

Title: Whosoever Will
Series: Living Free
Text: Chapter 10

Introduction: There has long been a debate within the church on the role of the human will and the sovereignty of God in salvation. Good hearted, God-fearing Christians on both sides of the discussion have differing opinions.

There is, however, a great deal of common ground among the Calvinists and the Arminianisms: Without God's intervention no person would be saved and without faith calling is ineffectual. It has been said that we pray like it everything depends on us and we sleep like all depends on God!

The book of Romans gives every person great hope for it declares that God always responds to faith in Jesus Christ. When He says, "I will have mercy on you", there is nothing anyone can do about it – He will have compassion on you!

The controversy addressed in Romans 9 is "What about the Jews? Are they still God's elect now that the Messiah has come?" Paul clearly lays out that as a result of the atonement all people are now saved by faith in Christ and thus not by the works of the Law. God accepts and rejects each of us on the basis of faith or unbelief and not on the basis of tradition, ancestral line, or the works of the Law.

I. The Danger of Zeal without Knowledge. - Romans 10:1,2

- 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.*

Paul had no doubt about the Jews sincerity, their emotion and enthusiasm for Jehovah. He himself, before obeying the gospel, was extremely zealous. He says of himself:

- **Phil. 3:6** *"concerning zeal, persecuting the church."*
- **Gal. 1:14** *"more exceedingly zealous."*

The Pharisees were zealous but Jesus says of them, *"You have made void the word of God because of your tradition ... but in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men,"* **Matt. 15:6, 9.**

Jesus doesn't criticize zeal, per se, but rather the lack of knowledge

1. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **Ro 12:9-13**

The Word actually commands us to have zeal

- *Be zealous for spiritual gifts* **I Cor 14:1**
- *Be zealous for good works,* **Titus 2;14**
- *Zealously repent* **Rev 3:19**

Jesus himself says after cleansing the temple: *The zeal for the house of the Lord consumes me...* **John 2:17**

**We all need the zeal of the Lord today to rise up
within us in a more powerful way than ever before...**

2. *People perish for lack of knowledge* **Hosea 4:6**

All over the world there is religious practice that, although sincere and passionate, is not according to knowledge. Many of us may have practices of superstition and religious routines that are faithfully observed but are not according to knowledge too.

Here is the knowledge you need to know: Christ died for you. Christ now lives in you. Christ is coming again. Faith in Christ drives everything in life.

II. Christ is the end of the Law Romans 10:3-7

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).*

A. The self-righteous boast in the superiority of their works. The Jews felt observance of the Law made them the exclusive people of God – instead of the faith in the Covenant Giver – the guide (the Law) became an idol and a badge of self-righteousness..

This is a snare we must all be on constant guard against – the feeling of superiority with other believers.

B. Christ ends the Law – the Law, Paul said earlier, is spiritual, relevant and serves as a tutor to Christ, who inaugurated a new epoch. In Christ salvation is now available for *everyone who believes*.

1. You and I don't have to do something amazing or heroic to be worthy of the Lord's grace – *i.e. ascend to heaven*

- **II Kings 5.** Namaan the general of the Syrian army had to only dip in the river Jordan seven times to be healed from leprosy but he was too proud for such a simple act – but when he humbled himself he was miraculously healed.

2. Nor do we need to seek out some hidden, spiritual secret to be saved – *i.e. descend to the deep places*

- **Revelation 2:24** *Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's **so-called deep secrets** (I will not impose any other burden on you):*

Salvation is neither the possession for the heroic nor the mystical – it is open to whoever will believe.

III. How are you saved? Romans 10:8-10

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):*

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

10) *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

8) *What does it say?* Paul is quoting from Deuteronomy.

A. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord

1. Lordship. What are we to confess? Jesus Christ is Lord

The word *Lord* was a very common term in the Roman/Greek world. It was used of a master in relation to his slaves or servants, the head of a family and the head of a religious or national cult, such as Caesar is Lord. It implied superiority requiring submission. It means basically ruler and by implication ‘master’.

9) *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11) and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**,
to the glory of God the Father*

Philippians 2:9-11

Jesus triumphed over death by an act of extraordinary obedience to the Father and as a result God bestowed on him the highest name in the universe: Jesus Christ is Lord. And **I Cor 8:6** says *there is one Lord Jesus Christ*

However, Jesus is not to be worshipped as an historic conqueror of sin and Satan but served as a *present* ruler over them all, as well.

- I like Kenneth Copeland’s signoff of his TV show “Jesus is Lord” – now that says it all doesn’t it?

2. Earliest creed of the church

The first doctrinal statement of the early church was *Jesus is Lord*. Before the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed or any handbook of prayer, the church was unified around the simple common confession “Jesus is Lord”.

The statement Jesus is Lord is a summary of the *kerygma* – the basic tenants of the salvation story: Jesus is the Messiah, He conquered the grave, He fulfilled all that was needed for salvation, He is coming back and the Holy Spirit makes this effective

- **I Cor 12:3** – you can only say ‘Jesus is Lord’ by the Holy Spirit’
- Story: On Easter this year many made public confessions of faith in Christ for the first time in their lives.

B. Believe in your heart that God raise Jesus from the dead

This is a crystal clear assertion – Jesus died and rose again. The resurrection is not a metaphor for hope that tomorrow will be a better day. Jesus really came back to life after being dead for three days.

This is an abbreviated way of saying Jesus died because of our sin and when He rose again victory was secured.

I personally believe Jesus Christ rose again. If you believe that truly happened then nothing is impossible for Jesus will do exactly what He said He would do.

- Don’t mess with a guy who said he was going to come back to life after three days and the actually did it!

C. Aligning your confession *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Mouth and Heart. There is a powerful link between *confession* and *faith* – between our words and our beliefs – between the mouth and the heart. Scripture says, “*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*”. This is universal truth that has been proven true over and over again.

The Bible says ‘*life and death are in the power of the tongue*’ (**Prov 18:21**) and there can be not greater particularization of this truth than Romans 10:9.

The Greek word *confess* is *homologeō* - which according to Kittle’s Lexicon means, “*a binding public declaration by which a legal relation is contractually established*. It is like the vows you make in a marriage – they are binding even in a court of law.

Our words, thus, **contract** from our side what God has provided on His side.

- **Mark 11:24** again points to receiving what we believe and confess

IV. Salvation is for all who believe Romans 10:11-13

- 11) For the Scripture says, “**Whoever believes** on Him will not be put to shame.”
12) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.
13) For “**whoever calls** on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

A. There is a vital connection between election and faith. Election focuses on the action of God while faith focuses on the response of man.

It is not because we are elected that we are able to believe (Calvinism) nor are we elected on the basis of foreseen faith (Arminianism) but we are elected as believers.

Dr. Rodman Williams

God yearns for all people to be saved. Christ did not come to the world to save some and condemn others, but to save all. The only barrier is man’s unbelief. “*This is the condemnation ... men love the darkness*” **John 3:19**

God has no hidden agenda by which He has already saved some and not others. The elected are of faith and those of faith are the elected... all in Christ.

The **point of Romans** teaching on election, calling, predestination, etc is not to emphasize that some are not saved but that now there is an invitation to all people to be saved. We are the promise of Isaac, the vessel of mercy, and the *whosoever*s of Romans 9.

B. No uncertainty about salvation is necessary

If you call on the Lord you **shall** be saved --- not might be--- not a good chance – but you can be certain.

What does *saved* mean? The idea of ‘saved’ to the Jew was the conviction that at the end of the world those who called on the name of the Lord would find safety in the kingdom of the Messiah. This is true for the Christian as well but the NT expands ‘saved’ to spiritual, emotional and physical deliverance as well: The whole gospel for the whole person.

V. The Urgency of Evangelism Romans 10:14-17

- 14) How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?
15) And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”
16) But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?”
17) So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

A. The progression is stated clearly:

- 1) People need to believe in Christ to be saved
- 2) People need to hear the gospel to believe (Good things)
- 3) People must be sent out to share the good news

The passion of missions is ignited when we understand that salvation comes only through faith Christ. Verse 14 follows directly from 13) “*those who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*”

- We must not leave it to another
- We must not be lulled that ‘we can do it another day’
- We must have a zeal according to knowledge
- We must either be a sender or a goer.

B. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

When the gospel is heard and understood – something awakens the heart in faith. Faith comes... it is not generated, it is not worked up, it is not coerced... it comes.

What do you say to someone who is seeking? Unpack the phrase *Jesus is Lord!*

There are other applications to this verse – faith for any area of your life comes by the Word of God addressing that particular area: peace, confidence, love...

VI. The Lord is looking for you Romans 10:18-21

18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “ Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.”

19 But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: “ I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation. I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.”

*20 But Isaiah is very bold and says: “ **I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.**”*

21 But to Israel he says, “ All day long I have stretched out My hands. To a disobedient and contrary people.”

The Gentiles, who were not given the Law, the covenants, the glory or the promises, had been wandering in darkness worshipping pagan gods. Does that describe someone here today? Now the gospel was being preached to all that there is one God who sent His Son for them and now they were coming into the kingdom like never before!

What determines if the gospel to you is ‘good news’ or not? Faith. The Jews could not see the fulfillment of OT prophecy before their very eyes. They loved the special status with God through the Law. Things changed – they wouldn’t.

Let us never say the destiny of a man, however, is fixed by God in eternity for eternity - for in Christ there is always a ‘yes’ for every person **II Cor 1:19**

Closing. God says to us today, don't be disobedient and contrary. Self-righteousness can not save you. Your works can not save you. Being in a religious observant family won't save you either. The question is one of faith. Do you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead? Believe it for yourself.