

Did God's Plan A Fail?

Week 2 - Romans 9:30-10:15

Objectives:

- Understand Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of the law and God's final and only salvation plan
- See that we can never add anything to Christ's salvation, and He offers it to everyone

? Share about a time something worked out, even when the odds seemed stacked against you.

What stands out?

Romans 9:30 - 10:15 (NIV)

³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. ³³ As it is written:

"See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame."

10 Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ² For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

⁵ Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: "The person who does these things will live by them." ⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹¹ As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

? What observations do you have about the passage? Key words or phrases?

Possible answers: righteousness, works, faith, stumbling, stone, Jesus

? What made Jesus a stumbling block to the Jews whom Paul is writing about?

Possible answers: Christ is a stumbling block for those who would seek their salvation by works (Isaiah 8:14-15). Isaiah 28:16-17 tells us that he is a cornerstone for those who trust in God.

? Have you ever pursued something passionately, but later found it was the wrong thing?

Possible answers: answers may vary :)

Digging a little deeper

? Paul starts this week’s section by answering a question from the previous section. What is the question behind verse 30?

Possible answers: “Why are the Gentiles being included?” The question he anticipates might make his point sound ridiculous on the surface, but the question is, in fact, the answer. Those who pursued their own righteousness through the law did not attain it.

? What is the argument Paul is building after his statement in 10:2?

Possible answers: seeking to establish a righteousness of your own will not lead to salvation, Christ is the end (or fulfillment) of the law. Christ = righteousness for everyone who believes.

? In verse 4, Paul states that Christ is “the end of law.” This word can mean *fulfillment* or *purpose* or “point of”... What role does Christ have in our righteousness?

Possible answers: Christ is the fulfillment of the law, for those who are in Him.

The Law that Paul is referring to is likeliest the category of OT rules concerning sin and atoning for sin, the ceremonial law. Other portions include civil law (how the nation was supposed to run) and criminal law (offenses, and paying for offenses).

The Law was a set of rules to be trusted for salvation, as well as a reflection of God’s heart and what He wanted for His people. Christ fulfills the ceremonial law; we can then meditate and seek to obey some aspects of the law, not to be saved, but to love, serve, and honor God!

? What is Paul getting at in verses 6 through 8?

Possible answers: Christ is the center, the lynchpin, the cornerstone, the fulfillment of our need for righteousness. Christ is God incarnate, for our sake. Faith trusts that Christ's work accomplished what Jesus said it would: righteousness for those who worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4).

? Why does Paul continue to quote from the Old Testament in verses 5-13?

Possible answers: Paul continues to point out that the message of the Gospel is throughout all of scripture. The question (or invitation) of "are you going to follow Jesus" was as valid then as it is now.

Bringing it home

? If Christ is "the end of the law", why would we be concerned with obeying God?

Possible answers: Though Christ continuously makes intercession for our sins, the law does still reflect God's heart for how His people ought to live. We love God and want to obey Him. Christ did the same and we are to imitate Christ.

? What does it look like to pursue righteousness while not seeking to earn your salvation?

Possible answers: the difference is likely in your heart. It can show up when you fail in some way - fear or shame, versus grace for yourself. Are you trusting in your hope, faith, and works or the object (Christ) of those things?

? In verses 14-15, Paul succinctly explains the process of evangelism including sending, preaching, hearing, receiving, believing and calling on Jesus. What series of events and circumstances lead to your own exposure to and acceptance of the Gospel message?

Possible answers: answers will vary

? Have you ever considered how you might reflect those who were a part of your own story of salvation?

Possible answers: answers will vary

For Discussion and Accountability

? Do you think you have been relying on any "righteousness of your own"?

? Take some time to pray for evangelism opportunities this week.