

SERMON FOCUS: Christ must be the only Lord in my life.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will recognize the importance of a lifestyle that confesses genuine heartfelt faith in Christ.

BACKGROUND: Apostle Paul had a lot to say to the church at Rome. This is interesting, because he had not been there, but he had heard about them. He knew a lot of people in the church at Rome, because he mentions 26 of them by name in chapter 16. Paul wrote this letter in about 57 A. D. from Corinth, intending to teach this church about the doctrines of Christ. There is a whole lot of information contained in this short book, and we reference it often. In fact, many of us were taught to share the gospel using what is found in this book, called the *Romans Road*. This letter has a lot to teach, but today we are going to focus on part of Chapter 10.

SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 10:1-13

INTRODUCTION: I think that most of us in this room would agree that trying to save ourselves is ridiculous, but that is what many want to do. Unfortunately (or fortunately) we are unable to do this. In fact, we can wind up in more trouble if we try. EXAMPLE: Abandon Ship Drill.

MESSAGE:

1. WHEN WE TRY TO ESTABLISH OUR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS APART FROM CHRIST, WE TRY TO BECOME OUR OWN GOD.
 - a. In verses 1-3, Paul is talking about the Israelites, who tried to establish their own righteousness by super-strict adherence to the law.
 - b. The law can only point out our sin, not remove it.
 - c. An X-Ray can tell you that a bone is broken; it cannot fix it.
 - d. Trying to establish our own righteousness denies our need for Christ's righteousness.
2. RIGHTEOUSNESS CAN ONLY COME THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST.
 - a. (Deut. 30:11-14) "This command that I give you today is certainly not too difficult or beyond your reach. It is not in heaven so that you have to ask, 'Who will go up to heaven, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?' And it is not across the sea so that you have to ask, 'Who will cross the sea, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?' But the message is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may follow it."
 - b. We could never go into heaven to bring Christ down (v. 6). He came down for us.
 - c. We could never descend to the abyss to bring Christ back from the dead. God the Father raised Him from the dead.

- d. We do not have to seek out ways to do these things because Christ did them. He is all the righteousness we need.
- e. Of course, our righteousness must come by faith in Christ and genuine faith in Christ must lead to confession.

3. CONFESSION OF CHRIST IS A POLITICAL ACTION

- a. (9) [“If you confess with your mouth ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”](#)
- b. Remember that Paul is writing to the church in Rome. They were only allowed, by law, to worship Caesar.
- c. Since ancient times, political leaders have wanted to be worshiped as gods. Remember what happened to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when they refused to worship the statue of Nebuchadnezzar.
- d. Claiming Christ as your Lord was (and still is) countercultural.
- e. Claiming Christ as your Lord was (and still is) putting Him ahead of any government or leader on earth.
- f. Claiming Christ as your Lord was (and still is) risky to one’s very life.
 - i. Ten of the twelve disciples would be martyred.
 - ii. Paul would be martyred.
 - iii. Hundreds of people in the first three centuries of the church were martyred.
 - iv. In many parts of the world today, that is still the case.
 - v. Today, in America, claiming Christ as your Lord can cost you jobs, business opportunities, friends, and relatives.
- g. Confession of Christ as Lord is countercultural in culture that wants to put themselves first. But not only is confession of Christ a political action, but it is also a religious action.

4. CONFESSION OF CHRIST IS A RELIGIOUS ACTION

- a. I mentioned the political ramifications of claiming Christ as your Lord, but to the Jews, there were also significant religious ramifications: To call Jesus “Lord” was to equate Him with God.
- b. You may remember that the religious leaders considered this blasphemy when Jesus said, “I am.”
- c. It does no good, however, to call Him Lord and then fail to trust Him.
- d. It does no good to call Him Lord then try to create our own righteousness.
- e. It does no good to call Him Lord then refuse to obey Him.
- f. This is because our confession of “Jesus is Lord” is not a one-time transaction giving us a ticket to heaven. Our confession of “Jesus is Lord” is supposed to be our entire lifestyle.

5. CONFESSION OF CHRIST AS LORD IS A LIFESTYLE

- a. If Christ is truly our Lord, it will be seen in our speech.
- b. If Christ is truly our Lord, it will be seen in our love of each other.

- c. If Christ is truly our Lord, it will be seen in our actions.
 - d. If our confession of Christ is not reflected in every part of our lives, our confession is false.
 - e. True confession of Christ as Lord in our lifestyle can only be because we “believe in our heart that God has raised him from the dead.”
6. CONFESSION OF CHRIST IS *BECAUSE* OF BELIEF IN THE HEART
- a. Jesus liked to remind people that their actions came from the heart.
 - b. Matthew 15:18-20: “But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this defiles a person. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, slander. These are the things that defile a person”
 - c. If our confession is not based on true faith, it will not survive the first challenge.
 - i. When asked to put Christ before our own desires.
 - ii. When faced with threats and intimidation.
 - iii. Many people’s confession does not survive the first inconvenience.
 - d. Confession without belief is unsustainable. Belief without confession is impossible. The two go hand-in-hand always.
 - e. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. If these are missing, all that is waiting at the end of your life is, “Depart from me, I never knew you.”
7. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
 - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

FOUR QUESTIONS:

1. What do you hear God saying to you?
2. What keeps you from doing that?
3. If you were to do that, what might be a good first step?
4. Who are you going to tell?

INVITATION HYMN # 311 Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart