

Rejection, Israel's Present

Romans 10:1-21

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We come, in the book of Romans, to a very unique section, chapters 9, 10 and 11. You need to remember that those three chapters are a main section and are not parenthetical. They are part of the whole logical flow of the book of Romans. Paul showed the whole world as under condemnation and lost without the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then, he showed that the gospel is the gospel of God's grace, and by the grace of God, God saves sinners. He does that through faith. We looked at the doctrine of justification by faith—we are declared righteous by God through our faith in Jesus Christ. Then you come to Romans 9, 10, and 11 where the subject is the nation of Israel and the gospel. What role does it play in the gospel of Jesus Christ? Is the gospel only for the Gentiles or also for the Jews? Since the Jews did not believe nor receive Jesus as their Messiah, is God's promises to them nil, void, and of none effect? Has God cast off Israel, and is He only working with the Gentiles with no future, purpose, or plan for the nation of Israel?

There are those that teach that God no longer has a purpose and a plan for the nation of Israel. I believe that we see clearly in these chapters, (I'll give you the outline) that Romans 9 is Israel's election, Romans 10 is Israel's rejection, and Romans 11 is Israel's restoration. Paul is trying to make it very clear, "No, God has a plan for Israel," as they accuse Paul of hating the Jews and preaching the gospel of grace, "Paul, you're against the law. You're against the law of Moses. You are no longer really a Jew." Paul says, "No. My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. God's not finished with the Jews," and people are saved today by the grace of God whether they are Jew or Gentile. In chapter 9, the focus was on the sovereignty of God, and in chapter 10, the focus is on human responsibility. Chapters 9 and 10 balance each other out. Chapter 9, God's sovereignty; chapter 10, human responsibility; and chapter 11, God's merciful purpose. Don't miss chapter 11. It really lays out the future. It's what theologians call eschatological, or it's the future plan of God for the nation of Israel. It's so very important. God is not finished with the Jewish people.

Paul is now answering supposed questions of, "If God is sovereign, and God saves whom He will, and God is the Potter and we are the clay, then God can't blame me for my sin or my rejection. God is responsible." Whenever the human mind is faced with the sovereignty of God, quite often the response is, "Well then, I am what I am because God made me what I am, and so God can't blame me. I'm just a big sinner, and God made me what I am, and it's God's fault so God's responsible." They like to shift responsibility back to God. Well, chapter 10 is a response to that kind of foolish reasoning or argument. In chapter 10, Paul is going to show us three things. I want you to write them down as we break it into these three facts about the gospel. First, Paul shows that the gospel is within the reach of all. Second, the gospel has been offered to all. Third, the gospel has not been obeyed by all. We are going to go through them one at a time, but I wanted to give you an overview of these three facts that he gives us about the gospel, the Jewish people, and us as Gentiles as well.

The first fact, the gospel is within the reach of all, verses 1-10. It's a whosoever gospel, so no one can blame God for what they are because of God's sovereignty or that they're not responsible. Let's read it, verses 1-10. Follow with me in your Bible. Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Now, I pointed it out a couple of weeks ago, but in each one of these chapters (chapters 9, 10 and 11), the first verse affirms Paul's love for Israel. Go back to chapter 9, verse 1. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost," notice verse 2, "That I have a great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart," that is, for the nation of Israel. Now go to chapter 10, verse 1. "...my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That's the key. We're saved by faith or belief. "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law," he's drawing from Leviticus 8:5. There are a lot of Old Testament references pulled into these statements that Paul makes, and he quotes it, "That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." So, those who are under the law have to live by the law. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascent into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descent into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." These are verses that are often taken out of context, and I'm going to point out some of the ways that these verses are misinterpreted, but there's a lot of truth packed in these 10 verses.

I'm sure that some of you are thinking, "John, you've bit off more than you can chew tonight. You're going to cover this whole chapter?" I've been away for a week and a half, so I've got to make up for lost time. I want you to go back with me to verse 1. Paul affirms his desire and prayer to God for Israel is they might be saved. I believe, like Paul, we should all have a desire and we should pray for lost souls to be saved. If you are a Christian and you're not praying for souls to be saved, shame on you. Ask God to give you a burden for the lost. Ask God to break your heart with the things that break His heart. If you work around people that aren't saved, and you're not praying for them, you need to pray for them. If you live with people that are not saved, you need to pray for their salvation. If you have neighbors, and you see people, you watch the news, you should be constantly praying, "God, save them. Open their eyes." Paul had a heart burning with a desire to see people saved. By the way, that's not inconsistent with knowledge. People sometimes think that when they gain knowledge they grow cold. I believe that we can gain knowledge, be fueled by the Holy Spirit, and still have a burden for the lost. What I believe all Christians should be, and I don't know that I've ever shared this with you, but I think it's a pretty cool thought (I stole it from somebody else, it's not original) that Christians should be theologians on fire. I like that concept—theologians on fire. Know, grow, understand the Word of God, but don't get a big head, get a burning heart. Amen? That's what we should

all be, and the more we know, the more our hearts should burn. If you've gone through this study on the book of Romans, certainly you should say, "My heart's desire and prayer to God is for my unsaved husband that he be saved," or my unsaved wife, or my kids, or my friends, or my brothers or sisters, or aunts or uncles, or my coworkers, my boss, or my employees. You should say the same as Paul, "My heart's desire and prayer to God is that they might be saved."

In context, Paul is speaking here of the nation of Israel. Then, Paul says the problem is they have a zeal for God but it's not according to knowledge. That's a description of Israel—religious, zeal for God, but ignorant. Again, there are a lot of points that we could make from that, but I would simply like to point out very practically that it's possible to be zealous for God, to be fervent for God, and to be sincere in your love and devotion to God but be wrong, ignorant, and deceived. Today, in our culture, we've got this politically correct concept and it has infiltrated into the church that all religions are the same, valid, and are to be accepted as true. That, in itself, is simply not true. Jesus said, "I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life. No one comes to the Father except by Me." That excludes any other way to get to God. You cannot coexist with Judaism, in context, that is Christless, anymore than you can coexist with a muslim that has rejected Jesus Christ for who He is, the Son of God who died on the cross for our sins, risen from the dead, the only mediator to heaven, not just a prophet like Mohammad, even less than Mohammad. You can't coexist with that. I don't care what the bumper stickers say. It's like, "Pastor John, haven't you seen the bumper sticker?" Yes. I've seen it, okay? Every time I see it, it grieves my heart. That doesn't mean that we can't get along. It doesn't mean that we can't love them. It doesn't mean that we can't pray for and help them. I think that we should love everyone. We should never be violent, harsh, or rude toward anyone. We should be kind, loving, and all those things but truth is truth. There is only one way to get to God and that's Jesus Christ. I don't care how many robes you have, you can have a big phylactery, you can have a prayer book, you could sit in the lotus contemplating your navel, hyperventilate, meditate, elevate, and whatever else you want to do. If it's not Jesus Christ, you can't come to God. There's only one way to God and that's through Jesus Christ. Amen? We can't compromise that.

It is possible to be sincere but to be sincerely wrong. I meet people all the time, "Well, Pastor, they're so sincere in their religion. They're so sincere. They're so devoted." So were the Jews and Paul said, "They're lost." They have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. You know what we need? Both. We need a zeal for God according to knowledge; gain knowledge, but don't lose your zeal. Paul himself illustrates this when he was called Saul of Tarsus. His name was Saul before his conversion. He was a very religious Jew. Read Philippians 3—a pharisee, circumcised eight days old, keeping the law, persecuting the church, all the things he had going for him in his religious pedigree. He said that all those things that were gain to me; my religion, my race, my rites, my rituals, "When I came to know Jesus Christ, those things were just a..." literally "...pile of manure." That's what he said—I count it but refuse. Just dung. They were just like a pile of manure. They were nothing. All the things that we in the world today look at, "Oh! Look at his religion. Oh! Look at his race. Oh! Look at his rites. Oh! Look at how ritualistic he is," and "Oh! He's so devoted," and "Certainly, God will accredit it to him for righteousness." Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that sincerity can get you to heaven. The

only thing that will get you to heaven is the righteousness of Christ imputed to you by faith. You can be sincere and be sincerely wrong, and such was the case with these Jews. They had a zeal for God, but it was not according to knowledge.

Verse 3, “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness...,” I want you to notice here, there’s only two kinds of righteousness. God’s righteousness or your own righteousness. In all religiousness, all religious thinking, and all religious past there’s only two ways—self righteous or God’s imputed righteousness as a gift. That’s all there is. There is nothing in between. Either you get yourself to heaven or you accept the righteousness of Christ which gets you to heaven. There’s only one that’ll work, and that’s the righteousness of Christ. All the religions of the world are man’s righteousness. Christianity is God’s righteousness imputed to us by faith in Jesus Christ. The problem is these Jews were going about establishing their own righteousness, and that’s exactly what sinners try to do today. “I go to church.” “I tithe.” “I pray.” “I’m a good person.” “I don’t drink, I don’t chew, I don’t hang out with those that do.” “I don’t dance.” “I don’t go to picture shows.” “I don’t listen to secular music, so God’s going to let me go into heaven.” That’s your righteousness. The Bible says that it’s like filthy rags before a holy God. They haven’t submitted themselves to the righteousness of God, and that’s what you have to do to be saved, but the Jews had their own righteousness. That’s why it’s hard to get a religious person to trust in Christ because they’re trying to establish their own righteousness. This would apply to anybody that is religious who has rejected the righteousness of God through Christ.

Verse 4, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” When you come to faith in Jesus Christ, you don’t need the law anymore. The law cannot save you, all it can do is show you your sin. The purpose of the law was to bring you to Jesus Christ, show you your sin and drive you to Him for salvation, so it’s the end of the law for righteousness. He says, “For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.” The law says, do and live, but we can’t do. The law says do and live, but we are inept, weak, and unable to do the demands of the righteousness of God in the law because of the weakness of our sinful flesh. For you to get yourself to heaven you’d have to be born of a virgin, live a sinless life, die, resurrect from the dead, and ascend back into heaven. I don’t think anyone is going to pull that off. There’s only one person that’s done that, Jesus Christ. You say, “I’ll just take His hand. I’ll trust in Him. If He’s offered me salvation, His righteousness, and He wants to give it to me, He wants to take me to heaven, I’ll trust in Him rather than my own righteousness.”

That’s what Paul is saying here about the Jews. They tried to establish their own righteousness, and religious people try to do that today. If you’re going to be under the law, you have to obey the law. You can’t keep the law. “But the righteousness which is of faith...,” verse 6, we read about that in Romans, “...speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)” in other words, you can’t do it by your own works. “Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)” In other words, I have to try to save myself, or I have to bring Christ down or raise Christ from the dead. Man didn’t bring Jesus to earth, and man can’t raise Jesus from the

dead. That's all a work of God. What he's trying to say is that it's God's work not ours. We can't do that. Notice what he says in verse 8, "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." He's talking about the Word of faith, that it's right there on your lips; it's right there in your mouth. It's salvation. We're going to see that it is so simple. All you have to do is just believe in your heart and confess Him with your mouth. When he says, "thy mouth," he's talking about the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, He's your Savior, and you're trusting Him by believing. Notice what he goes on to say, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Why does Paul put confession before belief (verse 9)? I believe he's looking at it from man's perspective. The confession with the mouth comes from the heart, and it starts with the heart and then comes out of the mouth. Paul turns it around here, but then notice he reverses it again in verse 10, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The point here is that salvation is in the reach of everyone. It's right there on your lips. It's right there in your heart. You can be sitting here right now in this sanctuary listening to me preach on your way to hell, lost, and unforgiven. Right this moment, right this second, right while I'm preaching, you can actually say in your heart, "Jesus, I believe that you died for me. Come into my heart. Forgive my sins. I trust You." Snap If you were to utter that prayer from your heart, and you don't even need to make it audible, just totally, in sincerity, pray that prayer. CLAP Right now, right here, instantly, you can be saved before I even finish this teaching tonight, which I recommend you do by the way. You can be saved that easy. Now, it wasn't easy to purchase your salvation. God had to give His Son to come from heaven and to die on the cross, but if you would just believe in your heart and confess Him with your mouth, you'll be saved. You don't have to go through some process. It's not a rite or ritual or a race or religion. It's trusting with your heart and believing on Jesus Christ. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." What an awesome thing that is!

Christ is not only easily accessible, but He's equally accessible and that's my second point, verses 11-15. The gospel has been offered to all and is within reach of all. The gospel is acceptable or offered to all. This is clearly teaching man's responsibility, and I want you to follow me, verses 11-15. Paul is going to quote a series of Old Testament Scriptures. I'll give as many of them to you as I can. Some of them come from more than one place in the Old Testament, so you might find other places that these references come from. If you have a good reference Bible, most of them are in the footnotes or in the margin of your Bible. He says, "For the scripture saith..." by the way, when the Bible says, "The Scripture says," guess what that means? God speaks. When the Scripture speaks, God speaks. "Whosoever..." underline that word. "...believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Isaiah 28:16. It means you will not be disappointed; you will not be let down. You'll not say, "Oh, man! What a waste of time, trust in Jesus as my Savior." Do you think that's going to happen? Do you think when you stand before God you're going to say, "Man, I really blew it! I gave Jesus my heart." I don't think so. Do you know there are a lot of things that disappoint us. People disappoint us. Things disappoint us.

Institutions disappoint us, but God never disappoints us. If you trust in Jesus Christ you won't be disappointed or ashamed.

Verse 12, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." That's a quote from Joel 2:32. Too bad the Jews didn't read their Old Testament, they'd know that God is the same God over all Jew and Gentile, and He's rich to all that call upon Him. Verse 13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Notice all these questions. How are they going to call on Him if they haven't believed in Him? "and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Three questions Paul asks in verse 14. "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" Another question. "As it is written," he's quoting Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Do you know when you take the good news of Jesus Christ to people you have beautiful feet?

I think feet are kind of the most unattractive part of the human anatomy. If someone says, "Hey, let me take your picture," and you say, "Oh, take my feet, I have beautiful feet." Would you send a picture of your feet to somebody? They get it printed, blow it up, frame and mat it, and put it up on your wall. "Who's that?" "Oh, that's my good friend. They have beautiful feet." I don't think so. There are some who have nice-looking feet, but feet are kind of gnarly. They are kind of ugly. People do all they can to make them look nice, but the best way to have beautiful feet is to be one who carries the gospel of peace. Amen? That makes your feet beautiful.

Look back with me at verse 11. As I pointed out, "...the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." So, the gospel has been offered to all. Again, why would the Jew, and he's anticipating the argument of, "Well, I'm not to blame. God made me the way I am. If God's the Potter and I'm the clay and God is sovereign, I'm not to blame." No. No. No. No. You were offered the gospel. You were given the gospel. If you reject the gospel then you are to blame for your destiny. You are responsible for your eternal destiny, and the gospel had gone out to the entire Jewish world. There is no difference, verse 12, between Jew or Greek. The same Lord is over all and rich unto all that call upon him, and that's all it takes—call on the name of the Lord and you will be saved.

Verse 13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." I want you to notice, "shall be saved." Not, might be saved, maybe be saved, saved if you're lucky—shall be saved. You can absolutely know you're saved and you're going to heaven if you call on the name of the Lord, and the name of the Lord is Jesus. There is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved. The name Jesus means God is salvation, Jehovah Shua (Joshua) or Jehovah saves, and Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. So, when you call on the name of Jesus. When Paul told the Philippian Jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved," he didn't say get a haircut or go to church, get baptized, be a good person, clean up your act, or get out of the jailing business. He just said believe. It's so close; it's so nigh. All you do is believe in your heart and confess with your lips, trust in Jesus, Snap and you will be saved. The whole argument is that you can't shift the responsibility to God. You

can't say, "I'm not to blame." It's within your reach and it's offered to you, equally Jew and Gentile, anyone.

Verse 15, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" I've circled some words I want to point out. I've circled the word "preacher," "sent," and "gospel of peace." Do you know that's what we're to be doing as the church? We are to be preaching the gospel. Do you know that every member of this church is to be a preacher? Is to be sharing the good news? Maybe not in a Harvest Stadium, maybe not at Revival from the pulpit, but maybe at work, in your home or wherever you are. You are to take, with your beautiful feet, the gospel into the highways and byways sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. When you're at the store, at Lowe's, Home Depot, or wherever you go, share the gospel of Jesus Christ. We as Revival Christian Fellowship have an opportunity to really impact this community that we live in. We come, we get fed, we're taught the Word, we're built up and then we disperse. Do you know everything outside this sanctuary is a mission field. When you leave here tonight, you're going into the mission field. By the way, these verses are an amazing foundation for missions. We need to send preachers to preach the gospel. It's okay to feed hungry people. It's okay to clothe hungry people. It's okay to build hospitals, schools, and orphanages, and take care of babies, mow grass, paint buildings and things like that, but if we don't preach the gospel, we're failing in our mission. We're not to have, primarily as our goal, a social gospel. We are to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ—God sent His Son who was born of a virgin, was God in the flesh, who died on the cross as a substitute to pay for our sins, was buried, rose from the dead, ascended back into heaven, exalted by the right hand of God the Father, and only faith in His name can save. Whoever believes in Him will never perish but have everlasting life. All you need to do is memorize just a couple of verses to be locked, loaded, and ready to go. Share your testimony. Wherever the Lord sends you, go. We're all on a mission, and the church's primary goal is not only to love God but to make God known to others. Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." That's what we need to be busy about doing. We need to pray for that, support that, be engaged in that, and do that—preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ on all levels. They need to hear the gospel of peace, the glad tidings of good things.

Here's my third and last point, verses 16-21, the gospel has not been obeyed by all. So he wraps this up. In verse 16 he says, "But they..." that is, Israel, the nation of Israel, the Jewish people, "...have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith," he's quoting Isaiah 53:1, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" It's so challenging to reach the Jewish people. They don't believe that even the prophesy in Isaiah 53 is about Jesus Christ. They believe it's about the nation of Israel. "So then faith cometh by hearing," verse 17. This is a common verse that is misinterpreted. "...and hearing by the word of God. 18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. 19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith," Deuteronomy 32:21, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people," that is, the Gentiles. God would save Gentiles to provoke the Jews to jealousy. "...and by a foolish nation..." again, the Gentiles, "I will anger you. 20 But Esaias is very bold," Isaiah 65:1, "...and saith, I was found of them that sought me not," referring to the Gentiles, "...I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. 21 But to Israel he saith," Isaiah 65:2, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying," or

stiff-necked, "...people." We see in this third point the gospel has not been obeyed by all. It is within the reach of all, it has been offered to all, and it has not been obeyed or believed by all, verses 16-21. For they have not all obeyed, but faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

In verse 17, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Normally, it is pointed out, and I think rightfully so, that if you want to have more faith read the Bible. That's true. If you want to have more faith read the Bible, but it's also not true. You can't just read the Bible and have faith. You have to believe the Bible. You have to respond receptively to the Bible, and they haven't trusted the gospel. I believe that the Bible is the chief means, primary means, that God uses to sanctify His people. Without the Word of God we cannot grow in holiness and likeness to Jesus. In context, I don't believe that it's primarily about studying the Bible as a whole. I think it's about preaching the gospel particularly. I think it's referring to a sermon preached where the gospel is heard. Faith comes by hearing, and if you look up the Greek word that's used there, "and hearing by the word of God," it's a unique phrase in the Greek that indicates a message or a sermon preached from the Word or about Christ. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes when people hear a sermon preached about Christ.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon has a book called *Sermons Most Likely to Win Souls*. In one chapter of that book he makes a point that sermons that are most full of Christ will win souls. I believe that. If we preach Christ, if we proclaim Christ, if we set forth the glories of Christ, His person, His saving work, and we offer Christ to people, people will hear and they will believe and respond. The sad and heartbreaking thing today is so few preach Christ and Him crucified. It's philosophy, psychology, it's a social gospel, it's a how to feel good message, how to have a positive outlook on life, how to make money, how to be happy, how to have a good marriage, and we have forgotten to preach Christ. We've forgotten that Christ is sufficient to meet all of our needs, that Christ is the Savior, that all we need is Jesus. Amen? He is all we need. He is all that we should want. He is all that we should long for. God help us as a church collectively and as Christians individually to preach Christ and to share Christ with other people. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by a sermon preached about Christ.

I believe with all my heart, that's why I've been committed to doing it for all these years, that there is no substitute in the church for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ—preaching the Word and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. It'll never change. It'll never grow old. It'll never go out of fashion. It'll never not be en vogue. It'll never be what God's doing. It's preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that means preaching the cross, His incarnation, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His ascension, His exaltation, that Jesus died on the cross. It's preaching Christ and Him crucified. That's the gospel. Stay on message. Major in what is most important—Jesus Christ. That's what he is closing with, but the gospel is rejected by so many and God uses that to provoke the Jews to bring them to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Not only are lots of Muslims coming to faith in Christ right now in the world, but a lot of Jews are turning to Jesus Christ. I believe during the tribulation, the last seven years of history on earth,

thousands of Jews will get saved. When we go into the 11th chapter, it's going to blow your mind to see what future God has for the nation of Israel. You can't understand the future of mankind without understanding Israel's part and role. You can't understand the future of mankind in history without understanding Israel because Israel is God's time clock, and chapter 11 is going to be about how God is going to graph them back in. God has a future and a plan for them. The point that I would like to close on tonight by way of wrap up is this:

1. Each man or woman is responsible for their eternal destiny. You can't blame your parents. You can't blame somebody else. You can't blame your environment. You can't blame your high school teacher or college professor. You are responsible for your eternal destiny.

2. It is important to preach the gospel. We need more beautiful feet in the world today. May each one of us leave here tonight with beautiful feet taking out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. There are only two kinds of righteousness. Self-righteousness, which is works that cannot save, it leads to pride and eternal death; or faith-righteousness, God's gift of righteousness which brings salvation and eternal hope. Which will it be?

4. Salvation is not difficult. If you confess Him with your mouth and believe in your heart you will be saved. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

You can leave here tonight saved. You can leave here tonight knowing that if you died that you'd go to heaven. But guess what? You'll have to decide how you want to leave church tonight. Do you want to leave here saved and going to heaven? Or, do you want to leave here in your own sin, in your own righteousness, on your way to hell? The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. Everyone here tonight must decide. I'm going to give you an opportunity tonight to say, "Yes," or "No," to Jesus. If you've never trusted Him, if you've never put your faith in Him, if you haven't believed in Him, if you haven't received Him, if you haven't been saved...you know, God's not going to take you to heaven because you came to church on Wednesday night. God's going to take you to heaven because you take the hand of Jesus Christ by faith and you trust in Him. I don't want anyone to leave here tonight, even if there is only one person here tonight and you don't know beyond any doubt that you're saved, you don't know for sure that if you died, you'd go to heaven, "the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." All you have to do is believe in your heart and confess Him with your lips and God will save you. So let's bow our heads in a word of prayer.