Faith Comes From Hearing (and Believing) the Message

Romans 10:10-21

Last week I shared with you, from Romans 10, that being right with God cannot be achieved by hard work or obeying the law. I used the analogy of trying to tread water in the ocean for a lifetime. This helps us to understand that there is no way to be “good” enough to earn our way to the afterlife. Many people, even Christians, make the mistake of basically believing in Karma.

In other words, people believe that we are rewarded or punished in their next life according to their deeds in this one.

It is true that people are accountable, to God, for what they do in this life. But, it is also true that no one can ever do enough to earn the reward of eternal life from God. Eternal life comes only from believing in what Jesus (who is God) has done for us. And it is impossible to believe in something or someone that you haven’t heard about.

Which logically leads us to the fact that you cannot hear a message unless there is a messenger. That is what we will consider today as we dig back into Romans 10 beginning with verse 10. Please follow along with me.

**10**For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. **11**As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” **12**Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. **13**For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Romans 10:10-13

Do you want to know that you are right with God and that your soul is safe forever? Then trust that it is God, “The Lord Who Saves.” Tell God that you are sure that His sacrifice for you is the only way you could make it to Him.

If you do that you can be sure that you will never be disgraced before Him.

As James wrote: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

People who are counting on some form of Karma are the proud. Those who are relying on Jesus are the humble. And this humility is designed to be help us be messengers of God’s grace to the rest of the world.

As Paul goes on to write:

**14**But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? **15**And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14-15

It is a beautiful thing when a believer humbly tells another about Jesus, “The Lord who Saves.”

Unfortunately, when it comes to the Good News, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. As Paul says in verse 16-17:

**16**But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, “Lord, who has believed our message?” **17**So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.

Romans 10:16-17

Some people believe that in the Old Testament people got right with God by obeying the law and keeping the sacrificial system. And some people believe that those who lived in Old Testament times didn’t know anything about the Good News of Christ. But these next verses beg to differ…

Romans 10:18-20

**18**But I ask, have the people of Israel actually heard the message? Yes, they have:

“The message has gone throughout the earth,  
    and the words to all the world.”

**19**But I ask, did the people of Israel really understand? Yes, they did, for even in the time of Moses, God said,

“I will rouse your jealousy through people who are not even a nation.  
    I will provoke your anger through the foolish Gentiles.”

**20**And later Isaiah spoke boldly for God, saying,

“I was found by people who were not looking for me.  
    I showed myself to those who were not asking for me.”

Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, even the book of Job speaks to “the Lord who Saves.”

Jew and Gentile alike, in fact all people everywhere, of all time, have been offered salvation through Jesus Christ. God uses people and His creation to tell the gospel.

When Luke recorded Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem he wrote:

**36**As he rode along, the crowds spread out their garments on the road ahead of him. **37**When he reached the place where the road started down the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen.

**38**“Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord!  
    Peace in heaven, and glory in highest heaven!”

**39**But some of the Pharisees among the crowd said, “Teacher, rebuke your followers for saying things like that!”

**40**He replied, “If they kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers!”

Luke 19:36-40

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:

**10**I don’t want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. **2**In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. **3**All of them ate the same spiritual food, **4**and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ. **5**Yet God was not pleased with most of them, and their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Psalm 19:1-4 says:

1The heavens proclaim the glory of God.  
    The skies display his craftsmanship.  
**2**Day after day they continue to speak;  
    night after night they make him known.  
**3**They speak without a sound or word;  
    their voice is never heard.  
**4**Yet their message has gone throughout the earth,  
    and their words to all the world.

Psalm 19:1-4

The people of Israel had every opportunity to believe that God alone was their salvation. The prophets told them the message, God’s creation spoke the message, to some even God Himself spoke the message. Reverend R.A. Torrey compiled a list of ways that Christ, our salvation, was alluded to in the Old Testament…

* Adam  
  [Romans 5:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/romans/5-14.html) ; [1 Corinthians 15:45](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/15-45.html)
* Abel  
  [Genesis 4:8](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/4-8.html) [Genesis 4:10](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/4-10.html) ; [Hebrews 12:24](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/12-24.html)
* Abraham  
  [Genesis 17:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/17-5.html) ; [Ephesians 3:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ephesians/3-15.html)
* Aaron  
  [Exodus 28:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/28-1.html) ; [Hebrews 5:4](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/5-4.html) [Hebrews 5:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/5-5.html) ; [Leviticus 16:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/16-15.html) ; [Hebrews 9:7](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-7.html) [Hebrews 9:24](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-24.html)
* Ark  
  [Genesis 7:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/7-16.html) ; [1 Peter 3:20](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-peter/3-20.html) [1 Peter 3:21](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-peter/3-21.html)
* Ark of the Covenant  
  [Exodus 25:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/25-16.html) ; [Psalms 40:8](http://www.biblestudytools.com/psalms/40-8.html) ; [Isaiah 42:6](http://www.biblestudytools.com/isaiah/42-6.html)
* Atonement, sacrifices offered on the day of  
  [Leviticus 16:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/16-15.html) [Leviticus 16:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/16-16.html) ; [Hebrews 9:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-12.html) [Hebrews 9:24](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-24.html)
* Brazen serpent  
  [Numbers 21:9](http://www.biblestudytools.com/numbers/21-9.html) ; [John 3:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/3-14.html) [John 3:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/3-15.html)
* Brazen altar  
  [Exodus 27:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/27-1.html) [Exodus 27:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/27-2.html) ; [Hebrews 13:10](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/13-10.html)
* Burnt offering  
  [Leviticus 1:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/1-2.html) [Leviticus 1:4](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/1-4.html) ; [Hebrews 10:10](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/10-10.html)
* Cities of refuge  
  [Numbers 35:6](http://www.biblestudytools.com/numbers/35-6.html) ; [Hebrews 6:18](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/6-18.html)
* David  
  [2 Samuel 8:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/2-samuel/8-15.html) ; [Ezekiel 37:24](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ezekiel/37-24.html) ; [Psalms 89:19](http://www.biblestudytools.com/psalms/89-19.html) [Psalms 89:20](http://www.biblestudytools.com/psalms/89-20.html) ; [Philippians 2:9](http://www.biblestudytools.com/philippians/2-9.html)
* Eliakim  
  [Isaiah 22:20-22](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Isaiah+22:20-22) ; [Revelation 3:7](http://www.biblestudytools.com/revelation/3-7.html)
* First-fruits  
  [Exodus 22:29](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/22-29.html) ; [1 Corinthians 15:20](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/15-20.html)
* Golden candlestick  
  [Exodus 25:31](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/25-31.html) ; [John 8:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/8-12.html)
* Golden altar  
  [Exodus 40:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-5.html) [Exodus 40:26](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-26.html) [Exodus 40:27](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-27.html) ; [Revelation 8:3](http://www.biblestudytools.com/revelation/8-3.html) ; [Hebrews 13:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/13-15.html)
* Isaac  
  [Genesis 22:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/22-1.html) [Genesis 22:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/22-2.html) ; [Hebrews 11:17-19](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Hebrews+11:17-19)
* Jacob  
  [Genesis 32:28](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/32-28.html) ; [John 11:42](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/11-42.html) ; [Hebrews 7:25](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/7-25.html)
* Jacobs ladder  
  [Genesis 28:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/28-12.html) ; [John 1:51](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/1-51.html)
* Joseph  
  [Genesis 50:19](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/50-19.html) [Genesis 50:20](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/50-20.html)
* Joshua  
  [Joshua 1:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/joshua/1-5.html) [Joshua 1:6](http://www.biblestudytools.com/joshua/1-6.html) ; [Hebrews 4:8](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/4-8.html) [Hebrews 4:9](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/4-9.html) ; [Joshua 11:23](http://www.biblestudytools.com/joshua/11-23.html) ; [Acts 20:32](http://www.biblestudytools.com/acts/20-32.html)
* Jonah  
  [Jonah 1:17](http://www.biblestudytools.com/jonah/1-17.html) ; [Matthew 12:40](http://www.biblestudytools.com/matthew/12-40.html)
* Laver of brass  
  [Exodus 30:18-20](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+30:18-20) ; [Zechariah 13:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/zechariah/13-1.html) ; [Ephesians 5:26](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ephesians/5-26.html) [Ephesians 5:27](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ephesians/5-27.html)
* Lepers offering  
  [Leviticus 14:4-7](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Leviticus+14:4-7) ; [Romans 4:25](http://www.biblestudytools.com/romans/4-25.html)
* Man  
  [Exodus 16:11-15](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+16:11-15) ; [John 6:32-35](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=John+6:32-35)
* Melchizedek  
  [Genesis 14:18-20](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Genesis+14:18-20) ; [Hebrews 7:1-17](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Hebrews+7:1-17)
* Mercy-seat  
  [Exodus 25:17-22](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+25:17-22) ; [Romans 3:25](http://www.biblestudytools.com/romans/3-25.html) ; [Hebrews 4:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/4-16.html)
* Morning and evening sacrifices  
  [Exodus 29:38-41](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+29:38-41) ; [John 1:29](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/1-29.html) [John 1:36](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/1-36.html)
* Moses  
  [Numbers 12:7](http://www.biblestudytools.com/numbers/12-7.html) ; [Hebrews 3:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/3-2.html) ; [Deuteronomy 18:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/deuteronomy/18-15.html) ; [Acts 3:20-22](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Acts+3:20-22)
* Noah  
  [Genesis 5:29](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/5-29.html) ; [2 Corinthians 1:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/2-corinthians/1-5.html)
* Paschal lamb  
  [Exodus 12:3-6](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+12:3-6) [Exodus 12:46](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/12-46.html) ; [John 19:36](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/19-36.html) ; [1 Corinthians 5:7](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/5-7.html)
* Peace offerings  
  [Leviticus 3:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/3-1.html) ; [Ephesians 2:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ephesians/2-14.html) [Ephesians 2:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/ephesians/2-16.html)
* Red heifer  
  [Numbers 19:2-6](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Numbers+19:2-6) ; [Hebrews 9:13](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-13.html) [Hebrews 9:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-14.html)
* Rock of Horeb  
  [Exodus 17:6](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/17-6.html) ; [1 Corinthians 10:4](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/10-4.html)
* Samson  
  [Judges 16:30](http://www.biblestudytools.com/judges/16-30.html) ; [Colossians 2:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/colossians/2-14.html) [Colossians 2:15](http://www.biblestudytools.com/colossians/2-15.html)
* Scape goat  
  [Leviticus 16:20-22](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Leviticus+16:20-22) ; [Isaiah 53:6](http://www.biblestudytools.com/isaiah/53-6.html) [Isaiah 53:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/isaiah/53-12.html)
* Sin offering  
  [Leviticus 4:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/4-2.html) [Leviticus 4:3](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/4-3.html) [Leviticus 4:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus/4-12.html) ; [Hebrews 13:11](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/13-11.html) [Hebrews 13:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/13-12.html)
* Solomon  
  [2 Samuel 7:12](http://www.biblestudytools.com/2-samuel/7-12.html) [2 Samuel 7:13](http://www.biblestudytools.com/2-samuel/7-13.html) ; [Luke 1:32](http://www.biblestudytools.com/luke/1-32.html) [Luke 1:33](http://www.biblestudytools.com/luke/1-33.html) ; [1 Peter 2:5](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-peter/2-5.html)
* Tabernacle  
  [Exodus 40:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-2.html) [Exodus 40:34](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-34.html) ; [Hebrews 9:11](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/9-11.html) ; [Colossians 2:9](http://www.biblestudytools.com/colossians/2-9.html)
* Table and show bread  
  [Exodus 25:23-30](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Exodus+25:23-30) ; [John 1:16](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/1-16.html) ; [6:48](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/6-48.html)
* Temple  
  [1 Kings 6:1](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-kings/6-1.html) [1 Kings 6:38](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-kings/6-38.html) ; [John 2:19](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/2-19.html) [John 2:21](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/2-21.html)
* Tree of life  
  [Genesis 2:9](http://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/2-9.html) ; [John 1:4](http://www.biblestudytools.com/john/1-4.html) ; [Revelation 22:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/revelation/22-2.html)
* Trespass offering  
  [Leviticus 6:1-7](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Leviticus+6:1-7) ; [Isaiah 53:10](http://www.biblestudytools.com/isaiah/53-10.html)
* Vail of the tabernacle and temple  
  [Exodus 40:21](http://www.biblestudytools.com/exodus/40-21.html) ; [2 Chronicles 3:14](http://www.biblestudytools.com/2-chronicles/3-14.html) ; [Hebrews 10:20](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/10-20.html)
* Zerubbabel  
  [Zechariah 4:7-9](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Zechariah+4:7-9) ; [Hebrews 12:2](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/12-2.html) [Hebrews 12:3](http://www.biblestudytools.com/hebrews/12-3.html)

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All of these were meant to be examples of Christ and God’s gospel of saving grace for the humble. God’s message was never, be good enough and be saved. Instead it He said something more like, in your brokenness trust me to save you. God was preaching the gospel to Israel, and the whole world, long before Jesus walked among them as a rabbi and died as their sin offering.

Unfortunately, most did not believe God’s message of salvation. As Paul says in Romans 10:21:

**21**But regarding Israel, God said,

“All day long I opened my arms to them,  
    but they were disobedient and rebellious.”

They were disobedient and rebellious because they were counting on their relationship to Abraham instead of their relationship with God. Remember Jesus said:

**8**Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. **9**Don’t just say to each other, ‘We’re safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.’ That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones.

Matthew 3:8-9

How about you?

How has God shown Himself to you?

How have you seen your inability to fix things yourself and your need to repent and turn to Jesus?

Everything everywhere is proclaiming God’s glory and our dependence on Him.

In the book of Revelation it says:

“I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Revelation 5:13

The Message of Jesus has always been among us. As Paul had written in verse 18: “The message has gone throughout the earth, and the words to all the world.”

It isn’t our job to take the message of Christ to the world. It is our job to help others know that Jesus is the message that their hearts have already been hearing. People are already seeing the dots. And our faith is meant to help them connect them.

How will you show your faith in Jesus to others?

How will you tell others about the way God preached the gospel to you?

Your story doesn’t have to be eloquent. It doesn’t have to be theologically airtight. It is your story of how God helped you hear and believe the message of Christ.

I will finish today with one of Jesus’ parables.

**9**Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: **10**“Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. **11**The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! **12**I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’

**13**“But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ **14**I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Luke 18:9-14

Which one do you think had a better understanding of God’s message of salvation?

And which one would you be more likely to listen to and be around?

Everyone who believes is meant to be a messenger. Let’s share the message like sinners who have been justified, instead of like saints talking to sinners.