

August 1
Lesson 9 (NIV)

SALVATION AVAILABLE FOR ALL

DEVOTIONAL READING: [Psalm 19:1–14](#)

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: [Romans 10:5–17](#)

Romans 10:5–17

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!”

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.



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KEY VERSE

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” —**Romans 10:13**

CONFIDENT HOPE

Unit 2: Faith and Salvation

LESSONS 6–9

LESSON AIMS

After participating in this lesson, each learner will be able to:

1. Identify several Old Testament passages Paul uses to make his argument.
2. Explain the danger of isolating the Key Verse from its context.
3. Create a personal plan for better supporting for the spread of the gospel through use of

time, talent, and/or treasure.

LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction

- A. Rejoice, We Conquer!
- B. Lesson Context
- I. Preaching the Word (Romans 10:5–13)
 - A. Ascending and Descending (vv. 5–7)
No Mountain High Enough
 - B. Confessing and Believing (vv. 8–10)
 - C. Calling and Saving (vv. 11–13)
Call on Me
- II. Telling the Gospel (Romans 10:14–17)
 - A. Sending and Preaching (vv. 14–15)
 - B. Hearing and Obeying (vv. 16–17)

Conclusion

- A. Where Does Faith Come From?
- B. Prayer
- C. Thought to Remember

HOW TO SAY IT

cholla	<i>choy-ah.</i>
Philippides	<i>Fih-lip-pea-deez.</i>
Pheidippides	<i>Feh-dip-pea-deez.</i>
Septuagint	<i>Sep-too-ih-jent.</i>

Introduction

A. Rejoice, We Conquer!

When the Persian fleet and army threatened the Greek peninsula in 490 BC, the leaders in Athens knew that they had to rally their forces to meet this threat. There seemed to be no hope, for the Persians vastly outnumbered the Greeks. Therefore, the elders of Athens decided to send an entreaty to the king of Sparta, a traditional enemy, to ask for help.

They sent a man named Philippides (sometimes spelled Pheidippides) as their emissary.

He was a professional herald and long-distance runner. Legend has it that Philippides ran to Sparta and back to Athens in four days, a nearly 300-mile round trip. He returned with the news that the Spartans could not help. The Athenians had no time to wait, so they marched their forces to the plains of Marathon. There they ambushed the invaders and won a great victory over the numerically superior Persian army.

After this triumph at Marathon, Philippides was again called on. This time he ran 26 miles back to Athens to announce the victory to his defenseless and terrified city. Legend has it that he arrived at the city gates with only enough life left to utter “Rejoice, we conquer!” before falling dead. His death was tragic, but his dramatic message was truly good news for the unprotected city. Some good news is worth the sacrificing for!

B. Lesson Context

In [Romans 9](#) Paul introduced a new subject in his letter: the place of the Jews in God’s redemptive plan. His discussion sprang from his personal passion for his people (he calls the Jews his “people” and his “own race” [\(9:3\)](#)) and his desire that they know the Christ who has done so much for him [\(9:1–5\)](#).

That concern continues in [Romans 10](#), which begins with Paul writing, “Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.” The apostle described his fellow Jews as zealous, yet lacking knowledge. Their desire to follow the Law of Moses and thereby pursue “their own [righteousness]” [\(10:3\)](#) was ill-founded, now that “Christ is the culmination of the law so that there might be righteousness for everyone who believes” [\(10:4\)](#). A new way, the way of salvation—by grace through faith—was open for all to accept. But, sadly, many of Paul’s “own race” [\(9:3\)](#) rejected it.

Paul then proceeded to contrast righteousness based on keeping the law with righteousness available through faith.

I. Preaching the Word

[\(ROMANS 10:5–13\)](#)

A. Ascending and Descending (vv. 5–7)

5. Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.”

There are only two potential ways to obtain *righteousness*, or a right standing, with God: (1) by keeping *the law* perfectly or (2) by receiving grace through faith. *Moses* is recognized as Israel’s lawgiver. So it is fitting to cite him as an authority on lawkeeping.

The *law* is what defines sin and righteousness. The verse that Paul quoted implies that

complete obedience to the law will result in life because a person so doing will be righteous ([Leviticus 18:5](#); see also [Romans 2:13](#) and [Galatians 3:12](#)). But Paul has already shown that no one obeys the law perfectly ([Romans 3:23](#)), so there is no one who can achieve righteousness through keeping the law ([Romans 3:20](#)).

The principle of righteousness by lawkeeping places the responsibility squarely on our shoulders. If a person obeyed every aspect of the law perfectly, then he or she would earn a right standing before God. But that *if* is huge—it never happens!

6–7. 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) “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

Paul has already drawn a distinction between the “law that requires works” and the “law that requires faith” ([Romans 3:27](#)). He used this framework again in today’s text, but this time the terminology is adjusted slightly to be “righteousness that is by the law” ([10:5](#), above) vs. *riotousness that is by faith*. This contrast is also found in [Philippians 3:6–9](#).

To stress the distinction, Paul draws on imagery from [Deuteronomy 9:4](#); [30:12–14](#) to illustrate the nature of righteousness based on law: it’s like trying to *ascend into heaven* in order to *bring Christ down* or attempting to *descend into the deep* in order to *bring Christ up from the dead*.

The imagery is not an exact quote from those Old Testament passages. Therefore Paul should be seen as giving an inspired application of those texts for the era of the new covenant. In so doing, he establishes that the righteousness obtained by faith is not based on our deeds or works of law. Even if we could perform supernatural actions such as those described in those passages, that would not be enough to gain right standing with God.

Some Bible commentators have noted the significance of Paul’s use of the book of Deuteronomy to make his case for righteousness by faith. Moses spoke the words of Deuteronomy when the Israelites were on the brink of entering the promised land. He wanted to impress on the people the covenant that God had made with them. Here in Romans, Paul desired to impress on his Jewish readers the reality of the new covenant that God has established. Just as God brought his word to Israel through Moses (see [Deuteronomy 30:11–14](#)), God has now revealed his living Word in the person of Jesus Christ, whom Paul had already declared to be “the end of the law” ([Romans 10:4](#); compare [Colossians 2:14](#)).

Thus it is not by good works or devoted efforts that righteousness with God is obtained. Salvation is not the result of our perfection or hard work. Salvation is the result of Christ’s sacrifice as the lamb “without spot” ([Hebrews 9:14](#)) in our place. Indeed, we do not have to bring Christ down; he has already come down! Nor do we have to bring him up from the grave; God has done that ([Romans 8:11](#)).

NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH

Yearly pilgrimages are part of certain faith expressions. In Mexico, pilgrims crawl toward the shrine that supposedly marks the place where the mother of Jesus is said to have appeared. In Greece, some travel to a statue that is believed to have miraculous healing powers. And in Tibet pilgrims travel for days, even months, to reach the “holy city” of Lhasa. These trips can result in self-imposed hardships. But they are considered valuable because people believe they will be greatly blessed by completing a pilgrimage.

Paul assured us that we do not have to do any of that. There are no great lengths that Christians need to go to in order to reach God. No level of suffering is required to draw near to him. Christ has endured all the suffering necessary.

There is indeed suffering in this life, and the Lord asks us to endure it. But faith tells us God is always in reach. Are you spending time and effort to draw near to him when Christ has already done that for you?

—P. M.

B. Confessing and Believing (vv. 8–10)

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:

We do not need to travel to Heaven or the deep because *the word* we need *is near*. It is as close as our mouths and our hearts ([Deuteronomy 30:14](#)). Paul always preached justification by faith, not works. These Old Testament references continued here reveal that the law itself testifies to Christ.

What Do You Think?

Considering Paul’s numerous quotations from the Old Testament in this lesson, what lifelong plan can you set in motion to develop your own ever-greater expertise in Scripture?

Digging Deeper

What emphasis on breadth vs. depth should adopt? Why?

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.

Paul used Moses’ comment about the *mouth* to explain a foundational reality of how the way of faith works. Paul expected that those who embraced his message would respond in two ways. First, they would use their mouths to *declare* that *Jesus is Lord* (compare [Matthew 10:32–33](#)). Those who do so acknowledge that Jesus is Lord of all creation and our master in all things. This is the core of faith, the open door to the law of righteousness.

Second, Paul’s preaching called sinners to have a change in *heart*. When we do, we put aside the faulty reasoning of the world regarding the nature of death (compare [1 Corinthians 15](#); [Colossians 2:20](#); etc.). Instead, we *believe in our heart* that Jesus is risen *from the dead*. The facts of history form the basis for our willingness to acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

Notice the requirement of both an external response (confessing the Lord Jesus) and an internal one (believing in one’s heart). These should not be considered works in order to earn righteousness ([Ephesians 2:8–10](#)), but as expressions of faith that accept the righteousness God is eager to give.

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.

Paul moves to implications or result. We should not be fooled by the simplicity of these expectations. To mouth the words, “Jesus is Lord,” appears to be easy, but to say this with a heart of faith will result in a life-changing experience and a new direction. To believe that Jesus is risen from the dead seems straightforward enough, but it requires faith in an event that defies personal experience. This is the pathway of faith (compare [John 20:25–29](#)).

Before we move on, we note that just because this verse says nothing about baptism or repentance does not mean that Paul considered those to be insignificant (compare [Romans 2:4](#); [6:3–4](#)). In the context of [Romans 10](#), Paul focused in particular on the *heart* and the *mouth* to emphasize that becoming right with God does not require the kind of efforts described in [10:6–7](#).

Both believing and confessing are meant to be more than one-time actions associated with becoming a Christian. Faith in Jesus and confession of him as Lord must become the hallmarks of a Christ-centered life. While living a godly life is crucial, we must also be able to put our faith into words.

What Do You Think?

What mismatches between your heart and your mouth need to be resolved? When will you start the repair job?

Digging Deeper

Should you seek the help of another, or is this strictly a do-it-yourself job? Why?

C. Calling and Saving (vv. 11–13)

11. As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”

Paul quoted the last part of [Isaiah 28:16](#) here and in [Romans 9:33](#). But if we look up this passage in Isaiah, we may be confused because in the [NIV](#) (2011) it says “the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.” The solution comes in realizing that Paul quoted from

the Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint. For the last word in the quote, that version uses a verb that means *ashamed*; this word was a favorite of Paul's—19 of the New Testament's 35 uses of this word and its variants occur in his letters.

In context, [Isaiah 28:16](#) as a whole prophesied the coming Messiah to be “a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation.” Paul used that promise to say that those who correctly understand God's work in sending his Messiah are wise to respond in faith.

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,

Jews and Gentiles enter into God's promise on the same basis—through faith in Christ. This included everyone, for a person was either a Jew or a non-Jew (Gentile). Jews did not have exclusive rights to God, for he is *the same Lord* to all people (compare [Acts 17:24–28](#)). Jews did not have a monopoly on the privilege of having faith in God, even though the promise came through one of their prophets. The one God *richly blesses* (is generous and gracious) to anyone who calls *on him*.

SEEING AS GOD SEES

A close friend of mine was set to marry a wonderful Christian man a few years after they both experienced devastating divorces. She was ecstatic. But she also feared that she might not treat his seven children like she did her two children.

One day, she was watching his daughters play at the park and turned away for just a moment when she heard a desperate “Mommy, Mommy, Mommy!” Instantly she jumped to her feet, searching the empty park, heart in her throat.

She found them huddled together where the park gave way to desert. The girls had stumbled into a cholla cactus, which were covered in needles. She was indescribably relieved that nothing more serious had happened, and she cried as she tenderly ministered to them.

It was then she knew her fears were unfounded. These were her children, no matter the bloodline. Paul taught the same thing: there is no distinction between Jew and Greek to the heavenly Father. Do you view people as he does?

—P. M.

13. for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Paul quotes [Joel 2:32](#) to reinforce the promise of grace to *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord* (also see [Acts 2:21](#)). This is a common expression in the Old Testament to include active prayer and worship on the part of a believer. The first instance of this, recorded in [Genesis 4:26](#), is usually understood as the first time that men and women sought to worship the Lord in a deliberate manner.

Being *saved* is another way to talk about being declared righteous, being justified, or being forgiven. It includes being reconciled to God ([Romans 5:10](#)). Here Paul's inclusion of the idea of calling brings together the act of faith in the heart and confession with the lips, the verbal expression of faith leading to salvation.

God saves all who call.



Sheet 5—Summer 2021, *Adult Resources, Standard Lesson Quarterly*® Curriculum

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Lesson 9

Visual for Lesson 9. Post this visual as you ask learners for examples of how they can preach the gospel even if they never step behind a pulpit.

What Paul addressed here was central to his agenda, because he, a Jew, was Christ's apostle to the Gentiles ([Romans 15:16](#); [1 Timothy 2:7](#)). All people must come to God through Christ in faith. Gentiles had not been born into Israel, the old-covenant people of God. Even so, for all people there was only "one body and one Spirit, ... one hope ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father" ([Ephesians 4:4–6](#)).

II. Telling the Gospel ([ROMANS 10:14–17](#))

A. Sending and Preaching (vv. 14–15)

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?

For Paul, *preaching* the gospel was primary. It was good news, the greatest message in history! But how could “everyone” *believe* in Christ if his message was unknown to them?

God has chosen to use human instruments to convey his message. This seems to have been his preferred method of operation even back into Old Testament times (examples: [Isaiah 6:8](#); [Jeremiah 1:5](#); [Ezekiel 22:30](#)). And so it still is. The good news has to be proclaimed, and that requires a preacher to take the message to those who *have not heard*. The Greek word translated *someone preaching* describes a herald or an announcer who runs ahead of a king and proclaims what the king wishes others to know (compare [Daniel 3:4](#)). Certainly, the task of preaching can be done by any Christian who tells the good news to someone else. At the same time, there must be those who will devote their lives to preaching and teaching in the setting of the local church. The church always needs those willing to answer such a calling. And those who are ready to do so need to be supported and sent, as the next verse indicates.

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!”

Paul quoted from Isaiah again (see [Romans 10:11](#), above), this time from a text that visualizes a herald returning to Jerusalem, running up the mountains in full view of the citizens crowding the wall of the city ([Isaiah 52:7](#)). The herald runs up the mountain of Jerusalem to announce a victory over an enemy (compare the lesson’s [Introduction](#)). In Isaiah, the herald’s words are simple: “Your God reigns!”

We, the church, have the good news of salvation. We proclaim this through our songs, sermons, confessions of faith, celebrations of the Lord’s Supper, and submission to baptism. But ultimately, Jesus wants us to carry his message to the world; we call this charge the “Great Commission” (see [Matthew 28:18–20](#)). The church also plays a vital part in sending, as illustrated by Barnabas and Saul (later renamed Paul), who were sent by the church in Antioch on their first missionary journey ([Acts 13:1–3](#)).

What Do You Think?

What more can you do in a role of being either one sent to preach or of supporting those sent to preach?

Digging Deeper

What factors should you help your church consider regarding relative emphases on local, national, and international evangelistic efforts?

Those who bear such good news are pictured as having *beautiful ... feet*. Usually the heralds who traveled many miles to convey a message arrived at their destinations with dusty, dirty feet. The appearance of their feet per se was anything but beautiful; beauty was to be found in the contents of the message delivered. Later Paul described the Christian's armor as including "feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" ([Ephesians 6:15](#)).

B. Hearing and Obeying (vv. 16–17)

16. But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

Again, the words of Isaiah are cited. This verse, from [Isaiah 53:1](#), comes in the context of one of the most powerful messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. But this particular passage warns us of a harsh reality that can dampen the enthusiasm of preaching and sending: not everyone who hears our message will receive it gladly. In the context of Romans, Paul lamented the fact that so many of his fellow Jews neither *believed* nor *accepted the good news*.

The reference to acceptance would include the idea of taking actions associated with receiving salvation or living it out (example: [Acts 2:38](#)).

17. Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

Paul's ministry is driven by a simple fact: people who have never heard the gospel have no opportunity to believe the gospel. *The word about Christ* must be preached for it to be heard! In the process, some will believe and some will not believe ([Acts 18:5–8](#); etc.). But no one will believe the gospel where there is no proclamation of the gospel. An unshared, unpreached gospel is an unreceived gospel—which is no gospel at all.

It is up to the church, the body of Christ, to see that everyone hears about Jesus. That means missionaries, sent and supported. That means teachers, trained and developed. That means preachers, educated and willing.

Many "parachurch" organizations can help accomplish these important tasks, but the local church remains God's primary appointed vehicle for making it possible for men and women to hear the Word of God. The old saying "Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words" is defective because it places the use of words in a secondary position. Words are primary!

What Do You Think?

How would you respond to someone who, quoting Edgar Guest (1881–1959), says, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day"?

Digging Deeper

What role should [1 Timothy 4:15](#) and [1 Peter 2:12](#) play in this discussion of [Romans 10:17](#)?

Conclusion

A. Where Does Faith Come From?

Faith comes from hearing the gospel, a message proclaimed by preachers. Christ must be preached as having been crucified as the substitutionary atonement sacrifice for sin ([1 Corinthians 1:23](#)), and as having risen again for our assured hope ([15:4](#)). The church will always need preachers who faithfully proclaim the gospel.

Though many of us are not preachers by vocation, we are still representatives of Christ. If you are praying for opportunities to spread the gospel, God will surely answer your prayers!

What Do You Think?

Which concept in today's lesson most highlights a need for improvement in your level of Bible knowledge? Why?

Digging Deeper

What specific, time-bound steps can you take to bring about that improvement?

B. Prayer

Mighty God, may we be faithful to preach the gospel. May our faith in Jesus never waver in so doing despite the rejection we will face. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

C. Thought to Remember

Spread the gospel so others may believe.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

Enhance your lesson with [NIV Bible Student](#) (from your curriculum supplier) and the reproducible activity page (at www.standardlesson.com or in the back of the [NIV Standard Lesson Commentary Deluxe Edition](#)).

Into the Lesson

Write this question on the board:

What is the best news you ever received?

Have learners pair up (with someone other than a family member) to share responses. After two minutes, reconvene for whole-class reporting of results by partners (that is, class members don't share their own responses).

Transition to Bible study by saying, "Today we will consider the best news that was ever experienced by the world. We will also consider how that news must be shared with those who haven't heard it."

Into the Word

To groups of three or four, distribute handouts (you create) that feature a blank chart that looks like this:

	Moses	Isaiah	Joel
Verse(s) in Rom 10:5-17			
Quoted from where			

Have printed at the top this title as a prompt for filling in the chart: *Where and from where Paul used the Old Testament in [Romans 10:5-17](#).*

Encourage learners to use study Bibles, internet resources, etc., to identify the references. (*Expected responses:* Moses—verse 5, from [Leviticus 18:5](#); verses 6-8, from [Deuteronomy 30:12-14](#); Isaiah—verse 11, from [Isaiah 28:16](#); verse 15, from [Isaiah 52:7](#); verse 16, from [Isaiah 53:1](#); Joel—verse 13, from [Joel 2:32](#))

After reaching consensus in the ensuing whole-class discussion, announce that a *what's so* should be followed by a *so what?* Then immediately become personally silent to create an expectation for student responses. Do not be hasty in relieving the silence by offering hints, etc.! Wait at least 15 seconds before doing so. Jot student responses on the board. Follow each suggestion by asking for a reason.

Alternative or Option. Distribute copies of [Romans 10:5-17](#) with these instructions:

- 1—Underline every verb in the text.
- 2—Circle every verb that tells how we are to respond to the gospel.
- 3—Put a star beside each verb that indicates our responsibility to share the gospel.

Ask learners to complete the first task individually. Then, in groups, half the class can complete the second task while the other half completes the third task. Reconvene for a discussion of results.

Into Life

Invite a guest to speak to your class about your congregation's missionary outreach. Ask for a brief report, including challenges, progress, and ongoing needs. Discuss how members of your class can help.

Next, write these three words on the board:

Time. Talent. Treasure.

Ask students, in pairs, to discuss how they individually could use each of these three gifts to spread the gospel more effectively. (Perhaps assign each word to a different third of the class.) After two or three minutes, ask class members to share ideas. Say: "Which of these gifts will you personally commit to use more fully to send or take the good news to those who have not accepted it?"

Option 1. Distribute copies of the "Amazing Stats" exercise from the activity page, which you can download, for study pairs to complete as indicated. *Option 2.* Do the same thing with the "Amazing Quotes" exercise.

After several minutes, ask volunteers to share their discussion with the whole class. Close with prayers for your congregation's efforts to share the gospel across cultures and around the world.