

## Epistle of Romans XXII

(Chapters 9:30-10:13)

### Rock of Offense/Stone of Stumbling

Fred R. Coulter

Romans 9:30: “What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the* righteousness that *is* by faith. But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why? Because *they* *did* not *seek* it by faith, but by works of law...” (vs 30-32).

Remember what we said about *works of law*. When it is *works of law* this means a law that was created in addition to the commandments of God, such as the Jews have.

“...for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling, exactly as it is written: ‘Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed’” (vs 32-33).

Romans 10:1: “Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ *is* the end of works of law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the law, ‘The man who has practiced those things shall live by them.’ But the righteousness *that comes* through faith speaks after this manner...” (vs 1-6).

*Righteousness* from v 30=11 times:

- the righteousness of law vs the righteousness of faith—we covered that very thoroughly in Rom. 5
- the righteousness of law is the righteousness that is derived from Israel from keeping the *letter of the Law*.
- the righteousness, which is by faith, is the faith that God gives you as a gift, the imputed righteousness of Christ

Israel (Rom. 9:31), which had a law of righteousness didn’t attain to it. Why? *Because their efforts were not by faith* (v 32). But as it were, by works of law, and they stumbled. They were looking to the nationalistic thing; they were looking to their law,

the *Code of Jewish Law*. There are thousand and thousands of laws! Here’s what happens with the *works of law*: When you have a *work of law*, which you have created that replaces a Law of God, you have created *legalism*! You have a religion by legalism according to a law. All commandment-keeping, all law-keeping that God has is required and is good, right, fine, true and should be done in faith. That’s why if you keep the Sabbath, you should keep the Sabbath in faith and in spirit.

Here’s what happens when you have all the legalism and why they did not obtain to the righteousness of God. They had many, many different laws.

Mark 7:1: “Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem came together to Him. And when they saw some of His disciples eating with defiled hands (that is, unwashed *hands*), they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, **holding fast to the tradition of the elders**...” (vs 1-3).

That is a work of law! Legalism is devising your own religious laws, which then replace the laws of God, and they get so focused in on it that they do not keep the laws of God in the spirit. Let’s understand something else concerning legalism: You have:

- Jewish legalism, which is contained in the *Code of Jewish Law* and the Talmud and the Kabala
- the code of Catholic law, which is contained in Catholic law
- the codes of Protestant laws, which are their laws

One of the most outstanding things you can say about having a legal law is the requirement of Sunday-worship instead of Sabbath. *That is total legalism*! So, when you have a Protestant that says commandment-keeping is legalism, *NO!* it’s the other way around. Commandment-keeping is not legalism; commandment-keeping is what *God requires*.

- Sunday-keeping is *legalism*
- Christmas-keeping is *legalism*
- keeping Sabbath in the synagogue the way the Jews keep it is *legalism*

That is not keeping the Sabbath according to God's ways.

*Code of Jewish Law* concerning hand-washing:

Washing the Hands Before Meals: (1) Before eating bread over which the benediction *Hamotzi* (who bringeth forth) is said, one must wash his hands first. If the bread is no less than the size of an egg, he must say the benediction for washing hands...

You have to say a benediction for washing hands before you wash them.

...but if it is less than that, he need not say the benediction.

So, you go around with this little egg-size thing to measuring your bread. What size of an egg? a canary egg? or an ostrich egg? I mean, who's to say? You see how these things get all carried away.

(2) The water used for washing the hands must be poured out of a vessel that is perfect, having neither a hole nor a crack. It must also be even at the top without any indents or projecting parts. When using a vessel having a spout, we must not let the water run through the spout, because that part is not the vessel proper since it does not hold any liquid. We must, therefore, pour the water from the edge of the vessel which contains the liquid.

(5) After washing both hands, we rub them together and then, raise them upward, as it is written (Psa. 134:2): "Lift up your hands," etc. Then, before drying them, we recite the benediction: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hath sanctified us by His commandments and hath commanded us concerning the washing of the hands."....

*NO!* God never commanded concerning the washing of the hands.

(6) If after pouring the water upon one hand, he touched it with the other hand, or someone else had touched it, the water on the hand becomes contaminated by the contact.

Ooooo, very bad!

The hand must, therefore, be dried and then washed a second time. But if that happens after he had pronounced the

benediction, the benediction need not be repeated.

(11) Before washing the hands, we must examine them to make sure that there is no coating on them, as that would be an obstruction between the hands and the water. If we have big nails, we must clean them well, so that there would be no clay or dirt under them, as that, too, is considered an obstruction. We must also remove the rings from the fingers before the washing.

And on and on and on and on! There are hundreds of laws! Ridiculous! I'll read the one *Hand Washing in the Morning*, that one is always hilarious—upon rising in the morning. Christ condemned it!

Vol. 1, Chapter 2, Hand Washing in the Morning: (1) Since every man upon rising from his sleep in the morning is like a newborn creature, insofar as the worship of the Creator is concerned, he should prepare himself for worship by washing his hands out of a vessel, just as the priests used to wash their hands daily out of the wash-basin before performing their service in the Temple....

In the first place, they are not priests.

This hand-washing is based on the biblical verse: (Psa. 26:6-7): "I will wash my hands in innocency, and I will compass Thy altar, O Lord; that I may publish with a loud voice," etc. There is another reason given by the Kabbalists...

This comes from Kabbalism, the Talmud.

...(Zohar, quoted in Beth Joseph), for this morning hand-washing; when a man is asleep, the holy soul departs from his body, and an unclean spirit descends upon him. When rising from sleep, the unclean spirit departs from his entire body, except from his fingers, and does not depart until one spills water upon them three times alternately. One is not allowed to walk four cubits (six feet) without having one's hands washed, except in cases of extreme necessity.

The reason all of these are there is to hedge everyone with so many laws they can't possibly sin. Sin is in the mind! These things do not control the mind. Anything that is outward, legalism, does not accomplish the righteousness of faith—which is by belief with the Holy Spirit within you! Here's the

whole principle of why they do these things: That a person will acquire a feeling of reverence and humility and will be ashamed and afraid to do anything wrong. That is all negativism. *That is all religion based upon fear!* This is only sample. It would take me months to read the thousands of these laws aloud to you, and you would be bored to death upon hearing them.

Another one is: If two are reading the Scriptures and they have this little lamp—the little lamp with the wick hanging out the side—if it runs low on oil you may not tip it to keep the light going. But if there are two of you, one may tip it.

Another one is: On the Sabbath, if a bushel basket of apples falls over you may not put them back into the basket if they're spread out too far. If they're close you can put them back and set it up. But if they're spread out too far, you can't put them back because that's harvesting. However, you may eat them one at a time.

All of that has nothing to do with God! What they wanted to do, instead of filling their minds with the Word of God, they wanted to fill their minds with all of their laws to make them ashamed and to control them. That's why Judaism is anti-God—Christ says so!

Mark 7:4: “Even *when coming* from the market, they do not eat unless they *first* wash themselves. **And there are many other things that they have received to observe**, *such as the washing of cups and pots and brass utensils and tables....* [and I could read all of those to you] ...For this reason, the Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, *saying*, ‘Why don't Your disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?’ And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me...”’ (vs 4-7)

Their heart is *on their laws, not toward God!* Can you imagine all the picayunishness that goes on:

- Did you wash your hand?
- Did you not wash your hands?
- Did you have it in the right pot?
- Did you pour it from the edge?
- Did you pour it through a spout?
- Did you have on your right clothes when you got up in the morning?
- Did you wash your hands?
- Did you put on your underwear correct?

All of that is there! It is!

- Do you have your phylacteries on?
- Do you have all your merit badges on?

When they eat a meal:

- there's a benediction before you start
- there's a benediction for meat
- there's a benediction for vegetables
- there's a benediction for fruit
- there's a benediction for wine
- there's a benediction for water

And you say *grace* and *amen* all the way through and throw your hands up in the air—hallelujah, and all that sort of thing. *NONSENSE!* Even most of the Jews don't observe those things, but this is what the Code of Jewish Law has done. That's why Paul said, ‘They did not attain to the righteousness of God.’ This is not the righteousness of God. *This is the foolishness of demented minds of religious crackpots!*

“...their hearts are far away from Me” (v 6)—that's what God wants; *He wants your heart!* Just like the Publican who repented, said, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner.’ He went down justified, not the Pharisee.

Verse 7: “‘But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men. For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.’ Then He said to them, ‘Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your *own* tradition” (vs 7-9).

That's why they never attained to the righteousness of what God wanted them to do, because they didn't live in the commandments of God; they lived in their own! They couldn't attain to it. God is turning the tables around completely and He's taking the people that they hate—the Gentiles—and offering them salvation, and giving them justification by faith and righteousness before God. That's something!

Romans 9:32: “Why? Because *they did not seek it* by faith, but by works of law: for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling”—*Jesus Christ!* The Son of God! The Word of God!

Verse 33: “Exactly as it is written: ‘Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.’”

Let's look at this *Rock of Offense* and *Stone of Stumbling*. We're going to see some very

interesting things here concerning it. You can read in the Scriptures that *nothing is impossible* for God! And then to whom God gave His Word, they say, 'How can God become a man?' That's a big *stumbling stone* for them.

1-Corinthians 1:21 "For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God..."

You've got on the other hand the Gentiles who had their problems: 'We have our philosophy and we have our thoughts and our religion,' which are *works of law*! "...did not know God..." Just like the article that was given to me. Isn't it nice that 60% of scientist are able to say, 'We are able to find a place for God.' Isn't that nice. Wait until God finds *your* place; you'll change your mind.

Verse 22: "For *the* Jews require a sign..." How many did Jesus give?

- healed the sick
- raised the dead
- gave sight to the born blind

—which the Jews had in their own writing was a sign of the Messiah. You go back and listen to the sermon *The Three Miracles of Jesus*, the three major miracles which were taken right out of the writings of the Jews that these three miracles would prove Who the Messiah was. Jesus did all three of them publicly, notoriously, openly, and they still rejected Him. That's why he became a *Stone of Stumbling*.

Verse 22: "For *the* Jews require a sign, and *the* Greeks seek after wisdom... [Yes, we must be smart!] ...but we proclaim Christ crucified.... [that's where we need to focus in on] ... To *the* Jews *it is* a cause of offense... [stumbling block] ...and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness; but to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom" (vs 22-24). Those are really some strong words. What were the three miracles?

1. man born blind
2. man who was born crippled
3. raising from the dead

That's why Lazarus' death was so important at the last. Jesus let him be dead four days; the Jews say it takes 72 hours to be officially dead. So, He left him dead four days and the disciples said, 'Why didn't You come, he would have lived.' *Lazarus is sleeping!* 'He'd be lucky if he's sleeping.' Finally, Jesus said, '*Yes he is dead, but this is for the glory of God.*' What did the Jews want to do with Lazarus? *Kill him! and kill Christ!* So, those are pretty powerful witnesses. He was a *stumbling stone*.

Let's continue on with this 'Stone of Stumbling'; I was amazed at how many times it's mentioned and how this is brought out in so many different places.

1-Peter 2:6: "For this reason it says in the Scripture, 'Behold, I place in Zion *the* Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who believes in Him shall never be put to shame.' The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who believe; but to those who disobey..." (vs 6-7).

The worst disobedience is not to go out and sin. The worst disobedience is to create your own righteousness, with your own laws and reject the laws of God. What are you doing when you do that? *You're making yourself God!* That's why the sinner that repents is justified.

"...*the* Stone that the builders rejected has become *the* Head of *the* corner, and a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense; *especially* to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed" (vs 7-8).

Let's see where this comes out of the book of Isaiah. I think we'll be amazed what it says here, and how that refers to the Church and the disciples and so forth.

Isaiah 8:11: "For thus the LORD spoke to me with a strong hand, and warned me against walking in the way of this people, saying, 'Do not say, "A conspiracy!" to everything of which this people says, "A conspiracy!" And do not fear their fear, nor be afraid. The LORD of hosts, Him shall you sanctify, and *let Him be* your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be a sanctuary *for you*—but for a Stone of Stumbling, and for a Rock of Offense to both the houses of Israel..." (vs 11-14)—the house of Judah and the house of Israel. How is He a *Stone of Stumbling* to both?

To the Jews on the one hand—they rejected Him because they:

- did not believe what He did
- did not believe that God could be manifested in the flesh
- were not willing to throw away all of their laws and follow Christ

To the house of Israel, on the other hand, who now are the Protestants today, basically speaking, He's a *Stone of Stumbling* in as much as they want His grace, but they don't want to keep His commandments. So, they have their own legalism in Sunday-keeping.

It's amazing, brethren! Why should the

Church of God go to the religions of the world and say, 'How do you worship God, because we want to do the same?' And that's how the Worldwide Church of God was taken down! The true Christ became a Stumbling Stone. We are called a cult, legalists, and all of those things which are not true!

- show me one place in the whole Scripture where you're condemned for keeping the commandments of God
- show me one place where you are condemned for believing in Christ
- show me one place where you are condemned for keeping the same days as Jesus kept
- show me one place where you're condemned for not eating unclean meats

*You can't! No! No way!*

"...and for a trap and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.... [prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem] ...Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among My disciples" (vs 14-16).

A prophecy of the New Testament. Christ said He came to 'fulfill the law'—and that was brought in Matt. 5-7. He filled it up among His disciples.

Verse 17: "And I will wait upon the LORD, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will trust in Him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion" (vs 17-18).

That's what the apostles were. You read in the book of Acts and see all the signs and wonders that they did, it absolutely dumbfounded the Jews. They were so angry at the miracles and the healings that the apostles were doing. And, of course, it culminated in the final witness against them with Stephen, when he was martyred.

Psalms 118:19: "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. I will praise You, for You have answered me and have become my salvation" (vs 19-21).

There is a **gate of righteousness** that we go through. What is that? *Christ is the door! 'I am the door.'*

Verse 22: "The Stone, which the builders rejected, has become the Head Stone of the corner.

This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day, which the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech You, O LORD; O LORD, I beseech You, cause us to prosper now. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD; we have blessed You out of the house of the LORD" (vs 22-26).

What did Jesus say, the last thing He said to Jerusalem? *You won't see Me anymore until you say 'Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord.'* This is all a prophecy about Christ.

Let's look at another prophecy concerning Christ as far as the Stone is concerned, and then we'll see how this applies as Christ applied it in the New Testament.

Jeremiah 23:28: "The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream. And he who has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully...." That's what it has to be, brethren.

That's why the one thing that was good and right with Worldwide was 'prove it in your Bible, prove all things unless it's in the Bible.' When they got away from that—believe what I say, do what I tell you—then they got away from proving it out of the Scriptures. You have to deal faithfully with the Word of God.

"...What is the chaff to the wheat?" says the LORD. 'Is not My Word like a fire?' says the LORD, 'and like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I *am* against the prophets who steal My words each one from his neighbor. Behold, I *am* against the prophets who use their tongues and say, "He says," *when I did not say*. Behold, I *am* against those who prophesy false dreams and tell them, and cause My people to go astray by their lies and by their wantonness. Yet, I did not send them nor command them; therefore, they shall not profit this people at all,' says the LORD" (vs 28-32).

That's a fulfillment of it here in Rom. 9, that they had a *law* of righteousness, but didn't attain to righteousness. They brought everything else in it!

Let's come to Matthew 21 and see how Christ used these words, and He used it in no uncertain terms. Of course, He *is* the Word of God!

Matthew 21:42: "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures...'" Interesting statement! They got so busy with their laws that they never read the Scriptures.

"...*The Stone that the builders rejected... [Psa. 118] ...this has become the Head of the corner.*

This was from *the* Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes”? Because of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that* produces the fruits of it” (vs 42-43)

That nation is the Church; not yet a nation, but will be a nation of spirit beings.

Verse 44: “And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken... [with repentance; you fall on the Stone with great repentance and yieldedness to God] ...but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Just like a hammer breaks the stone into nothing.

Verse 45: “Now, after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them.” They fell at His feet and repented—*NO! That’s what they should have done!*

Verse 46: “And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet.”

Mark 12:10—the parallel account: “Have you not read even this Scripture: “*The* Stone that the builders rejected, this has become *the* head of *the* corner; this was from *the* Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes”? Then they sought to arrest Him...” (vs 10-12).

When Peter and the apostles were answering for the healing of the man at the Gate Beautiful; this is what he told them, standing there before all these religious figures, right in the Sanhedrin. They said, ‘How did you do this? By what name and power?’

Acts 4:8: “Then Peter, filled with *the* Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we are examined this day as to a good work *done to the* infirm man, by what *power* he has been cured... [and he’s standing right here next to him] ...be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, Whom you crucified, *but* Whom God has raised from *the* dead, by Him this *man* stands before you whole.... [what a witness this was] ... This is the Stone that was set at naught by you, the builders, which has become the Head of *the* corner. And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (vs 8-12). That’s something! They really brought this out!

Let’s see how the Apostle Paul used it in reference to the Church and things done there. Paul is completing the thought here about building the Church, talking to the Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens

with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone” (vs 19-20). It’s interesting, Christ is the only foundation upon which you build.

I’ve seen how they built the Empire State Building. They had a huge cornerstone that had to be laid absolutely precisely in the right place, and that was way at the bottom of the building, not a capstone at the top, but right at the bottom of the building, because that whole building had to be built from that one chief cornerstone; everything else had to come from that. It had to have the angles perfectly straight; had to be a perfect 90-degree angle on the corner. It had to be absolutely flat, a 180-degree cut on the top of it, all the way across the surface of it, and then it had to be laid and squared into the foundational setting so that it would lay absolutely perfect, and that would affect everything clear to the very top of the building. For those of you who build, you know this. Once you lay the foundation, if you get that foundation off just a little bit, you’re going to be way off when you get up high. That’s what it’s talking about here:

Verse 21: “In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together... [because the Cornerstone is correct] ...is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 21-22). Then that is the righteousness.

I don’t think at this point that Paul fully understood all of how God was going to do what He was going to do. As you read the Apostle Paul’s writings, you understand that in his earlier writings that he was expecting Christ to return during his lifetime. I think it’s demonstrative to show that when James, the brother Jesus, was martyred about 63<sub>A.D.</sub> and Christ had not returned and all the turmoil was going on that God revealed to Paul that Christ wasn’t returning then. But when you read this statement, he has kind of the sound that, yes, they’re going to be saved.

Romans 10:1: “Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation.” So, I would have to say at this point, yes, that’s fine, that’s marvelous, that’s wonderful, but here there is no understanding whatsoever of the second resurrection. There’s kind of an illusion to it (Rom. 11) by saying that by the wisdom of God He’s going to work it all out. But here there is none.

Verse 2: “For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God... [This is their own. Aren’t we a ‘religious’ people today? Churches everywhere!]

...but it is not according to knowledge.”

Ask them, ‘Have you ever read...?’ *No, they haven’t read the Bible!* ‘Do you have one?’ *Yes!* ‘Do you read it in church?’ *Most of the time!* ‘How much do you cover in there?’ *Well....* ‘Have you really read it all the way through yourself. I mean, have you sat down one time, read it all the way through—cover to cover—just yourself?’ *No, don’t need to do that!* Catholics are forbidden to do it, so don’t even ask them; it doesn’t mean anything to them.

No, it’s “...3: For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”

{note sermons: *The Two Righteousness*’ #s 1-2 this series, and booklet/sermon series: *Belief’s of the Christian Biblical Church of God*} The **righteousness of the law** and **righteousness of faith**.

#### **The righteousness of faith:**

- you believe in Christ
- you repent, you’re baptized
- you receive the Holy Spirit
- God imputes His righteousness to you
- you stand in grace

Nothing—no law, no rule, no regulation—can replace that! Another way to look at it is this: ***Nothing can substitute for Christ!—period!***

“...seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (v 3). Let’s see how Paul also brought this up in:

Romans 7:5: “For as long as we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which *were* through the law... [the law defines sin] ...were working within our own members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been released from the law...” (vs 5-6)—which brought that death.

That doesn’t mean that there’s no law to keep. In other words, the claim of death has been satisfied upon baptism.

“...because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter” (v 6). That is the righteousness of God, *in spirit, not in letter*.

Romans 5:15: “But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*? For if by the transgression of the one man [Adam] many died... [we all received the law of sin and death] ...how much more did the grace of God, and the gift of

grace, which *is* by the One Man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many? And *should* not the free gift *be* like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment *was* by one unto condemnation; but on the other hand, the free gift *is* by *one* to *the* justification of many offenses. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness... [so, you have the *gift of grace* and the *gift of righteousness*, which is the righteousness of Christ] ...reign in life by the One, Jesus Christ” (vs 15-17).

That is given to us as a gift! That’s why that kind of righteousness can ***never be substituted*** for anything else! Nothing else can replace it. They didn’t submit to the righteousness of God. Another way of putting it: Isn’t Christ also the righteousness of God? *They didn’t submit to Christ!*

Romans 10:4 has always been a great controversy. Here’s where people turn—in the *King James*—to show that the Law has been eliminated by Christ,

Romans 10:4 (KJV): “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.” When they read that they say Christ ended the Law. ***That isn’t what it says!***

(go to the next track)

Get out your *Strong’s Concordance* and you look up the Greek word for *end* and ‘telos’—it says, *end, purpose, goal, attainment, fulfillment*. So they say, for those who still believe in law, Christ is the purpose of the Law. Well, that’s a fairly good understanding of it, but not entirely, because what are we talking about here? *Works of law* (Rom. 9:32)

So, it is: Christ is not the end of ***the*** Law, but Christ is ‘telos nomos’—*end of law*—Romans 10:4 (FV): “For Christ *is* the end of *works* of law...” ***Christ eliminated all the works of law, which were added by men!*** That’s what He’s done! He didn’t end the commandments of God. He said, ‘Until heaven and earth passes, not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law.’ Was Paul saying that Christ ended ***the*** Law? Does grace end law? *No!*

Romans 3:31: “Are we, then, abolishing *the* Law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE!...” I translated it that way to bring out the force of the Greek—‘me ginoito’: *Don’t even let this thought come into mind!* ‘Ginoi’ means to *even produce the thought, let it come into being*. This means *never let it be!*

“...Rather, we are establishing *the Law*” (v 31). How do you establish law? *By having it in your heart and mind!* You have the true law that is established; that’s what he’s talking about here.

Romans 6:1—referring to the *righteousness which is of faith*: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** We who died to sin, **how shall we live any longer therein?**” (vs 1-2). If there is no law you can’t be living in sin. But he’s saying here that that shows that *the Law is established through grace* by showing the true meaning of it.

Verse 15: “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**”

Romans 7:7: “What then shall we say? *Is the Law sin?* **MAY IT NEVER BE!...**” The Law is spiritual and Holy and just and true. Can you do away with something spiritual? ***MAY IT NEVER BE!*** So, Paul is not by any stretch of the imagination saying here that Christ did away with the Law.

I believe this is the most proper translation of it, Romans 10:4: “For Christ *is the end of works* of law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” What is that to do for us if we are believing?

Romans 8:3: “For what *was impossible* for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the likeness* of sinful flesh; and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; **in order that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us**, who are not walking according to *the flesh*, but according to *the Spirit*” (vs 3-4). That is how the righteousness of God is given, and it comes through belief. Belief then means:

- repentance
- baptism
- walking in faith
- receiving the Holy Spirit
- receiving the gift of righteousness
- receiving the gift of imputed righteousness from Christ
- you walk in God way with Christ in you
- you walk as Christ walked

Did Christ ever sin? *No!* Was He not perfectly righteous before God? *Yes, indeed! No question!*

Now, let’s come back to Romans 10:5 and I think we’ll see the difference: “For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the law, ‘The man who has practiced those things shall live by them.’” But the problem is, they didn’t! They added their own and replaced them!

Verse 6: “But the righteousness *that comes* through faith speaks after this manner... [this is quite interesting the way he brings this out here]: ...‘Do not say in your heart, “Who shall ascend up to heaven?”’ (that is, to bring Christ down)—because He’s the only One through Whom there is salvation.

Wasn’t it true in pagan religions, if someone could finally get up to God and finally get the message, finally just bring it down so we could do it. Oh my, that would be wonderful! But since no one could, no one did!

Verse 7: “Or, ‘Who shall descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from among *the dead*). Wasn’t that the whole thing with the Egyptian religion? They went down into hades in the darkness. That was the whole cycle of the sun every day, going down through hell. He’s bringing out what everyone would think of. Well, if we could only communicate with those who are dead and find out what they did that was wrong, then maybe we would know what to do. *NO!*

Verse 8: “But what does it say? ‘**The Word is near to you...** [How near?] ...in your mouth and in your heart.’ This is the Word of faith that we are proclaiming.”

- What is he saying with this?
- Does everyone have the Word of God in their heart?
- Does everyone have the Word of God in their mouth?
- Does everyone have the Word of God in their mind?
- *No!*

What he’s saying is that God provided for them in their own language so that they would know. Once you have Christ in you, then it’s in your heart and in your mind.

Let’s see where this prophecy is taken from (Deut. 30). This is also fulfilled in having the Scripture in your own language. When you understand that the American Bible Society and British Bible Society have produced the book of Mark—which what they consider the basic essence of the Gospel—in over 2,200 languages, *it is in your heart and in your mind*. They have the New Testament in over a 1,000 languages. They have the entire Old and New Testament in over 250 languages, and have distributed them into the entire world! You can probably go to a motel some place way out in the remote reaches of nothing and open up the drawer and find a Gideon Bible.



Someone went to a conference in Southern California and it was at a rather ritzy hotel and opened the drawer to see if there was a Bible and sure enough there was a Gideon Bible, but the pagans had snuck in and there was a book on Buddhism, too. So, the competition is at hand. Buddhism in the Churches of God was not a stretch by any imagination.

Deuteronomy 30:11: “For this commandment which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’” (vs 11-12).

Isn't Word of God interesting the way it starts in the Gospel of John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

That's why John had to write that. And that is so powerful when you understand that. In Romans, Paul puts in the word *Christ*.

Deuteronomy 30:13: “Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it” (vs 13-14).

So, Paul re-interprets this just a little bit, understanding what it is concerning Christ.

- Christ is the One Who brought it
- Christ is the One Who has the message
- Christ is the One Who has the righteousness
- What would happen if someone went up to heaven and got it?
- Whose work would that be? *Their own!*
- Whose work would it be if they went into the abyss and got it? *Their own work!*

Christ would be left out of it.

Romans 10:8: “But what does it say? ‘The Word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart.’ This is the Word of faith that we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth *the* Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from *the* dead, you shall be saved” (vs 8-9).

Why does he say *heart*? *You have to believe it in the innermost part of your being!* That's why! It's not just something you say, ‘I heard this and I believe it.’ It's something you believe in your heart. Why? *Because you may have to die for it!* It has to

be with the heart. Men have to believe God, believe in the Word of God and so forth.

Verse 10: “For with *the* heart one believes unto righteousness...” That's a true righteousness; that is the most important thing that there is, that kind of belief.

“...and with *the* mouth one confesses unto salvation, because the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.’ For there is no difference between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all *is* rich toward all who call upon Him. For everyone who calls on the name of *the* Lord shall be saved” (vs 10-13). What does this tell us? They will be saved *if*:

- they believe in Truth
- they call upon Him in Truth
- they repent in Truth
- they truly believe

That's what it's talking about, not just some simple-minded profession like the Protestants interpret this, that if you just say, ‘Do you believe?’ *Oh, yes, I believe!* ‘You're saved.’ No, it has nothing to do with that.

Everyone wants to do something for God, so that God will do something for them. After the feeding the 5,000, they came to Jesus and they wanted to know what they could do so they could keep getting this automatic bread. You know, the never diminishing loaf, you break it off and it grows. The never diminishing fish: you cut it and there's more. What Christ was doing with that and the 12 baskets of and all of that, He was showing *there was plenty of the Word of God to feed all that would really come*. Then it got narrowed down when they wanted the food.

So they found Him, John 6:28: “Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?’.... [Everyone wants to do something for God!] ...Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God...’” Listen very carefully, what is **the work of God?** Radio time, television time, print magazines? *NO!*

Right there, there it is: “...**that you believe in Him Whom He has sent**” (v 29). In other words, you believe on the Father: that the Father sent Christ, that Christ is the Christ, He is the Lord, and if you believe with your heart. ***That takes away all works of law!*** Yes, it does, because you have to believe! That's why He's bringing it out this way. That's very important. They were all dismayed at that. They didn't know what to do. They said, ‘Give us bread.’ He said, ‘Okay, I'll give you bread.’

Verse 35: “Jesus said to them, ‘I AM the Bread of Life... [that confounded them even more] ...the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.’” That’s why faith is so important and that you believe in your heart to the very depths of your soul and your being. A religion is a legal thing that you do. That is legalism!

- Do you see the difference between them?
- Do you understand what He’s talking about?

*The righteousness of the law*, which was given, that’s fine; and the commandments—that’s in the letter. If they would have done it, they would have believed in Christ even more. But they didn’t do it, so they didn’t believe in Him. You can attain to a certain level of righteousness with that, but you’ve got to live in them. That doesn’t bring you Christ. Only God the Father can call you and bring you Christ.

Let’s see how this carries on with repentance and belief. This is Philip and the eunuch. The eunuch was reading in the scroll as he was going along in whatever kind of horse-drawn vehicle:

Acts 8:34: “And the eunuch answered *and* said to Philip, ‘I pray you, about whom does the prophet say this?... [he was reading Isaiah] ...About himself, or about another?’ Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning from this Scripture, preached to him the Gospel of Jesus. And as they were going down the road, they came upon a certain *pool of water!*....” (vs 34-36).

He’s probably saying, ‘Yes, you need to repent; you need be baptized; you need to believe on Him.’ The Eunuch is looking at him—eyeball-to-eyeball—in the chariot as it’s going along and the Eunuch says:

“...‘Look, *there is* water! What is preventing me from being baptized?’ And Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, it is permitted.’.... [total commitment] ...Then he answered *and* said, ‘I believe *that* Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ And he commanded the *one driving the* chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. But when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of *the* Lord caught Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no longer, but he went his way rejoicing” (vs 37-39).

I don’t know what the eunuch thought or where Philip went. I don’t know how high in the air

he was carried away, or whatever it was, but he was gone!

Mark 16:16—showing that *believing* is the part that needs to be emphasized, the *believing* part! “The one who believes...” Believing on an ongoing basis. In the Greek the words *belief* and *faith* are so close that you could have it: *the one who is faithizing into Christ*. You actually have such an active faith, and it’s not just on Him or on His name, but the Greek has it *into!* A real spiritual thing between you and Christ.

“...and is baptized shall be saved, but the one who does not believe shall be condemned” (v 16)—or shall be judged.

Romans 3:22: “Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [Jesus’ own faith that brings that righteousness to us; His faith in us] ...toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference.”

If you want a Strong’s Concordance study sometime, look up the words: *believe*, *believeth*, *believed* in the book of John. He has more about believing than anything else. List out all of the things that you have to believe. It all comes back to believing on Christ and into.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him...” *Believing*, and the Greek for *in* means *into*. It is a spiritual something that comes from you, to Christ and back to you, because you have God’s Spirit *in* you. It goes to Christ and it goes to Him in heaven above. It’s a very profound thing, *in Him!*

“...may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (vs 16-18).

This is the kind of belief that Paul is talking about here in Rom 10. He’s not just talking about an acknowledgement of a historical character.

John 12:37: “Although He had done so many miracles in their presence, they did not believe in Him.” Miracles will not produce belief. You must *choose* to believe. You can see all kinds of miracles, but say, ‘Yeah, but...’ What did they say? *Yeah, but by they did this by Baalzebub. Yeah, but there was something strange about this.* Didn’t convince them.

Verse 38: “So that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled who said, ‘Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?’ For this *very* reason they could not believe because again Isaiah said, ‘He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts...’” (vs 38-40).

Why would God do that? *Because God is going to exercise His will* and for those who will not believe, He makes them even harder; ‘I would you were hot or cold.’ These are cold.

“...so that they would not see with *their* eyes and understand with *their* hearts, and be converted, and I would heal them” (v 40).

Brethren, when you read that, think about your calling. Think about what God has done. What God has done is very special. What God has done in calling us is very unique in the world.

Verse 41: “Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory and spoke concerning Him. But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; **for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God**” (vs 41-43).

You can’t mix politics with true belief in God. It just won’t work! That’s another reason why the Churches of God are failing, *too much politics, not enough belief!*

Verse 44: “Then Jesus called out and said, ‘The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness.... [Then He gives the key]: ...**But if anyone hears My words and does not believe...**” (vs 44-47).

When you hear the words of Christ—Who is God in the flesh, Who cannot lie, Who will not lie, Who is total righteousness from God—you better believe!

“...I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day” (vs 47-48).

So, *the very words that they reject are the very words that are going to judge them!* That’s awesome to contemplate! That’s something!

Verse 49: “For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me...” In other

words, every word that is here, every word that Jesus spoke is what the Father:

“...gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak” (v 49). That makes it far more profound. Who shall go up to heaven to bring Christ down to us? *No, He came voluntarily, and He spoke the words of the Father!* Every word is what He was commanded to speak and what He should say.

Verse 50: “And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me.”

Hebrews 11:6—a very profound Scripture here: “Now, without faith *it is* impossible to please God...” So, if we do the things that are pleasing to Him, we do it by faith.

- you can’t please God by how much you give
- you can’t please God by who you are
- you can’t please God by how much you have done
- ***You must believe!***

“...For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists...” (v 6). Once you do that, it will make a profound change in your life. Once you believe that God the Father *is* and Christ is His Son Whom He has sent, and He has done all of these things, that will make a great and profound change in your life.

- you’re *setting aside* ‘religion’
- you’re *setting aside* works of law—which men have given
- you’re *asking God for a clean heart* and a clean mind to do the things that God wants:
  - ✓ to love Him
  - ✓ to serve Him
  - ✓ to believe Him
  - ✓ to live by every Word of God

That’s what God wants! That’s why you come to Him and believe “...*that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (v 6), when is the reward going to be given? When are the words, ‘well done good and faithful servant’ going to be given? ***At the resurrection!***

Not now in this life. We may have the total opposite of that, brethren. We don’t know what the road is going to hold down in the future. Look how quickly it’s changed just in one week with all that’s going on in Washington, D.C

Sermons:

- *The Three Miracles of Jesus*
- *The Two Righteousnesses* (see this series)

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*  
(except where noted)

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Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 9:30-33
- 2) Romans 10:1-6
- 3) Mark 1:1-9
- 4) Romans 9:32-33
- 5) 1 Corinthians 1:21-24
- 6) 1 Peter 2:6-8
- 7) Isaiah 8:11-18
- 8) Psalm 119:19-26
- 9) Jeremiah 23:28-32
- 10) Matthew 21:42-46
- 11) Mark 12:10-12
- 12) Acts 4:8-12
- 13) Ephesians 2:19-22
- 14) Romans 10:1-3
- 15) Romans 7:5-6
- 16) Romans 5:15-17
- 17) Romans 10:4
- 18) Romans 3:31
- 19) Romans 6:1-2, 15
- 20) Romans 7:7
- 21) Romans 10:4
- 22) Romans 8:3-8
- 23) Romans 10:5-8
- 24) Deuteronomy 30:11-12
- 25) John 1:1
- 26) Deuteronomy 30:13-14
- 27) Romans 10:8-13
- 28) John 6:28-29, 35
- 29) Acts 8:34-39
- 30) Mark 16:16
- 31) Romans 3:22
- 32) John 3:16-18
- 33) John 12:37-50
- 34) Hebrews 11:6

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