv11, 13. **Moses** ×2 — vv5, 19. **Isaiah** ×2 — vv16, 20. **Israel** ×2 — vv19, 21.

Contrasts: zeal ⟷ knowledge (v2). Their own righteousness ⟷ the righteousness of God (v3). "Based on law" (v5) ⟷ "based on faith" (v6). Ascend/descend ⟷ "near you" (vv6–8). Mouth ⟷ heart, and the order flips between v9 and v10. Jew ⟷ Greek, but "no distinction" (v12). Those who did not seek found Him (v20) ⟷ Israel, to whom He reached all day, refused (v21). Paul's heart's desire (v1) ⟷ God's outstretched hands (v21).

Shape of the chapter: a prayer (1–4), a sermon on nearness (5–13), a chain of questions (14–17), and a courtroom of witnesses (18–21). It begins with longing and ends with longing.

Chapter theme (my words): Religious effort can't make anyone right with God — Christ already did. The word that saves is near enough to say and believe, open to whoever calls, and God sends people to carry it while He keeps reaching for those who keep refusing.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 10:17

"So △faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

FIGURE · TWO RIGHTEOUSNESSES — MOSES BESIDE PAUL

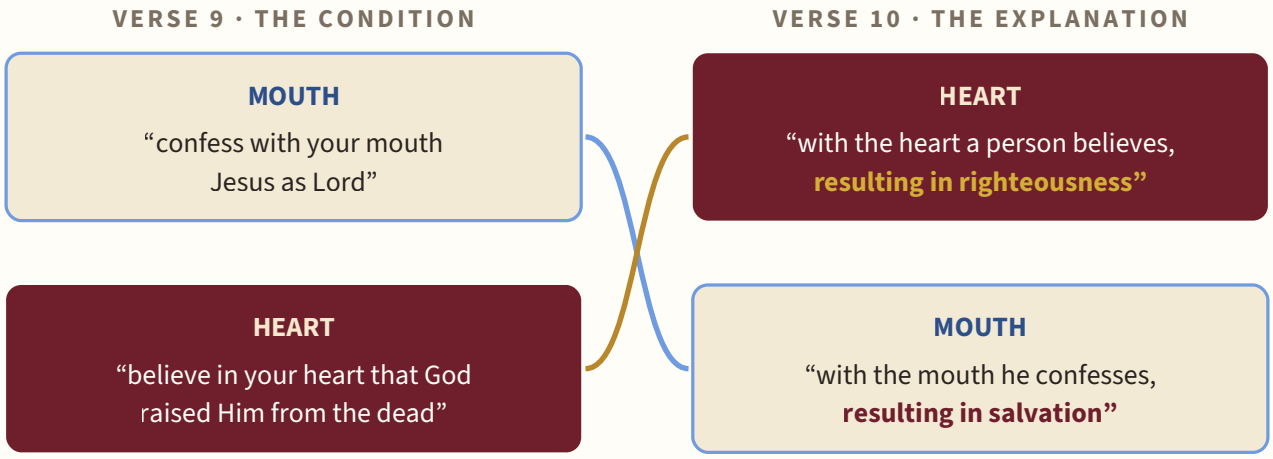
BASED ON LAW · 10:5	BASED ON FAITH · 10:6–8
"the man who practices … shall live by that righteousness"	**"THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"**
Leviticus 18:5 · the promise is real, but it pays only a perfect doer	Deuteronomy 30:14 · not a ladder to climb but a word to receive

MOSES · DEUTERONOMY 30:12–14	PAUL · ROMANS 10:6–8
"Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us …?" v. 12	→ "WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?" **— to bring Christ down** v. 6 · He already came: the incarnation
"Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us …?" v. 13	→ "WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?" **— to bring Christ up from the dead** v. 7 · He already rose: the resurrection
"the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart" v. 14 · "that you may observe it"	→ "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU …" **— the word of faith we preach** v. 8 · confessed and believed (vv. 9–10)

Moses: the commandment is not out of reach. Paul: Christ is not out of reach — He has done the climbing.

Paul sets the law's "do and live" against faith's "the word is near," then reads Deuteronomy 30 line by line as a picture of Christ — no one has to climb up or dig down, because He has already come down and come up.

FIGURE · MOUTH AND HEART — PAUL'S CROSSING LINES (10:9–10)



Heart without mouth hides Christ; mouth without heart is only words. Paul will not separate them.

Verse 9 runs mouth → heart, verse 10 runs heart → mouth: the order flips, but the two always travel together — the inward trust that God credits as righteousness, and the outward confession that owns Jesus as Lord.

Zeal without knowledge (vv1–3). Guzik: Paul readily recognizes Israel's zeal but sees it is "not according to knowledge," and election (ch. 9) doesn't cancel responsibility (ch. 10). Sproul borrows the definition of a fanatic — one who "has lost sight of where he is going but redoubles his effort to get there." Henry: "There is such a thing as a blind misguided zeal," and "Unbelief is a non-submission to the righteousness of God." The sin of verse 3 is not laziness but self-made righteousness — building, in Sproul's words, "upon the foundation of their own merit."

"Christ is the end of the law" (v4). *Telos* means end, goal, completion. Spurgeon finds three senses at once: Christ is the law's *purpose* (it was a schoolmaster to bring us to Him), its *fulfillment* (He kept it and bore its penalty — "Christ did not come to make the law milder"), and its *termination* for the believer as a covenant of life. Henry: the moral law searched the wound, the ceremonial law shadowed the remedy, "but Christ is the end of both." Note the qualifier: "for righteousness to everyone who believes." The law still shows me my sin; it is no longer a ladder.

The two righteousnesses and Deuteronomy 30 (vv5–8). Leviticus 18:5 promises life to the doer — and no one has done it. Faith-righteousness "speaks" in Moses' own words from Deuteronomy 30, where the commandment was "not out of reach." Paul reads those lines as a picture of Christ: no one needs to ascend to bring Him down (He came — the incarnation) or descend to bring Him up (He rose — the resurrection). Sproul: those are "manifest impossibilities"; "The gospel is right in front of you." Guzik: "We believe and receive." Henry: the law's tenor is "Do, and live"; the gospel "is very plain and easy." Spurgeon: "As thou art, believe and live." (Sproul's sermon doesn't take up Deuteronomy 30 directly; that link is Paul's own quotation.)

Mouth and heart (vv9–10). Verse 9 goes mouth → heart; verse 10 goes heart → mouth. They are not two steps but two sides of one faith. Confessing "Jesus as Lord" gives Him the divine name — verse 13 applies Joel's "the LORD" (Yahweh) to Jesus. Guzik: confessing is agreeing with what God said about Jesus, and "Mere intellectual agreement … is not enough." Sproul is the sharpest here: "It is the possession of faith, not the profession of it," that justifies; faith has content, assent and personal trust, and "Every demon from hell knows that information." Henry: heart-belief is the consent of the will; true faith will not stay silent.

"Whoever" and election (vv11–13). Here the teachers sound different notes, and I should say so honestly. Spurgeon preaches "whosoever" wide open — "thou canst not pray and perish" — and still says "No man ever called on Christ's name yet who was not elected." Sproul, in the next sermon, is the most openly Reformed: "Jesus does not die for everyone indiscriminately; He dies for believers," and he rejects "God loves you and has a wonderful plan" as honest evangelism. Henry speaks of God offering life "with the greatest sincerity and seriousness that can be." Guzik keeps both truths in view without resolving them. All four agree on the thing I can act on: anyone who truly calls will be saved.

The chain (vv14–17). Paul asks backward: call ← believe ← hear ← preacher ← sent. Read forward, it's the road salvation travels. Sproul: election doesn't make evangelism pointless — "God has chosen chiefly the foolishness of preaching as the means by which He will gather His elect" — and "No preacher is indispensable." Spurgeon: "The gift of preaching is the responsibility for preaching." Guzik: preachers "partner with God for the salvation of men." Henry: "Preachers and hearers are correlates," and "the holiness of ministers' lives is the beauty of their feet." Verse 16 adds the hard truth: hearing is necessary but not sufficient — Sproul: "You cannot have faith without it, but you can have unbelief even with it." *Text note:* NASB95 and SBLGNT read "word of Christ" in v17; KJV reads "word of God."

The witnesses and the hands (vv18–21). Psalm 19:4 — the message went out. Deuteronomy 32:21 — God would stir Israel's jealousy through outsiders (Paul builds chapter 11 on this: 11:11, 14). Isaiah 65:1–2 — found by the unseeking, refused by His own. Guzik: Israel's responsibility is "all the more so" because of their privilege. Sproul: the Gentile turn was God's plan from the beginning, and the power is "in the Word." Henry: "The patience of God towards provoking sinners is admirable." The chapter's last picture is not a closed door but open hands.

Word study (Greek):

- **zeal — *zēlos* (G2205):** heat, fervor; good or bad depending on its object.
- **knowledge — *epignōsis* (G1922):** full, discerning recognition — not just information.
- **end — *telos* (G5056):** end, goal, completion, fulfillment.
- **near — *engys* (G1451):** near in place or time, within reach.
- **word — *rhēma* (G4487):** a spoken word, an utterance — "the word of faith which we are preaching."
- **confess — *homologeō* (G3670):** to say the same thing, to agree openly.
- **call on — *epikaleō* (G1941):** to call upon, invoke, appeal to.
- **disappointed — *kataischynō* (G2617):** to put to shame, to let down in one's hope.
- **distinction — *diastolē* (G1293):** difference, separation (same word as 3:22).
- **sent — *apostellō* (G649):** to send out on a mission.
- **beautiful — *hōraios* (G5611):** timely, seasonable, beautiful for its hour.
- **hearing — *akoē* (G189):** hearing, and the report that is heard.
- **make jealous — *parazēloō* (G3863):** to provoke to jealousy or rivalry.
- **disobedient — *apeitheō* (G544):** to refuse to be persuaded. **obstinate — *antilegō* (G483):** to speak against, answer back.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. Sincerity is not enough — zeal needs knowledge.
2. The root sin is self-made righteousness; unbelief is non-submission (Henry).

3. *Telos* is goal and finish: Christ is what the law aimed at, so He ends it as a ladder.
4. The gospel is near, not hard — Christ has done the climbing up and down.
5. Possession, not profession, justifies (Sproul).
6. "Jesus is Lord" gives Him the divine name of Joel 2:32.
7. Whoever means whoever — no distinction in sin, none in mercy.
8. God ordains the means: someone is sent, someone preaches, someone hears.
9. The feet are beautiful because they are timely — and because the walk matches the message.
10. The chapter ends with God's hands open all day long.

Cross-references: Lev 18:5 · Deut 30:11–14 · Isa 28:16 · Joel 2:32 · Isa 52:7 · Isa 53:1 · Ps 19:1–4 · Deut 32:21 · Isa 65:1–2 · Rom 3:21–22 · Rom 9:30–33 · Rom 11:11 · Gal 3:24 · Phil 2:9–11 · Phil 3:6 · Acts 4:12

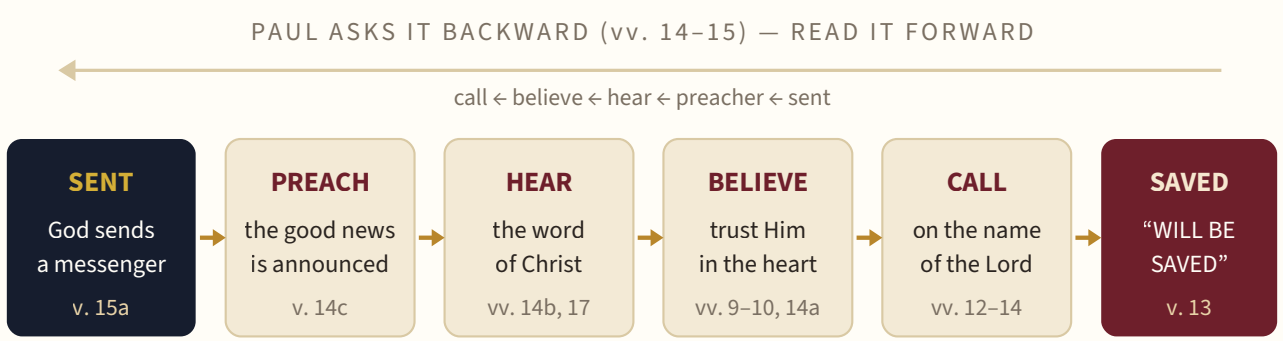
03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 10:15

"How will they preach △unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "☆HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!""

FIGURE · THE CHAIN OF 10:14–15, DRAWN BACKWARD



"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." — 10:17

"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET …" (v. 15, Isaiah 52:7) — the first link is a pair of feet on the road.

Paul asks his questions from the last link back to the first; read them forward and you see how a person comes to be saved — it starts with God sending someone, and it ends with a sinner calling on the Lord.

Sin to confess — "seeking to establish their own." My problem has never been too little effort. It's been effort aimed at the wrong thing — trying to stack up enough good days, enough clean time, enough service, so I can feel right with God. That is building my own righteousness. Today I'll name the thing I'm quietly leaning on to feel acceptable, and lay it down in front of the cross.

Promise to trust — "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU." No one has to climb up to bring Christ down or dig down to bring Him up. He's already come, already died, already risen. For the men I sit with — in a prison chapel, a recovery room, a kitchen table — that means nobody is too far away, too far gone, or too uneducated. The word is as near as their own mouth and heart.

Command to obey — "confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord." Heart and mouth go together. If I believe it, I'll say it — at work, at home, to the man next to me. And "Lord" means Lord: not a helper I call in a crisis, but the One whose name is above every name. Where am I keeping my faith private because saying it out loud would cost me something?

Example to follow — the beautiful feet. Someone was sent to me. Someone preached, and I heard. I want to be the next link: to go, to speak, and to help send others. Henry says the holiness of a minister's life is the beauty of his feet — so my walk has to match my message.

Warning to heed — "they did not all heed." Hearing isn't the same as obeying. I've heard the gospel a thousand times. The question is whether I'm still answering back — "disobedient and obstinate" — in some corner of my life while God keeps holding out His hands.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Paul says Israel had "a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge." Where have I been sincere and busy for God while still running on my own steam? (10:2–3; Phil 3:6) *Zeal is heat; it needs the light of knowing what God has done.*
2. What does it look like, in a man's actual week, to "establish his own righteousness" — and what would it look like to "subject himself to the righteousness of God" instead? (10:3; 9:31–32) *The opposite of earning is receiving.*
3. Moses said the word was "not out of reach"; Paul says no one has to bring Christ down or up. What "climbing" am I still doing to feel right with God? (10:6–8; Deut 30:11–14) *He has done the ascending and the descending.*
4. Sproul says a raised hand or a signed card never justified anyone. How do I tell the difference between professing faith and possessing it — in myself and in the men I walk with? (10:9–10; Jas 2:19) *Mouth and heart travel together.*
5. Who were the "beautiful feet" that brought the gospel to me? Whom am I being sent to right now — and what part do I play in sending others? (10:14–15; Isa 52:7) *Every saved man is the end of someone's chain and the start of another.*
6. God says, "All the day long I have stretched out My hands." Where am I being "disobedient and obstinate" — answering back — while He keeps reaching? (10:21; Isa 65:2) *The patience of God toward provoking sinners is admirable.*

Worship. The God who could have shut the door kept His hands open all day long. Christ came down so I wouldn't have to climb up; He rose so I wouldn't have to dig Him out of the grave. The same Lord is rich to all who call on Him — and I called, and He did not disappoint me.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are the end of the law and the only righteousness I have. Forgive me for trying to build my own. Put Your word in my heart and on my lips; make my faith real, not just spoken. Thank You for the feet that brought the gospel to me — now send me. Give me patience like Yours with the men who keep answering back, because You were patient with me. Amen.

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