

August 15, 2021 - Kent Stiles

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Preacher: Kent Stiles

[0 : 00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church, knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. Good morning, if you would, go ahead and turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Romans.

We are going to continue where we have been for the last several months. Romans chapter 10 specifically is what we're looking at this morning.

And last week we were in, I believe, chapter 9, verse 30 down through 13. And we saw that Paul went out of his way to stress the centrality of faith, that we're not saved by our own works, and we're not even saved by our own righteousness, but rather we are saved by the righteousness of Christ. And it's not our righteousness that makes us right with God, but whether it's Jesus' righteousness imputed to us that saves us. And so this morning we're going to continue on that in verse 10.

We're going to backtrack, take a look at a couple verses at the end of that passage that will give us some context, and then we're going to work our way through the end of chapter 10, verse 21.

[1 : 12] So before we get started, let's go ahead and open up in a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to come together, Lord. We're reminded, Lord, even in our announcement time, just the finite time that we have here on earth, Lord, that none of us knows our appointed day or time, Lord, other than you.

And we just ask, Lord, that we would make the most of the time that we have remaining, that we would redeem the time. If there happens to be those that are here that may not know you, Lord, pray that maybe that as we read your word today, that that might perk their heart, Lord, to come to know you, Lord.

We just pray that you would bless the next half hour or so as we go through your word, and we ask this in your name. Amen. So I think most of us probably know of Galileo, right?

Galileo was a 17th century Italian physicist. He was a mathematician, an astronomer, and even a philosopher who had been called the father of modern observational astronomy.

And he was the first person to discover that the earth revolved around the sun, contrary to the position of the Roman Catholic Church at the time, which held to the belief that the sun revolved around the earth.

[2 : 26] And despite the evidence that Galileo presented, and despite the empirical evidence that would be in his favor, even asking his accusers to come and check out his telescope, see it for themselves, the Roman Catholic Inquisition refused to do so.

They already knew what they had believed, and they were firm in that. And they would only believe what they wanted to believe, and so eventually they convicted him of heresy, and he was forced to recant his position, and he lived the remainder of his life under house arrest.

Well, you know, much the same way, the Jews in the first century that we see here this morning, and even so today, they believe only what they want to believe. And it's a pit that, frankly, I think a lot of us are prone to fall into from time to time, that no matter what the truth is, you can show me something different that provides evidence.

I'm going to believe what I believe and how I want to believe. Well, thus far in Romans 10, Paul has revealed his deep sorrow for his kinsmen because of their stubborn disbelief.

They had a zeal, it said, earlier in chapter 10, without knowledge, without faith. And here this morning in verses 11 down through 21, we're going to see Paul reflect on Israel's zeal without knowledge by exposing their failure to be the witness nation that God had intended them to be.

[3 : 50] And he's going to show us that in a couple different ways. Number one, he's going to expose their refusal to believe God's universal call, that his call for salvation was universal, not just to the Jews.

And then secondarily, he's going to expose their ignorance of prophetic scripture concerning their willful rejection. Now, to understand really what we're looking at here with regard to this conflict with Jews and Greeks, I think we have to take a quick look at historical context.

That proves to be important. You have to realize that the Jews hated the Gentiles more than cats hate dogs.

You know, they hated them more than a Missouri tiger hates a Jayhawk, more than some of you might hate broccoli. That's hard to believe, right? They hated each other.

The Jewish people hated the Gentiles because they, meaning the Jews, they were God's chosen covenant people, the apple of his eye. And they were absolutely certain that God would shower his love on them and them alone and no other people.

[4 : 59] But I also think in context, it's hard to not overlook or hard not to understand. They've suffered unimaginable horrors at the hands of the Gentiles, right?

If you look back through scripture, think of, or through history, think of the Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans. Even in today's time, they're all against the Jews. You know, this is why, incidentally, that Jonah boarded a ship going the opposite direction of where God told him to go to Nineveh to reach out to 600,000 people.

This is why he decided to go a different direction. Because, you see, Nineveh, they were exceedingly wicked. They were idolaters. They were barbaric. It was the capital city of Assyria. And if you look at history and you look at some of the interactions that the Assyrians had with Israel, you'll see that they did some pretty incredible things, things that were unimaginable. They would impale people that were Jews and they would put them up on a stick for people to see and poles for those to observe.

[6 : 13] They would skin them alive. They would behead them. They would cut off their arms and their legs. And so you can somewhat understand why Jonah, you know, he didn't really want to go hang out with these people.

Right? I don't think it wasn't. It wasn't because he was afraid of what they would do to him or because he feared that somehow they would reject God's offer to forgive them.

But rather, he did not want God to save them. But after an interesting swim and an encounter with a fishing expedition, you are all aware of what happened there.

You'll recall that Jonah did go and the people of Nineveh, they did heed the warning. And it said in Jonah 3.5, it says, You would think Jonah would have been pleased by this, right?

Lord, you called me. I went and gave the message and they repented. Well, it says in Jonah 4.1, But it greatly displeased Jonah. And he became angry and he prayed to the Lord.

[7 : 20] And he said, Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for death is better than my life.

Not something you would expect to see from someone who just saw this miraculous work of God. You know, it's amazing, isn't it? That although Jonah had been the recipient of a divine pardon, he hated the Gentiles so much that he would not want them to experience this same pardon.

Well, Israel had become Jonah. Jonah, incidentally, means dove. And Israel had become like a hawk, wanting to see the death and destruction, instead of seeing themselves as what they could have been, vessels of mercy.

In Acts chapter 10, Paul talks why Israel of his day, why they had rejected the gospel message. The first reason was a stumbling block of grace. And the second was a logical following, that Gentiles would now be part of God's program.

Behold, I will send you to the Gentiles away with him. Such a man should not be allowed to live. That was their response.

[8 : 53] These Jews, they looked at Paul, one of their own. They didn't like what they saw. They didn't like what was going on. They didn't like this interaction that was going on between him and the enemy. And so let's look here in verse 11.

Let's take a look at Paul's defense. That the Gentiles have been extended salvation. Incidentally, aren't you glad that God extended salvation to you and me?

You and I, we're Gentiles. We don't trace our origin back to Genesis 12, to Abraham, spiritually, but not physically.

Our physical or national origin can be traced back one chapter earlier. Genesis 11, where would that be traced back to? To Babel.

That's where we were. That's where we trace our national origins. Not Genesis 12, but Genesis 11. That we're the rebel force against God that he has drawn to himself.

[9 : 53] And they're saying, Paul, is this biblical? Is what you're saying biblical? These journeys that you've been on to the Gentile world, are they biblical? Or are you just starting your new faith alone cult?

Is what you're saying match up with biblical ideas? Well, in verse 11, and what we're going to see here throughout the rest of the passages, Paul, as he often does with the Jews, is he goes back to the Old Testament.

He goes back to the Old Testament, and he uses the words of God from the Old Testament to show that this is not a new idea. That this is something that God has planned. That they're not going to be able to refute the word that he brings to them.

And so in verse 11, he says this. He starts with this. For the scripture says, whoever believes in him will not be disappointed.

Or some of your versions might say ashamed or put to shame. So ashamed meaning that you will put your trust in something, and it will drop the ball on you.

[10 : 54] The Old Testament, it speaks of the Philistines after they were defeated by Israel, that they would be ashamed of their gods, and they would cast them into the holes, into the caves, because their gods would shame them.

And the truth is that whoever believes in him in Jesus Christ will not be ashamed. There is not one occasion in all of the Bible that a penitent sinner comes to the true God and is cast away.

Not once. And so if you're here this morning and you're the worst heritage that you could imagine, if you've come out of a background of a murderous family, if you've served time, if you've lived a life of deceit or malice or perversion, you've come to God on the basis of grace and sought his forgiveness, there is not one of you that God will not take.

Not one. Whoever believes in him, he will not put to shame. Not one. You know, incidentally, whenever you sing the song Amazing Grace, that was written by an ex-slave trader.

And so you are hearing the words of worship of God by a man who trafficked in human blood and who got saved.

[12 : 17] And that deserves a song, doesn't it? Amazing Grace. None of them are without reach. Whoever believes, he will not put to shame. And so Paul goes to Isaiah.

And Isaiah agrees with them. In verse 12, he appeals then to the very nature of who God is. And it's not that God is a God of the Jews and Jupiter of the Romans and Zeus of the Greeks and Baal of the Canaanites.

There is no distinction between Jew and Greek. The same Lord is the Lord of all. You see, God made the Athenian. As foolish as he is in his polytheism, he made him.

God made the pygmy in the deepest part of the forest. God made him. God made that Celt in Ireland worshiping the sun that would put his enemy on pikes and kill him.

God made him. And he is the God of all creation. As a result, he abounds in riches to all who call on him, not just the Jew.

[13 : 18] And so Paul here appeals to Isaiah. Whoever. Not Jews. Not just Greeks. Whoever. Whoever. And then he substantiates that by appealing to the monotheistic nature of creation.

That God welcomes all repentant men who come. And he abounds in riches. He treats them all in that sense equitable. He doesn't bestow upon the prince of whoever more blessedness than the pygmy, the kelp, or whoever.

That they are all children in Christ. In Christ. So whoever calls. In verse 13, he goes to the prophet Joel.

We see that phrase here in Joel chapter 3 verse 2. Whenever. Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Not just some. Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

To any human being. Whether they might be. If it's a cleric. If it's a cleric. In the farthest reaches of Iran. Far away from the gospel. When he calls a sense of emotional pleading.

[14 : 22] For mercy. When he calls out on the name of Yahweh. The covenant keeping God of Israel. You're not saved by some generic G-O-D. That you might fashion into your own image.

But whoever calls on Yahweh. The creator of the heaven and the earth. And of the dry land and the seas. Who set apart Abraham and gave word through Israel.

Of who Jesus Christ was the final outworking of his mercy. Whoever calls on that name. Whoever calls upon God. He shall be saved.

Whoever. Whoever. And in verse 14. Paul now takes that verse from Joel. Whoever will call. And he reasons backwards. And this is where we get into some new verses this morning.

And I want you to watch this. Watch in verse 14. How now will they call on him who they have not believed? That makes sense. You can't call upon someone to save you.

[15:19] If you don't believe in deed they can do so. And how will they believe in him who they have not heard? You know you're not going to give an ounce. Or assent a belief. To that God.

Unless you hear about him. And unless. Like in Thessalonians. You can turn to God from idols. And serve the true living God. Your polytheistic. Pantheistic. Islamic belief.

It must be penetrated by the light of the true God. How can you believe in him who you haven't heard about? In verse 14. How will they hear without a preacher? Without a messenger?

Somebody has to tell you the truth.

For you to believe it. For you to call out. And then verse 15. How shall they preach unless they are sent? And so we have this backward progression. And so in verse 13 is a true statement.

That whoever will call on the name of the Lord. If 13 is true. Then that assumes that man. Are going to have to. Or men are going to have to believe. And if they're going to have.

[16:14] If they're going to believe. That assumes that they're going to have to hear. And if they're going to hear. That assumes somebody is going to have to tell them. And if somebody is going to have to tell them. In verse 15. That assumes that somebody is going to have to send them.

Now here's Paul's logic. Who is the one who has sent. A messenger. A message. To the whosoever. About the saving grace.

Who has sent that messenger? Who has sent Paul. To the outer. Places. To the Greeks. To the Gentiles. Who has done that? It's God.

And that's his logic. That's what he tells the Jews here. So Paul's logic is. If man will call upon the name of the Lord. To be saved. Then God will have to send a messenger. To talk.

That man could hear. And believe. And call out to him. And in verse 15. Do you notice the Old Testament cross reference here. That he uses to substantiate it.

[17:10] If you look in verse 15. It says. How beautiful are the feet of those. Who bring good news. Of good things. This is a quote.

Again from the book of Isaiah. Of Israel being brought. Into captivity. In Isaiah. He preached in the day. That Israel was going to go away.

Into captivity of Babylon. They were going to be there. But 70 years later. There was going to come. They were going to come out of Babylon. They were going to go home. Not because. They would deliver themselves. By their great power.

But that God would raise up an anointed one. Named Cyrus. The king of Persia. And he would allow them by decree. To come home. And so by the sovereign work of God.

On this king. A decree would go out to Israel. Go home. God has freed you. And Paul says.

[18:04] As it would be in Israel. Going home. Because of the sovereign decree of a king. And in the same way. The Gentiles. The Gentiles. Would hear a message. Of good tidings.

Come home. Come home. Because of the decree. Of a sovereign king. So as to the Gentile.

They will believe in him. That they have heard. And they will have heard. By a messenger. That was sent. And as a Gentile. Will believe a message.

They will do the same manner. As Israel. Would hear a message. To come home. So as to the Jew. So to the Gentile. Well let's keep going.

Verse 16. 11 through 15. Is pretty good stuff. Right? I mean. All positive things. It's wonderful. The idea of Gentile salvation. That whosoever. Paul says. That's from Isaiah.

[18:59] That's from the very nature. Of God as creator. That's from Joel. That's typified. By Israel's going home. In the book of Isaiah. Hearing the glad tidings. That just goes to show.

That it's an Old Testament concept. Well in verse 16. He now tells you something. That's kind of disturbing. In verse 16. He references back to Isaiah. But he goes. To a different part of Isaiah.

He goes to Isaiah 53. A well-known passage. A verse speaking. Of the suffering savior. That would come. And would be misunderstood. And would be rejected. However.

They did not all heed. It says. They did not all heed. The good news. For Isaiah says. Lord. Who has believed. The report. They did not all believe.

The good news. And that they. He is talking there. About the Jew. The Jew would hear. This as. Excuse me. The Jew would hear. This wonderful. Glad tidings.

[19 : 53] Of great joy. They would hear. This message. That would be preached. To them. Yet instead of believing. They rejected. The idea. Of salvation.

By faith. That's something. That was repulsive. To them. We are not looking. For this kind. Of Messiah. They did not believe. The Messiah came.

With a lowly background. And this personal appearance. That wasn't attractive. To them. They could not believe. In a Messiah. That did not match up. To their ideas.

And they could not believe. In the one. That was despised. And forsaken of men. A man of sorrows. Acquainted with grief. One of whom. Men hid their face. One of whom. Was despised.

And rejected. You see. They believed. What they. Wanted. To believe. Rather than the truth. How typical.

[20 : 48] Is that of sinful man? That God. Has revealed. The truth. Of who he is. In his creation. That he has revealed. Into us. In our conscience.

Through the law. And through the prophets. Through the apostles. Through the written word. Through the son of Jesus Christ. In fact. John 1.14. We read. That the word.

Referring to Jesus. Became flesh. And dwelt among. And became. His glory. As of the only begotten. From the father. Full of grace. And full of truth.

There it is. Yet man. It says. We saw it earlier. In Romans. What do they do? With the truth. They suppress the truth. And their own unrighteousness. Doesn't he?

You know. Man believes. What he wants. To believe. And specifically. He will believe. In a God. In a way of salvation. That will accommodate. His desires.

[21 : 43] And his own sinfulness. And will allow him. To live in a manner. That he. So pleases. Hopefully. That doesn't describe. Any of us here. This morning. So in summarizing.

These type. These things here. He says in verse 17. So faith comes from hearing. And hearing from the word of God. It doesn't come. Notice here. Through hearing of the.

What the rabbi is teaching. Unless they happen to be teaching the gospel. It doesn't come from some eloquent sales pitch. It doesn't come through the word of man. Faith comes through the word of Christ.

Literally the word of Messiah. The Lord Jesus. And that is how faith comes. By hearing the word. You know. That is really a practical thought. For evangelism.

Because how often. Do you find yourself. I find myself saying this. I just. I don't know the words to say. I don't know the right things to say. Well let them hear the word of Christ.

[22 : 41] That is what it says here. Faith comes from hearing. And hearing by the word of Christ. Point them to what Jesus says. That is what will perk their ear.

That is what will result in faith. That is what the Holy Spirit will use. To cause them to respond. To believe. To place their trust in Christ. You know. We tell them of their sin. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Romans 3.23. We tell them of their guilty standing before God. For the wages of sin is death.

Romans 6.23. We tell them of their standing before God.

That every man is condemned. It is through the offense. Of one. The result is condemnation of all mankind. In Romans 5. But we also tell them of the great.

We tell them that in his great mercy. He has provided a way for sinners. To be reconciled to him. Therefore there is now no condemnation. For those who are in Christ Jesus.

[23 : 39] Romans 8.1. Let them hear not you or me. But let them hear the word of the Lord. Well Paul continues with another rhetorical question.

Here in verse 18. And he says this. He says. But I say surely they have never heard. Have they? Indeed they have. And here he quotes Psalm 19.4.

He says. Their voice has gone out. Into all the earth. And their words to the ends of the world. You know this is interesting. Paul here likens the message of the gospel. To a voice. To the words of heaven.

That declare the glory of God. To all the earth. And thus awakens faith. And sinful men. So that men is without excuse. Romans 1.20. We see that. Think about it.

From the world's most powerful microscope. I think as of 10 years ago. So I don't know if they've made one. That's more expensive than this. But the world's most powerful microscope. Approximately 30 million dollars.

[24 : 37] You had an electron microscope. And they say that it makes images. To a resolution of half. Of the width of a hydrogen atom. That is really, really, really small.

And then on the other side. From the world's most powerful microscope. To the world's most powerful telescope. That allows us to look into galaxies. That are billions of light years away. And man can see the glory of God. That he is without excuse. We see the voice of God's natural revelation.

And creation. The issue is not a lack of truth. That is Paul's point here. That is not the issue. That is not. It's not the lack of truth. But rather it is the rejection.

Of truth. The external evidence of the glory of God. Can be seen everywhere you look. As you behold God's glory. In addition to internal evidence of our sin.

[25 : 37] And of our separation from God. This can be found from our conscience. According to Romans 2.15. The law written in their hearts. Their conscience. Bearing witness. And their thoughts alternatively. Accusing or else defending them.

On the day when according to my gospel. God will judge the secrets of men. Through Christ Jesus. So Paul's argument here. Is iron clad. He is saying that the gospel is offered.

And it is available to all men. Verse 18. It has gone out into all the earth. To the ends of the world. You can open up your eyes.

And you can see it. You know as a footnote. All of those. All of this refutes those who would say. Well surely God doesn't hold a poor heathen.

In some distant jungle accountable. Because he hasn't heard the gospel. Because of reason. And because of conscience. All men it says. Are without excuse.

[26 : 34] No man will ever be able to come before God. At the time of judgment. And say if I had only known. That I should have asked you for mercy. In place of my faith. In place of my faith.

And you be saved. I would have done so. But nobody told me. We'll be without excuse. Because we'll be able to see. His glory that's been manifest. Here as we approach.

The end of our text. As we finish up our passage this morning. We see one final item. Paul moves from exposing Israel's failure. As a witness nation. And he pivots to expose their ignorance.

Of prophetic scripture. Concerning their willful rejection. That ultimately Israel. Is responsible for their own rejection. Paul is going to expose.

Their willful ignorance of scripture. That predicted their rejection of Messiah. And he offers an example. By quoting the words of Moses. From the law that was written. Some 1500 years ago.

[27 : 34] Taken. Or at the time. 1500 years prior. From Deuteronomy chapter 32 verse 21. And we see this here in verse 19. It says. But I say. Surely Israel did not know. Did they? Did they? At the first.

Moses says. I will make you jealous. By that which is not a nation. By a nation without understanding. Will I anger you? Of course they knew. It was there all along.

If the Gentiles. Then certainly the Jews. If the wicked uninformed Gentiles. Could receive the message of the gospel. And believe. Surely the Jews cannot make the case. That they were not aware.

Again. Israel's rejection. Had. It had nothing to do. With their lack of opportunity. To hear. It had everything to do. With their stubborn pride. And with their willful rebellion.

And were it not for God's grace. We would be in the same state ourselves. See people today reject Christ for the same reason. It's not because of a lack of opportunity.

[28 : 35] To hear the truth. It is because of their stubborn pride. And their willful rebellion. If the musicians want to come up here.

We're going to wrap up. Paul bolsters the argument here. With the last couple of verses in this passage. Even more by quoting from Isaiah chapter 20. Or verse. In verse 20 from Isaiah.

And he says this. And Isaiah is a very. Is very bold. And he says. I was found by those who sought me not. I became manifest to those who did not ask for me. What Paul is saying here.

Is that all the time the Jews were trying to earn their salvation. Through works of the law. They knew that God's requirement for righteousness. Was available to them. But only by faith.

In a saving grace. And they knew it all along. And they didn't want to see it. And what a sorrow this brought to Paul. Who lamented over the lost condition of his kinsmen.

[29 : 30] According to the flesh. What a grief this brought to Jesus. In Luke 19.41. It says. And when he approached. He saw the city. And he wept over it. Saying. If you had known in this day.

Even you. The things which make for peace. But now you have been hidden from. Now they have been hidden from your eyes. Matthew 23. Beginning in verse 37.

We have another account. Where Jesus says this. Oh Jerusalem. Jerusalem. Who kills the prophets and stones. Those who are sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together.

The way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. And you were unwilling. Behold. Your house is being left to you desolate. And that's why Paul. We see then concludes in verse 21.

But as for Israel. He says. All the day long. I have stretched out my hands. To a disobedient. And obstinate people. I think the question for us today.

[30 : 28] Is what about us? You know. Have we humbled ourselves. In faith. To the gospel of Jesus Christ. In many cases.

And this. May be true for you. We tend to believe. What we want to believe. Because of our stubborn pride. Because of our willful rebellion.

We may be convinced. That the sun revolves around the earth. But that does not change. The truth. That in fact. The earth revolves around the sun.

Regardless of what our position is. You know. We may believe somehow. That we are good enough. For God to accept us. In the presence of his holiness. On our own merit. But the truth is. We are not. My belief in that. Doesn't change the fact. Of what is true. The only way. That we can be reconciled. To a holy God.

[31 : 23] Is by calling. On the name. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we do that. When we call out for mercy. That we do not deserve. When we trust in him.

And his finished work. On the cross. Of paying the penalty. For you and for me. God. Will be gracious. And he will forgive our sins. And we will not be.

Put to shame. And that is a glorious message. Of the gospel. May we proclaim it. And may we live it. That God. May be glorified. Heavenly Father.

We thank you for. Your word. Lord. We thank you for. We've seen in Romans. Just the blessings. That you've bestowed upon us. Lord. That you reached out. That you chose. Us. Lord.

That you chose me. A stubborn person. Lord. That you would bestow. Your grace. And your mercy. Upon me. Lord. And we're so thankful. Lord. We pray that. As we would go out this week.

[32 : 17] That we would share the message. Of the good news. With those around us. That whosoever. Lord. That would call upon you. That you would answer. Lord. And that you would not. Put them to shame. Lord. We thank you for our time this morning.

We ask these things. And you're in the sunset. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.