

# **Romans 9:30-10:21—The Terrible Danger Of Being Ignorant Of God’s Righteousness And Man’s Sinfulness**

## **Memory Verse**

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## **Revision**

Here are some of the highlights from Romans chapter 9 so far:

- God is faithful to keep His promises to His chosen people, the nation of Israel: God has not forsaken them and is not finished with them (Romans 9:6 and 11:1)
- God is righteous: In His sovereignty, reserves the right to bless one nation or individual more than another, in light of the fact that nobody deserves to be blessed by God in the first place (Romans 9:10-13)
- God is just and fair: It is right that mankind still be accountable to Him because God made us and therefore owns us (Romans 9:20)
- Foreknowledge is not foreordaining or predestinating, God simply knows everything in advance, including the free choice of every man and woman to choose Jesus Christ as their Saviour (Romans 8:29 and 1 Peter 1:2)
- God predestines all circumstances, both national and individual, and God predestines eternal blessings on those whom He already knows that will make the choice to receive Him (see Romans 8:29-30)
- The unrepentant prepare themselves for destruction: They choose and prepare their own path and destiny by the choices that they make (Romans 9:22)

## **Outline for Romans 9:30-10:21**

1. The reason Israel missed their Messiah and so were temporarily and partially rejected by God: They attempted to earn their salvation and refused to simply receive it by faith (9:30-33)
2. The two reasons why Israel Rejected their Messiah: intellectual and moral (10:1-3)
3. Achieving God’s righteousness vs Receiving God’s righteousness (10:5-8)
4. How God’s righteousness is received by grace through faith (10:9-13)
5. Why it is so important to speak the gospel and not just live it (10:14-15)
6. Prophecies concerning Israel’s rejection of their Messiah and the calling of the Church (10:16-21)

## **Romans 9:30-10:21 NKJV**

**What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; <sup>31</sup> but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. <sup>32</sup> Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. <sup>33</sup> As it is written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”**

**10:1** Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. <sup>2</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. <sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

**<sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.” <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) <sup>7</sup> or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. <sup>13</sup> For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”**

**<sup>14</sup> How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”**

**<sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

**<sup>18</sup> But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”**

**<sup>19</sup> But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: “I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.”**

**<sup>20</sup> But Isaiah is very bold and says: “I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”**

**<sup>21</sup> But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”**

## **Introduction**

The aim of today’s message is not so much to explain just how sinful our human nature is, rather these verses explain the *dire and eternal consequences* a person experiences when they fail to *understand* and *accept*, that the human nature everyone is born with is completely corrupted by sin. Again, while we will briefly describe the sin nature that every man is born with, the main point of Romans 9:30-10:21 is the terrible danger of not *recognising* and *accepting* our utter sinfulness. Paul already did a good job of describing what is often called the doctrine of “total depravity” in Romans 3:9-20 (see the sermon and sermon notes for Romans 3:9-20).

The main point of the sermon today is very simple: *If I don’t recognise and accept that I am inherently sinful at heart (sinful by nature), then I will continue to think that I can be good enough to earn God’s favour by my own best efforts or good works, and so will end up in Hell, separated from God forever: This is the terrible fate of all those who fail to recognise and accept the utter sinfulness of the human nature that every man is born with.*

From a human perspective, this message is offensive and unwelcome, but just like a doctor must diagnose a cancer before it can be removed, the bad news is actually working for our good. If I am not offended, then it means that I have not understood the most basic and fundamental truth of the gospel message—all men are born sinners.

Proverbs 20:6 NKJV

Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man?

1 Corinthians 1:23 NKJV

But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block [Greek: *Skandalon*, meaning an offense or a scandal] and to the Greeks foolishness [nonsense]

For the Jews, and also many people today, the idea that they can't be good enough to measure up to God's standard of righteousness (which is perfection), is both offensive and a scandalous idea. What they don't have is a correct knowledge of God's righteousness, and man's sinfulness. When a person comes to this correct understanding of who God is and who man is, then there is no trying to be good enough, rather just the simple choice to remain separated from God, or willingly accept God's gracious gift of His perfect righteousness when we accept Jesus as our Saviour.

**1. The reason Israel missed their Messiah and so were temporarily and partially rejected by God: They attempted to earn their salvation and refused to come by faith**

**Romans 9:30-33 NKJV**

**What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; <sup>31</sup> but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. <sup>32</sup> Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. <sup>33</sup> As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."**

**Romans 9:30-33 NLT**

**What does all this mean? Even though the Gentiles were not trying to follow God's standards, they were made right with God. And it was by faith that this took place. <sup>31</sup> But the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded [they did not depend on faith but on what they could do]. <sup>32</sup> Why not? Because they were trying to get right with God by keeping the law instead of by trusting in him. They stumbled over the great rock in their path. <sup>33</sup> God warned them of this in the Scriptures when he said, "I am placing a stone in Jerusalem that makes people stumble, a rock that makes them fall. But anyone who trusts in Him will never be disgraced."**

The definition of a gift is that it must be freely received. If there is any payment put towards something, then it isn't a gift anymore. Paul puts it this way in Romans 11:6.

**Romans 11:6 NKJV**

**And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.**

**Romans 11:6 NLT**

**And since it is through God's kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God's grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved.**

**Romans 11:6 AMP**

**But if it is by grace (His unmerited favour and graciousness), it is no longer conditioned on works or anything men have done. Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace [it would be meaningless].**

Why is it so hard to receive God's free gift of salvation? Pride! To be saved I must first admit or recognise that I can't save myself. Why can't I save myself? Because nothing I do by myself (by the sinful nature I was born with) will ever be good enough to please God. Why not? Because the sinful nature I was born with is inherently evil or selfish: everything I do, say, and think is tainted by these evil, selfish, and prideful tendencies—*Therefore it is impossible for me to be perfectly righteous or perfect like God is.* This is the doctrine often called "*total depravity*"; we learned about this back in Romans 3:9-20 (refer back to the previous sermon notes if you want to know more). However, a simple analogy to understand the doctrine or teaching or belief of "total depravity" is to think of ourselves being covered in mud—everything we touch becomes dirty because we can't help but leave mud wherever we step and on whatever we touch. Isaiah 64:6b tells us that God sees our best efforts to be good enough on our own strength as "filthy rags".

Isaiah 64:6b NKJV

But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags [literally, "like clothing covered in menstrual blood"].

Isaiah 64:6b NLT

We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags.

Isaiah 64:6b AMP

For we have all become like one who is unclean [ceremonially, like a leper], and all our righteousness (our best deeds of rightness and justice) is like filthy rags or a polluted garment.

Keep Ephesians 2:8-9 in mind as we study Romans 9:30-10:21. We need to be clear that salvation can only be received as a gift, freely, with no effort or work involved (good works follow salvation, they are not the cause of salvation, see Ephesians 2:10).

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NLT

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup> Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

Ephesians 2:8-9 AMP

For it is by free grace (God's unmerited favour) that you are saved (delivered from judgment and made partakers of Christ's salvation) through [your] faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [of your own doing, it came not through your own striving], but it is the gift of God

v 30 **Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness [by works, see v 32], have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith:** The gentiles did not seek to try to make themselves good enough to be accepted by God—they did not seek righteousness by works or self-effort like the Jews did. Instead, they just simply trusted what God said in His Word. They humbly confessed their sin and received God's righteousness by putting their trust in what Jesus did for them on the cross as their Saviour. They understood and believed that God would count them as being as righteous or as perfect as He is—*you can't get any more righteous or perfect than that!*

Again, the gentiles did seek God's righteousness, but by faith, and not by works like the Jews (see verse 32): *The gentile church puts their trust in God, and not in themselves (their own good works) like the majority of the Jewish nation did and still does.*

v 31-32 **But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.** <sup>32</sup> **Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law:** The majority of the Jewish nation are proud, and so will not accept that they cannot, by their own efforts and supposed inherent goodness, work to achieve God's perfect standard or level of righteousness. It may seem silly to our ears, but this is exactly the thinking that people have when they don't have a correct understanding of God's perfect righteousness, and man's inherent sinfulness—*thus the terrible danger of being ignorant of God's righteousness and man's sinfulness.*

v 32 **Because they did not seek it by faith:** What we began to see in Romans chapter 9, and will be made more clear in chapter 10, is that God's plan for the nation of Israel was for them to be temporarily and partially rejected, so that God could bless the gentiles through the creation of the Church. However, just like God knowing that Pharaoh would reject Him didn't mean that God forced Pharaoh to do something against his will, so God knowing that Israel would reject Him doesn't mean that He forced them to reject Him. Here again, we see God's foreknowledge demonstrated, as well as His sovereignty—what God planned came to pass—Israel as a nation rejected their Messiah, while the gentiles accepted Jesus as their Messiah. God, because He is infinitely wise, was able to work out His plan, without overriding the freewill of any individual human being.

v 32-33 **For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.** <sup>33</sup> **As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame":** This stone is Christ. Christ is either, by our own free choice, a stone of salvation or a stone that we stumble and fall over to our own destruction.

"But see the grace of God: Israel's rejection means the Gentiles' salvation! Paul's final quotation was from Isaiah 28:16. It referred to Christ, God's Stone of salvation (see Psalm 118:22). God gave Christ to be a Foundation Stone, but Israel rejected Him and He became a stumbling stone. Instead of "rising" on this Stone, Israel fell (Romans 11:11); but, as we shall see, their fall made possible the salvation of the Gentiles by the grace of God." (Warren W. Wiersbe)

Jon Courson comments on the main reason the Jews want to rebuild the temple: "The Jew, on the other hand, attempted righteousness by the law and failed because the law cannot save man (Galatians 3:24). The law was given to show us we're sinners. Yet to this day, Israel is trying to be saved by her good works. Ask a Jew in Israel today how he's going to make it spiritually, and he'll say, "We will make it by our good deeds." I've talked to sincere Jews about this, and they blush even as they say those words because they understand that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22). *The Jewish people desperately want to rebuild the temple in order that they may offer Old Testament sacrifices again.* For until that time, his only option presently is to hope his good works will cover his sins—as he continues to stumble over the very Cornerstone of the temple he is so desperate to build (Ephesians 2:20)."

## 2. The two reasons why Israel Rejected their Messiah: intellectual and moral

Romans 10:1-3 NKJV

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. <sup>2</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Paul's love and prayer for the nation of Israel

v 1 **Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved:** Like we covered in 9:1-3, Paul's greatest desire and prayer, for the very people who were desperately trying to kill him, was that they be saved. Remember, *our heart's desire for people to be saved will only follow our prayers for the same; our prayer often changes us more than it changes others.*

The problem of zeal or enthusiasm without knowledge

v 2-3 **For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness:** Paul knew exactly what He was talking about. This was a perfect description of Paul before his conversion (see Acts 9:1-20). Paul went from being someone who persecuted Christians to the death, to becoming a Christian who was persecuted to the death.

For the Jews, part of the problem was an *intellectual one*, they didn't understand God's righteousness or their own sinfulness. Therefore, they were **seeking to establish their own righteousness**. They had zeal or enthusiasm, but this zeal for God was dangerous and destructive because their understanding of God's Word was wrong and/or incomplete.

**Application:** This is a major issue in today's modern church; the majority of people are not interested in taking the time and making the effort to learn to feed themselves by regularly reading the Bible for themselves—they are biblically illiterate. They also get hooked on false teachers and false churches. They may expend lots of energy for God, but it isn't constructive or productive, because it isn't according to the Word of God. False teaching and ignorance are dangerous. Of course, the same can be said of those caught up in other religions—many have much zeal, but they are worshiping the wrong God.

The moral problem

v 3 **Have not submitted to the righteousness of God:** This is the moral problem—a lack of submission to God. Often we know what God wants for us, but we fail to submit, and our knowledge does not become action. *Indeed, what we do and how we live often doesn't reflect what we know to be right—we have not submitted to the righteousness of God—we have not submitted to what we know is right.*

v 3 **Establish their own righteousness:** Paul's teaching in the first several chapters of Romans refutes this self-righteous thinking completely—*“by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin”* (Romans 3:20). As we will continue to see in Romans chapter 10, it's not about *achieving* God's perfect righteousness, rather we must choose to humbly *receive* God's perfect righteousness. Each person is personally responsible for the choice they make.

### 3. Achieving God's righteousness vs Receiving God's righteousness

Romans 10:4-8 NKJV

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

<sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "*The man who does those things shall live by them.*" <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "*Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'*" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) <sup>7</sup> or, "*'Who will descend into the abyss?'*" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? "*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart*" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

v 4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes:**

What an amazing statement and a tremendously freeing truth—once I believe in Christ and receive His righteousness, I am seen by God as being as perfect as He is. Remember 1 Corinthians 15:21, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (NKJV). Put another way, Christ took *all* my sin, and gave me *all* His righteousness: There is no more sin to take from me, and there is no more righteousness that He can give me.

This means that there is no longer any need for me to try to earn God's favour by doing good works—how can I, since God already sees me as being perfect—how can I improve on perfection? Now, because of this wonderful truth, the only motive left for obeying God is simply and only because I love God and want to please Him, and also experience a beautiful love relationship with Him. This does away with the condemnation problem.

"Jesus is the **end of the law** for those who believe. The law ends for the believer in the sense that our obedience to the law is no longer the basis for our relationship with God. The law has *not* come to an end in the sense of no longer reflecting God's standard or no longer showing us our need for a Saviour." (David Guzik)

"Christ did not come to make the law milder, or to render it possible for our cracked and battered obedience to be accepted as a sort of compromise. The law is not compelled to lower its terms, as though it had originally asked too much; it is holy and just and good, and ought not to be altered in one jot or tittle, nor can it be. Our Lord gives the law all it requires, not a part, for that would be an admission that it might justly have been content with less at first." (Spurgeon)

v 5 **For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "*The man who does those things shall live by them.*"**: For those who want to try to achieve righteousness, this is the standard—perfection.

Galatians 5:3 NLT

I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favour with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses.

James 2:10-11 NLT

For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws. <sup>11</sup> For the same God who said, "You must not commit adultery," also said, "You must not murder." So if you murder someone but do not commit adultery, you have still broken the law.

v 6-7 **“Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) <sup>7</sup> or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead):** This is the ‘Good teacher, “what must I do to be saved”’, way of thinking about achieving or earning or working for eternal life (see mark 10:17-22). This is the wrong question. The right question is, “What has Christ done for me so that I can receive eternal life?”

v 8 **But the righteousness of faith... what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.”:** It’s not about going to great lengths so I can *work to achieve*, but rather I simply *believe and receive* by putting my trust in the gospel.

John 6:28-29 NKJV

Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

#### **4. How God’s righteousness is received by grace through faith**

Romans 10:9-13 NKJV

**That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, “*Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.*” <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. <sup>13</sup> For “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”**

v 9 **If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved:** This is the gospel in a nutshell.

v 9 **Confess with your mouth:** To confess means to agree with God that He is right and I am wrong. I agree with God about what the Bible says about Jesus, and what Jesus says about Himself; that He is God, and that His finished work on the cross is the only means by which any person can be saved.

v 9 **Confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus:** This is the essence of genuine repentance. Agreeing to Jesus’ lordship over my life means that I am submitting my whole life to Him. To confess Jesus as my **Lord**, I am agreeing that He is my master, my king. Jesus warns us in Matthew 7:21 that there are many who have made false confessions of faith; the evidence is seen by the way they live—is Jesus Lord of their life?

v 9 **Believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead:** This is a very succinct or brief description of Jesus’ work on the cross. The resurrection is the only proof we need that Jesus’ death on the cross was accepted by the Father as the full payment for the sins of the whole world, even for those who God knew would never believe in Him and receive the wonderful and freely given gift of His Son (see John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2).

v 9 **Believe in your heart:** Again, it’s not enough to know that the parachute will save you if you put it on—if I jump from 10,000 feet knowing that the parachute will save me if I put it on, but I don’t put it on, I will still die. For the parachute to be effective, I must put it on. In the same way, I must “put on Christ” if I am going to be saved (see Romans 13:14 and Galatians 3:27). Head knowledge is not enough, I must act on what I know to be true.



“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 Saviour; 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.” (Spurgeon)

v 11 **For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation:** “These two together (belief and confession) result in **righteousness** and **salvation**. We should not ignore how scandalously simple this is (**whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**) and what an affront this is to every attempt of the flesh to be justified or any attempt to find salvation based on national or ethnic foundation.” (David Guzik)

v 12 **There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him:** Praise God that there are no limits to who God is willing and able to save. Everyone is invited to be a part of God’s family. This thinking would have been shocking to the Jews, who thought that they were far more important to God than the gentiles.

v 12-13 **For the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. <sup>13</sup> For “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”:** In chapter 9 we learned about God being sovereign over nations and over all the circumstances of our lives. However, when it comes to our salvation, God leaves the choice up to us—God will never force us to love Him. Despite already knowing who will accept Him, and who will reject Him, He lovingly convicts and woos all men to come to Him (see John 16:8-11). Ezekiel 33:11, Acts 2:21 and 2 Peter 3:9 are other Scriptures that remind us that God desires all men to be saved.

## **5. Why it is so important to speak the gospel and not just live it**

### **Romans 10:14-15 NKJV**

**How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”**

It may seem obvious that a person will never be able to believe something until they are told about it. However, there are many Christians who think that others will come to know Christ by only looking at the way they live. This is not true. There are many moral and upright people of diverse religions, who are all living good lives in a desperate attempt to be good enough to be saved. All believers are Christ’s ambassadors and we have been given a very specific message to give to the whole world (see 2 Corinthians 5:13-21).

Believers must be faithful to share this tremendously valuable treasure, the good news of the gospel that has been entrusted to them. Preparation for this task is essential:

- Be in the word daily and study it to know how to give an answer to anyone who asks you about your faith, the hope that is in you (see 1 Peter 3:15)
- Be praying for the salvation of others, so God will prepare your heart to be kind, compassionate, and bold when the opportunity comes (see Romans 10:1)

- Be living a pure life, a blameless life, a life that no-one can critique or criticise—if we don't live what we speak then our words mean nothing—in fact they actually have the effect of turning people away from the Gospel that can save them. If I am not living a pure life, free of habitual sin, and with a good testimony with all men, then it's probably better to work on my own relationship with God first before I open my mouth and cause God's name to be blasphemed on my part (see 2 Timothy 2:20-21).

## **6. Prophecies concerning Israel's rejection of their Messiah and the calling of the Church**

**Romans 10:16-21 NKJV**

**But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah [53:1] says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”<sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

*[The key word here is believed—just hearing is not enough. However, there can be no faith unless the Word of God is spoken or read—if we want our faith to grow, to walk in victory, then we must read the word of God daily. Read Psalm 119 every day for a week if you are lacking motivation and/or are not convinced of the benefits of reading the Word.]*

**<sup>18</sup> But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world [Psalm 19:4].”**

*[The nation of Israel heard the gospel truth, but it wasn't mixed with faith, and so it did them no good, see Hebrews 4:2. The Jewish nation didn't believe]*

**<sup>19</sup> But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: “I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation [Deuteronomy 32:21].”**

*[This is God choosing the church to temporarily represent Him instead of Israel. The church has been given the task of loving and being a blessing to the Jews, so that they will see that God is working through us, and will be drawn to want to seek their God. Sadly, much of the church is ignoring this mandate and is cursing Israel instead.]*

**<sup>20</sup> But Isaiah is very bold and says: “I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me [Isaiah 65:1].”**

*[This is God calling the church to temporarily represent Him in this world, until the rapture]*

**<sup>21</sup> But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people [Isaiah 65:2].”**

*[This is God prophesying that Israel would not respond to Him and accept Him as their Messiah.]*

### **Summary and conclusion**

1. God's partial and temporary rejection of Israel was according to His plan, but also a direct result of the individual choices of all involved. Many Jews chose not to believe, while a small number did. In Romans 9:30-10:21 Paul showed how the majority of the Jews, even to this day, still seek to make themselves right with God through the works of the law, instead of just receiving God's righteousness by faith—*Thus the Terrible Danger Of Being Ignorant Of God's Righteousness And Man's Sinfulness.*

2. We are God's ambassadors, and our purpose is to share the gospel with whoever is willing to listen. “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.<sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:20-21 NKJV)