

"That They Might Be Saved"

Romans 9:1-5; 10:1

It's so sad to see God's people's seemingly unswayed heart by the lost. We all know someone that died without Christ, but so few really care.

An artist, seeking to depict on canvas the meaning of evangelism, painted a storm at sea. Black clouds filled the sky. Illuminated by a flash of lightning, a little boat could be seen disintegrating under the pounding of the ocean. Men were struggling in the swirling waters, their anguished faces crying out for help. The only glimmer of hope appeared in the foreground of the painting, where a large rock protruded out of the water. There, clutching desperately with both hands, was one lone seaman.

It was a moving scene. Looking at the painting, one could see in the tempest a symbol of mankind's hopeless condition. And, true to the Gospel, the only hope of salvation was "the Rock of Ages", a shelter in the time of storm.

But as the artist reflected upon his work, he realized that the painting did not accurately portray his subject. So he discarded the canvas, and painted another. It was very similar to the first: the black clouds, the flashing lightning, the angry waters, the little boat crushed by the pounding waves, and the crew vainly struggling in the water. In the foreground the seaman was clutching the large rock for salvation. But the artist made one change: the survivor was holding on with only one hand, and with the other hand he was reaching down to pull up

a drowning friend.

That is the New Testament picture of evangelism—that hand reaching down to rescue the perishing. Until that hand is extended, there is no Gospel—and there is no hope for the world.

(Robert E. Coleman, In "The Heartbeat of Evangelism")

In the passage before us we find the Apostle Paul's heart for the lost, especially the lost of the nation of Israel. He felt so burdened, so broken-hearted, that if it were possible, he would have given up all of eternity in heaven for his people.

How many of us can say that? How many of us would give anything for the lost? We won't even give them a little Gospel tract, let alone give up heaven.

This passage teaches us some very hard things about the lost, some things we may not understand, and that's all right, because the main points are very clear.

Are we willing to see people saved? Are we willing to do what we can, and what we should, to see them saved? If so, this passage will give us a few guidelines on how to approach the topic "THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED!!"

I. THE MANNER IN WHICH WE GO "THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED" – VS. 1-5

A. With a truthful mind - vs. 1a "I say the truth, in Christ, I lie not"

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever

things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Ephesians 6:14

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

1 John 3:18

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

A pastor ended one Sunday morning service by instructing his people, "I would like all of you to read the 17th chapter of Mark's Gospel before next Sunday."

The following Sunday, true to his word, he asked the congregation, "How many of you actually read the 17th chapter of Mark's Gospel this past week?" Almost everyone in the pews raised their hands to signify they had indeed read that 17th chapter.

The pastor then stunned his people by announcing, "Ladies and gentlemen, there is no 17th chapter of Mark." Then he proceeded to preach his Sunday morning sermon, which happened to be on lying.

B. With a clear conscience - vs. 1b - "my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost"

Philippians 2:14-15

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a

crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

2 Corinthians 1:12

¹² For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

1 Timothy 1:5

⁵ Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

Have you ever watched the icicle as it is formed? Have you noticed how it froze, one drop at a time, until it was a foot long, or more? If the water was clean, the icicle remained clear, and sparkled brightly in the sun; but if the water was slightly muddy, the icicle looked foul, and its beauty was spoiled. Just so our characters are formed. One little thought or feeling at a time adds its influence. If each thought be pure and right, the soul will be lovely, and will sparkle with happiness; but if impure and wrong, there will be deformity and wretchedness.

C. With a compassionate heart - vs. 2

Psalm 119:136

¹³⁶ Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Luke 19:41-44

⁴¹ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

⁴² Saying, **If thou hadst known, even thou, at**

least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

A church was in need of a pastor. A candidate came who preached on hell. The next Sunday another candidate came whose sermon was also on hell, and his fundamental teaching was the same as that of the first one. When the members of the church were called upon to vote, they voted for the second candidate. When they were asked why, the answer was, "The first one spoke as if he were glad that people were going to hell, while the second seemed sorry for it."

D. With a burdened soul - vs. 3-5; Ps. 126:5-6

Psalm 126:5-6

5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Peter Gillquist, in his book *Love is Now*, mentioned that on one occasion he and several other friends were invited to speak to a group of UCLA students. Following the meeting, one young man expressed a

desire to discuss the matter of salvation. So arrangements were made to meet with him the next morning. He said that he really wanted what he saw in the lives of believers, but he hesitated to make a decision because he thought that if he became a Christian he would have to witness. His counselor, however, assured him that to become a Christian he was not required to do anything but place his trust in Christ. Realizing that salvation is by God's grace through faith, the student gladly received the Lord Jesus as his Savior. But a strange thing happened. As he went back to his fraternity house, he met a friend and told him of his newfound faith in Christ. Before the day was over, he had testified to every one of his fraternity brothers.

II. THE MEANS THAT WE USE "THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED" - VS. 6-13 - THE WORD OF GOD

A. It's an inspired Word - vs. 6 - "Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect"

Isaiah 55:11

¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶ All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect,

thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Researchers in Israel [in 1986, with subsequent supportive work done as late as 1997], after subjecting the first five books of the Bible to exhaustive computer analysis, came to a different conclusion than expected.

The Torah, or Books of Moses, had long been assumed by skeptics to be the work of multiple authors. But Scripture scholar Moshe Katz and computer expert Menachem Wiener of the Israel Institute of Technology analyzed the book's material through sophisticated computer analysis. They discovered an intricate pattern of significant words concealed in the canon, spelled by letters separated at fixed intervals. Mr. Katz says that the statistical possibilities of such patterns happening by chance would be one to three million. The material suggests a single, inspired author – in fact it could not have been put together by human capabilities at all. Adds Mr. Wiener, "So we need a non-rational explanation. And ours is that the (Torah) was written by God through the hand of Moses."

B. It's a faithful Word - vs. 7-9 - "the word of promise" - what God promises will come to pass

Hebrews 10:23

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Hebrews 11:11

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Revelation 19:11

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

There are several "I will's" in the Bible that God gave as promises to us:

I will bless Thee, Gen. 12:2

I will not fail Thee, Josh. 1:5

I will heal Thee, 2 Kings 20:5

I will guide Thee, Ps. 32:8

I will instruct Thee, Ps. 32:8

I will teach Thee, Ps. 32:8

I will deliver Thee, Ps. 50:15

I will satisfy Thee, Ps. 132:15

I will help Thee, Is. Isa 41:10

I will strengthen Thee, Isa 41:10

I will uphold Thee, ; Isa 41:10

I will hold Thine hand, Isa 42:6

I will not forget Thee, Isa 49:15

I will comfort Thee, Isa 66:13

I will forgive, Jer. 31:34

I will restore, Jer. 30:17

I will be your God, Eze. 36:28

I will put my Spirit within you, Eze 36:27

I will save you, Eze. 36:27, 29

I will love him, John 14:21

I will manifest myself, John 14:21

I will come again, John 14:3

I will sup with him, Rev. 3:20

I will give Thee a crown of life, Rev. 2:10

C. It's a perfect Word - vs. 10-13 - There's no error in it - "the purpose of God...might stand"

Psalm 18:30

30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

Psalm 19:8

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psalm 119:140

140 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

Proverbs 30:5

5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

III. THE MATTER WE TEACH "THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED" - vs. 14-33

A. God's righteousness - vs. 14

Genesis 18:25

²⁵ That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Deuteronomy 32:4

⁴ He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

B. God's sovereign will - vs. 15-24

1. As seen in His compassion and mercy - vs. 15-16
2. As seen in the illustration of Pharaoh - vs. 17-18

"God did not make Pharaoh wicked; He only forbore to make him good, by the exercise of special and altogether unmerited grace." "It was not that Pharaoh was worse than others that he was so dealt with, but 'in order that he might become a monument of the penal judgment of God, and it was with a view to this that God provided that the evil which was in him should be manifested in this definite form.'" (Charles Hodge as found in J-F-B commentary)

3. As seen in God's answer to those who question His will - vs. 19-24

It basically says we, as the created one, have absolutely no right to question the Creator. It's as simple as that. If we have a question of a Scripture that is seemingly contradictory to others, it isn't, and if we don't have a satisfactory answer, leave it alone. Do Not question God as to why He did this or that. He's God, He's perfect, He can do no wrong, so what's there must be right. Accept it.

C. God's grace - vs. 25-29 - His grace was to ALL - both Jew and Gentile

Romans 2:9-11

⁹ Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

¹⁰ But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

¹¹ For there is no respect of persons with God.

Galatians 3:28

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

D. Our faith, not works - vs. 30-33

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

As long as a person has life, there is hope for his conversion to Christ. One of Jesus' last acts on the cross was to give salvation to a dying man. A sea

captain by the name of Bjorn Kristiansen lay at the brink of death in a hospital bed. There was no pulse and no breath. A Norwegian nurse spoke to him, "Captain Kristiansen, you are dying. Do you know Jesus Christ? I'm going to pray with you." Kristiansen heard her voice, and later recalled that he clung to every word "like a lifeline." To the astonishment of the doctors, Bjorn revived. He said he had trusted Christ, and he knew he was saved.

We never know when we might be in the presence of a dying person whose spiritual condition is unknown. Our witness could mean the difference between heaven and hell for that one in life's final moments.

Conclusion:

There are some puzzling passages in this chapter that we may never fully comprehend, but be sure of one thing - The Apostle Paul had such a burdened soul, and broken-heart that he would die and go to hell for the nation of Israel - could we?

Maybe this message was heard by one who needed only the last point - the matter. Lost people only need to know they are lost and need saved. They are like Pharaoh right now - as God sees them with a hardened heart. It needs softened. God's longsuffering, He doesn't want you to die without Christ. But the time is coming when it will be too late.

You lived next door to me for years
We shared our dreams, our joys, our tears,
A friend to me you were indeed--

A friend who helped me when in need.
My faith in you was strong and sure
We had such trust as should endure,
No spats between us ever rose
Our friends were alike, also our foes.
What sadness, then, my friend, to find
That after all, you weren't so kind.
The day my life on earth did end
I found you weren't a faithful friend...
For all those years we spent on earth,
You never talked of Second Birth,
You never spoke of my lost soul
And of the Christ Who'd make me whole.
I plead today from hell's cruel fire
And tell you now my last desire,
You cannot do a thing for me,
No words today my bonds will free.
But do not err, my friend, again,
Do all you can for souls of men,
Plead with them now quite earnestly
Lest they be cast in hell with me.
(Copied)