**Romans 10**

Introduction

I. Here is the issue Paul is addressing in Romans 9-11: the vast majority of Jews in his day were not accepting Messiah and were missing out on salvation, and that called into question God’s faithfulness to his Word and his people

II. Paul’s defense of God’s faithfulness takes two forms

A. Ch. 9: God’s sovereignty: This is part of God’s sovereign plan and is consistent with his word to preserve a remnant

B. Ch. 10: human responsibility: This is Israel’s own fault and they have no one but themselves to blame for their stubbornness

III. Tim Keller on sovereignty and human accountability

It’s not an either/or but a both/and because God can be sovereign not only in spite of our decisions but even through our decisions

The Passage

I. An ironic twist: people who weren’t even looking for righteousness found it, and those who were intensely pursuing it missed it (9:30-10:4)

A. Gentiles

1. They weren’t looking for righteousness (this is an understatement! See 1 Peter 4:3-4 on the pagan way of life)
2. They obtained it

When Gospel preachers traveled to new cities and preached the gospel message to pagans, they accepted it by faith. Their advantage was they had no spiritual presumption or pride so they were more open to a righteousness by faith

B. Israel

1. They were pursuing righteousness (= a law of righteousness)

Some of them like the Pharisees really pursued it

Tried to follow all the 600+ laws of Old Testament, plus they added many more

2. They did not obtain it

Their disadvantage was they had a spiritual pride. They thought righteousness was something they could produce in themselves and work for, and that kept them from being open to a righteousness that is completely from God that they could never produce on their own. So they “did not submit” (v. 3)

C. Clearly God doesn’t like human pride and will do what he has to in order to thwart it

1. v. 33: Jesus is the stone (a crucified Messiah) laid in everyone’s path. And he confronts each of us with the reality that the Son of God had to die a gruesome, horrible death to pay penalty for sin (forgive); and therefore that means that all our efforts to be good enough don’t amount to a hill of beans

2. Two responses to this stone

a. Those who trip and stumble on him

They can’t accept the idea that all their efforts don’t get them anywhere with God, and they’re offended by the cross

b. Those who trust in him and are not put to shame

They recognize their brokenness and realize that Christ is the answer, and he is the end of the law for them

D. 10:20-21 succinctly summarizes the situation

II. Another contrast between the righteousness by law and righteousness by faith (v. 5-13)

A. Righteousness by law (v. 5)

1. If you want to live, you have to do all these things. Your life/salvation is dependent on you continuing to keep all these law

 2. Paul’s Point = that kind of righteousness is impossible, totally unattainable!

B. Righteousness by faith (v. 6-13)

1. It is very possible and attainable (v. 6-8)

 You don’t have to go to heaven or depths of earth to reach it.

 2. The content of the gospel (v. 9-10)

 Content: Jesus is Lord, God raised him from dead

 Believe in your heart and confess with your mouth

3. This righteousness is universally available to all (v. 11-13)

 C. The one thing needed is for people to share the message! (v. 14-5)

1. v. 15: It’s a beautiful thing when God’s people willing to go places to share good news

2. This is such a healthy balance to Romans 9. After Romans 9 we might be tempted to think that evangelism won’t make a difference, but Paul (who had a strong view of election) was one of the greatest evangelists of all time

Conclusion

I. Where do you need to hear the gospel yourself?

A. Where are you still trying to perform for God to gain or keep his approval?

B. Dietrich Bonhoeffer: “One must abandon every attempt to make something of oneself . . . even to make of oneself a righteous person.” Our attempt to make something ourselves can actually be the very thing that keeps us from receiving God’s grace

II. Where do you need to share the gospel?

A. v. 17: “Faith comes from hearing.” People have to actually hear the gospel spoken to them if they are to come to faith.

B. “Preach the gospel always, if necessary use words.” Ultimately, it is always necessary to use words

C. Matthew 9:36-37: Are we willing to be those harvesters who go out into the field?