

If You Declare With Your Mouth

Message 5 of 5 in the series: "If"

"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." Romans 10:9 (NIV)

A. Paul wanted the early Christians in Rome to embrace the Good News that anyone can be saved from his/her sins through faith in Jesus.

"For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, '**Anyone who trusts in him** will never be disgraced.' Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For '**Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**'" Romans 10:10-13 (NLT) (*Isaiah 28:16, Joel 2:32*)

1. Paul was writing to first century believers in Rome who had very little theological training. Paul wanted to make sure that Jews and Gentiles alike understood that we are all filthy rotten sinners who can never earn our way into right-standing with God. We are made righteous only by trusting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

2. Paul's message was in direct contradiction to the teaching of the Jewish religious leaders who insisted that right-standing with God had to be earned through strict adherence to the OT Law and painstaking observance of hundreds of Jewish religious traditions.

"But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, 'Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey **all the commands** that are written in God's Book of the Law.' So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law."

Galatians 3:10-11a (NLT) (*Deuteronomy 27:26*)

3. "Believing in your heart God raised Christ from the dead" and "calling on the name of the Lord" mean much more than simply saying "I believe in God."

"You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! **Even the demons believe this**, and they tremble in terror." James 2:19 (NLT)

"Then call on the name of your god, and **I will call on the name of the Lord**. The god who answers by setting fire to the wood is the true God!" 1 Kings 18:24a (NLT)

B. Paul wanted everyone to hear the Good News about Jesus so they can call on Him to save them.

"But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, 'How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!'" Romans 10:14-15 (NLT) (*Isaiah 52:7*)

1. God's plan for spreading the Good News of Jesus around the world is ordinary Christians just like us.

"And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So **we are Christ's ambassadors**; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'Come back to God!'"

2 Corinthians 5:19b-20 (NLT)

2. We probably won't share if we don't care.

"Dear brothers and sisters, **the longing of my heart and my prayer** to God is for the people of Israel to be saved. I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal. For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law. For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God."

Romans 10:1-4 (NLT)

“My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them.”

Romans 9:2-3 (NLT)

3. We must always be ready to explain our faith and look for opportunities to share the Good News!

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Colossians 4:5-6 (NIV)

“...you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it.” 1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

C. Paul said “if” because he recognized that not everyone will welcome the Good News about Jesus.

“But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, ‘Lord, who has believed our message?’ So, faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.”

Romans 10:16-17 (NLT) (*Isaiah 53:1*)

“But despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him.”

John 12:37 (NLT)

“As God’s partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God’s kindness and then ignore it. For God says, ‘At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.’ Indeed, the ‘right time’ is now. Today is the day of salvation.” 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

Read Romans 10:9-17 and then discuss the following questions:

1. Why do you think many Christians are reluctant to talk about their faith? Why isn’t evangelism a more urgent topic?
2. How comfortable are you in talking with others about a personal relationship with Jesus? What would give you more confidence?
3. Compare/contrast trying to earn righteousness by keeping the OT Law and being made righteous through faith. (Galatians 3:10-11, Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 8:6-13)
4. Why do you think the Good News about Jesus isn’t welcomed by everyone? (John 12:37, Romans 10:16)
5. Discuss the following statements:
 - God’s only plan for spreading the Good News of Jesus around the world is via ordinary Christians just like us. (Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, 2 Corinthians 5:19-20)
 - We probably won’t share unless we care. (Romans 9:2-3 & 10:1-4) What motivated Paul?
 - We must always be ready to explain our faith and look for opportunities to share the Good News! (Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:15)

6. Quotations to consider:

“We believe everything which the Lord Jesus has taught, but we must go a step further, and trust him. It is not even enough to believe in him, as being the Son of God, and the anointed of the Lord; but we must believe on him... The faith that saves is not believing certain truths, nor even believing that Jesus is a Savior; but it is resting on him, depending on him, lying with all your weight on Christ as the foundation of your hope. Believe that he can save you; believe that he will save you; at any rate leave the whole matter of your salvation with him in unquestioning confidence. Depend upon him without fear as to your present and eternal salvation. This is the faith which saves the soul.” Charles Spurgeon

“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergymen or laymen, they alone will shake the gates of Hell and set up the kingdom of Heaven upon Earth.” John Wesley