

Our Hope - Salvation For All

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Date: 30 November 2025

Preacher: Christopher Baker

[0 : 0 0] All right, if you have your Bibles this morning, get out your Bibles. And I know that as we begin Advent, often we look at Scripture specifically about the Christmas story.

! But yeah, we're not going to do that. We are going to continue on as we have been going through Romans. And we're going to continue in Romans because Romans really, again, it's all about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It's about the gospel message. And you know what? As we think about the themes of Advent, hope and peace and joy and love, and all those things are really what the gospel message is all about. So the two tie right together. So we're going to continue in Romans. And this morning we're in Romans chapter 10. So I encourage you to turn to Romans 10. We're going to be starting in the first verse.

And if you found that, if you're able this morning, I'd ask you to stand as we read God's Word this morning. Romans 10, beginning in verse 1, and this is what God's Word shares.

[0 : 5 7] Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

For Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which does those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise.

Say not in your heart who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep, that is, to bring Christ again from the dead. But what says it?

The Word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith which we preach. That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

[2 : 0 6] For with the heart man believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation. Let's pray together. Lord God, we thank you again this morning for your presence in this place.

We thank you that we have a place to come to worship and praise you this morning that's out of the cold. Lord, I thank you for each one that braved the weather this morning. And Lord, to be in your presence, that is a special thing.

And remind us today that we are in your presence. We're in the presence of the living God. That you are here among us. And Lord, you have a message that you desire that we hear. So Lord, I pray that our hearts, our minds are open to you.

That we take it in and then that we have a desire. Not just to take it in, but to live it in our lives. To live lives that are pleasing to you. So Lord, I pray that this morning we just open our hearts to you. And we ask and pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ. And all God's people said, Amen. You can be seated this morning. So this morning, the theme, the Advent theme that we're talking about is hope.

[3 : 0 9] And I know that Wendy was talking about hope this morning. And, you know, hope is a good word, isn't it? Hope is something that we all need. And to be honest, hope is something that all of us have in one way or another.

Because if you look at hope, there's really a lot of different definitions for hope. But one of the things that is for certain is hope is always future-oriented. It's something that we are looking to in the future.

Hope is always future-oriented. And hope is also, it's a desire. A desire that we have. Desire and hope are really linked together.

It's something that hasn't happened yet, but it's something we want to happen. Do you have other things like that in your life? Things that haven't happened yet, but you want them to happen?

That's a desire. That's a hope that you have. And as we look here in Romans, as Paul is writing, he shares in this first verse of chapter 10, one of his hopes, one of his desires.

[4 : 13] Look at what it says in this first verse. Brethren, my heart's desire. That's him saying, this is something I am hoping for. Something that hasn't happened, but I want it to.

My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be what? Saved. That was a hope that Paul had, a desire that he had.

You see, when Christ came, we know how the story goes. He was born in a manger, and we know the Christmas story. And as he began his ministry, he preached and he shared. But the Jewish leaders, the leaders of Israel, the religious leaders, did they accept Jesus?

No. They didn't believe that he was the Messiah, and eventually what did they do? They crucified him. And Paul was saying, my heart's desire for the Jewish people, for Israel, for God's chosen people, my heart's desire is that they might be what again?

Saved. Is that a good desire to have? Absolutely. His desire of his heart was that those people that he loved would be saved.

[5 : 25] That's a hope that he had. And I guess as I was reading this, what really came to my mind is a question, does God hope? We hope for things.

Does God hope for things? I mean, God controls it all, right? Right? Some of you are like, I don't know. I mean, God controls it all. So does he still hope for things?

Because he can just make it happen, right? But he gives us free will. Choices that he allows us to make.

That he doesn't just say, this is what you're going to do. He gives us a choice. And that's why I believe with all my heart, God can hope for things, desire things.

And I want you to look because if you look in 2 Peter, turn back to 2 Peter in the Bible. 2 Peter 3. Verse 9.

[6 : 25] And this is, again, I have a ton of favorite verses, I guess. This is one of the favorite verses that I have. 2 Peter 3.9. Because I think it gives us a glimpse into something that God desires, something that God hopes for.

2 Peter 3.9. The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3.9. 2 Peter 3.9. 2 Peter 3.9. So if you think about God hoping for something, what is He hoping for here? What is He desiring? For everyone to be saved.

It says He's not willing that any should perish. What does it mean when He says He's not willing that any should perish? Yeah, He's not wanting that. That's not what His desire is.

He doesn't want anyone to perish. You know, I know often in life some people will say, well, if God is such a good God, how can He let people go to hell? Well, the reality is God doesn't want anyone to go to hell.

[7 : 33] That is not His desire. He loves all of His creation. His desire is that no one goes to hell. That is why it says He's longsuffering.

He's patient. You know, God could have wrapped everything up already, couldn't He? He could have said to His Son, Jesus, it's time for you to return. You're going to wrap it all up.

But it says He's longsuffering. He's patient. He's giving more time because His desire is that people come to know Him. He's not willing that any should perish but all should come to repentance.

What He hopes for is for all to be saved. That is God's heart's desire for the world and guess what? For us. That's God's hope for us. So where is the problem?

Where does the problem come? Yeah, it comes with us, doesn't it? We are the problem. Do you realize that? Go ahead and say, I am the problem.

[8 : 35] We don't always like saying that, but isn't it the truth? Look back where we were at in Romans. So now we know God's desire, God's hope. But as we look in verse 3 of Romans chapter 10, it really identifies the problem that lies with us.

Look in verse 3. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, listen to this last part because here is the problem, have not submitted

themselves to the righteousness of God.

The problem comes in not submitting to God's righteousness, not acknowledging that God has the plan that we need to follow. Instead, it says they tried to come up with their own.

We have to come to the understanding, you know, when you think about righteousness, it's what's right. And we have to understand what's right and who decides what's right.

Who? God. Do we decide what's right and wrong? Do we have that ability? No. Does the world try to do that anyway? Yes. Yes.

[9 : 46] It says we have to submit to God's righteousness, God's understanding of what's right and wrong. And the problem is often that little word submit. Do we like to submit? What does it mean to submit?

It means to surrender. We live in a nation that we don't like that word, do we? What often comes before that word surrender?

In our world today, in our nation, what comes before the word surrender? Never. Never surrender. Never submit. Never give up.

But really, that's the opposite of what we need to do in our spiritual lives. We need to give up. We need to surrender to God, to His righteousness, to His understanding, and the way He says things are in His word.

You see, God makes the rules and determines what's right or wrong. And we are in no position to change those. But we sometimes try to, don't we? I was reminded of this last weekend.

[10 : 48] We had a birthday party for Caleb at our house, and the kids and grandkids were all over. And my granddaughter said, I want to play Candyland. How many of you have played Candyland?

All right. So you know the game. So I got to play Candyland with a four-year-old and two two-year-olds. You know what I learned about playing with a four-year-old and two two-year-olds? Liana, the four-year-old, she did pretty good. What about the two two-year-olds, Ridge? It was one of them. And Logan, our granddaughter. What do you think two-year-olds and the rules of Candyland, how do you think those two things go together?

Yeah. You'd pick out the card, oh, go to the next orange. Okay. And we'd help them move to the next color. And then they'd pick another card. All right. You need to go backwards. They'd just move it on forwards.

They didn't want to go backwards. And I was trying to keep track of the board and keep people moving in the right direction. Those pieces were going all over because they kind of wanted to make their own rules and just move wherever they wanted to move.

[11 : 57] How often do we try to do that in life with God? We try to determine what's right and wrong, and the world certainly does that. But how often do we fall into the world's thinking? Folks, when it comes to right and wrong, the world does not determine that and never will.

The world tries to judge right and wrong according to what it says is right or wrong. But you know what? There is going to be a judgment in the end when God is judging, and you know whose only definition of right and wrong is going to matter?

God's. Someone may say, yeah, yeah, yeah, but this was legal. It said this was okay. Guess what? Doesn't matter. If God says it was wrong, guess what?

It's wrong. And if God says something is right, guess what? It's right. And herein lies the problem. Not being willing to submit.

To submit to God's righteousness. To submit to God's way of doing things. To surrender to Him. And here's the thing.

[13 : 05] When you accept Christ, you're surrendering, right? You're surrendering to God. But we often think once that surrendering has happened that it's done.

But it's not. The surrendering as believers that we have to do to God, that surrendering needs to be a daily surrendering.

That each and every day we're willing to say, I surrender my own will, my own desires to yours, God. I submit myself to you.

That means what you want is more important than what I want. Folks, that is God's desire for us, isn't it? Isn't it? Everybody say yes. That we submit to Him daily.

And that means not always getting your way. How are you doing in your life when you don't get your way? You know, we have a lot of children here this morning.

[14:08] How do children react when they don't get their way? They can cry. What else do children sometimes do when they don't get their way? Throw a tantrum?

Kick, scream, holler, whatever. Pout. Pout. Thank you, Micah. I'm sure you never do that, though, do you, Micah? He's smiling.

A really big smile right now. Kids have all kinds of... That just goes to show you, folks. When kids are in here, guess what? They're listening. And they pick up far more than we know.

That's a bonus thing that we need to realize. But when kids don't get their way, often they throw a tantrum. The sad thing is I think sometimes we do that as adults, too, spiritually.

When we don't get our way, when God has other plans, we sometimes throw little tantrums because we don't like it. But, folks, if we're truly surrendering to God and submitting to Him, we're not going to throw a tantrum.

[15:11] We're going to say, okay, God. That's maybe not how I saw it. That's maybe not what I desired, but okay. Don't you like that in your kids when they finally say, okay, I'll do what you want?

Folks, that's another of God's hope, that we follow Him and do what He wants, not just what we want. That's what the Israelites have been doing, trying to establish their own righteousness. That's not what God wants in us.

He wants us to follow His righteousness. And you know what? As we look down in these verses that we read, look in verse 8. Because God's desire, we already said, is that all men would be saved.

And here's how God made that hope possible. But what says it? The Word is near to you, even in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith which we preach. It says the Word is even in your mouth and in your heart.

Well, you know, when the Bible talks about the Word, what's the Word? It's the Scripture. And here He goes on to say it's faith.

[16:14] But it's faith in what and in who? It's faith in Jesus Christ. If you look in the Gospel of John, it says, in the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God. And the Word was God.

It's talking about Jesus was the Word. And it says here, the Word is near to you. And folks, you can put Jesus in there. Jesus is near to us, isn't it? God sent His Son, Jesus, to be near to us so that we could accept Him as our Lord and Savior.

That's where our hope is at. That's God's hope for us, that we accept His Son so that we can be saved. The Word, Jesus Christ, is near to us.

It says He's in your heart. And He's where else? And in your mouth. Look at verse 9, that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

Two verses there. Talk about two things, the mouth and the heart. Folks, we need to use both of those for God. We need to use our heart to believe in Him, but then we need to use our mouth to praise Him and to confess Him and tell others about Him.

[17:25] That is God's desire for us. That we accept Jesus, but don't just keep it there, but that we use our mouth to praise Him and to share Him with others.

You know, on our Thanksgiving Eve service, we spend a lot of time just praising God, giving people an opportunity to praise God. But folks, we need to do that how often? Daily.

We need to tell others about Him how often? Daily. Guess what? That's God's desire for us, isn't it? That we use our heart and our mouth for Him.

That we surrender our heart and our mouth to Him so that He can use it to build His kingdom. God's desire, folks, God's hope is for righteousness and salvation.

Look in verse 10, our last verse. For with the heart man believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to what? Salvation. That is God's hope for the world.

[18:23] It's God's hope for us. And guess what? It needs to be our hope for the world too. Our hope and God's hope should be the same thing. That all people get saved. That's what God desires.

Is that what we desire? I hope it is. I hope that we desire that with all our heart and we do everything we can to make it happen.

God certainly did everything He could. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus certainly did everything He could. He died on the cross for us. What are we doing? What's our part?

What's our share? What's our desire in that? This Christmas season, as you think about hope, don't forget God has a hope and a desire. And that's that everyone comes to know Him, His Son, Jesus Christ.

That everyone is saved. Just remember that God's desire and hope needs to be our desire and hope. It's one and the same. That other people also come to know Jesus Christ.

[19 : 21] When we think about the word hope, I hope that is our hope. That that is our desire. That others are saved and come to know Jesus Christ.

Let's bow our heads this morning. Lord God, as we come before You. Lord, as we look at the Scripture, we understand that You have a desire, that You have a hope, and that is that all men would be saved.

Lord, our prayer is that we also have that same hope, that same desire. That those around us, the ones that You love and the ones that we're called to love, that they also come to know Jesus Christ and are saved.

As Paul wrote here, his heart's desire is that Israel would come to know Jesus Christ, that they would be saved. Lord, make it our heart's desire that those around us would come to know Jesus Christ and that they would be saved.

That we would share with them, that we would pray for them. Lord, help that to be our heart's desire. In the name of Jesus, we pray.

[20 : 25] Amen. This morning, as we close, the altar is open. If you have a need, come and pray about it. If that hope needs to be stirred up in your heart, come and ask God to stir it up. The altar is open this morning.

Thank you. This week, as you think about hope, remember God's hope, His desire, is that all men come to know His Son, Jesus Christ. I pray that's our hope and our desire as well.

Let's bow our heads as we close in prayer. Lord God, thank you again for this morning that you've given us. I thank you for each one that's here. And Lord, as we leave here, I pray that your Spirit leaves with us. Lord, that as we go about our daily lives, that we have a desire to surrender, to submit to you, that you continue to put in us a hope and a desire for others to come to know Jesus Christ.

So help us to do our part to share with them and to pray for them. But Lord, just direct our hearts in this. Help us to be the people, your people, that you'd have us to be. And we ask and pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ and all God's family said, Amen.

God bless you and have a wonderful week.