

MMSG0002

MicroMessage #2

The Requirements for Salvation:
Romans 10:8-13

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Once upon a time, a young preacher thrilled his new congregation with his first sermon. It was a wonderful and powerful message that sent them all home feeling very lucky to have him in their pulpit.

But then, to their dismay, he preached the same sermon the following Sunday. When he confronted them with the same ringing message on the third Sunday, the congregation felt something had to be done.

"Don't you have more than just one sermon?" they asked him.

"Oh, yes," he said quietly, "I have quite a number. But you haven't done anything about the first one yet!"

James 1:22 says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

And II Corinthians 6:2 says, "... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

If you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, don't wait any longer! Come to Him today.

Do you know what it means to be saved? Do you know how to be saved?

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Our passage begins with Romans 10:8 -

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

We do not have to go searching for salvation. The message of salvation through faith in the living Lord could not be closer to

us; it has been proclaimed to us from pulpits, in radio messages, and on television. All that is necessary for us, is to obey the words of verse 9.

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9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

When Paul first wrote this, the Jews of his day were deeply steeped in the idea that salvation came by fulfilling the law through their own efforts, and this message seemed too simple. It was so free that it seemed insulting.

We face the same problem today. The fundamental attitude of many people is that they must do something to merit or earn their salvation.

Some time ago, a preacher was trying to explain to a coal miner that salvation is the free gift of God's grace. The miner wouldn't accept the preacher's argument. So one day the preacher went along with the miner on his way to the mines. They were getting ready to descend by means of the company elevator, when the preacher said to the miner, "How much will this cost me?"

The miner replied, "It's not going to cost you anything."

"That's too cheap," the preacher said. "I don't want to ride on anything that costs nothing."

"Cheap!" exclaimed the miner. "This elevator cost the company \$25,000. There's nothing cheap about it."

"Oh," said the preacher, "I see. I can ride free because someone else has already paid the price for me."

So he was able to explain to the miner that salvation comes to us in the same manner. It costs us nothing, but it's not cheap, because it cost Christ everything.

Faith requires both belief and confession. The belief required is the belief that Christ is risen from the dead. It would be possible, of course, to believe firmly that Christ died, but that isn't enough. Everybody dies. In the past, many even died by crucifixion. But the resurrection is the confirmation and the evidence that Christ's claim to be God is valid! It is the proof that His death was sufficient to bring us salvation!

Faith also requires confession. In Paul's day, in the heart-believer's experience, there had to be a simple but profound statement that "Jesus is Lord." This was the very first creed of the Christian church, "Jesus is Lord."

Belief and confession are the inward and outward aspects of the same thing: faith. Both the inward and the outward are necessary. No one is saved by the outward alone: to say "Jesus is Lord" without believing it in your heart will do you no good at all.

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10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Believing with the heart must come first. Confession with the mouth comes afterward. To confess with the mouth what I do not believe in my heart is hypocrisy. Instead of being acceptable to God, it is an abomination in His sight! How dare I claim to have faith if I deny it in my heart? How dare I display a form of godliness if I haven't proved its power in my spirit?

Matthew 12:34 & 35 say, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

In the Bible, the word "heart" does not mean just that lump of muscle inside our chest that pumps our blood. The greek word (G - kardia) was used to mean the seat of one's innermost thoughts and secret feelings, one's innermost self, the depths of the soul, or the entire mind: including the intellect, the feelings, and the will.

And after belief, comes confession -

Matthew 10:32-33 say, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

When I get to the end of my life, I am going to need someone to stand up for me before God. Christ promised that if I would confess Him here, He would confess me there.

I want to hear Him say, "Father, he was not perfect, he was not always good, but he stood up for Me on earth, and I will stand up for him here." When He says that, then I know God will say, "Welcome, my child. Enter into the joys of thy Lord."

But if I refuse to confess Him, if I deny Him down here, He will deny me up there. He will sadly say, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." So you see, it is important to confess your faith before men. If you are genuinely saved, you will want to do this.

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11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

When man was first created in God's image, he was an innocent, and there was no shame in the state of innocence.

Genesis 2:25 says of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

But after their sin and fall, they fled from God, and Adam was forced to acknowledge the reason: he was afraid. With the loss of innocence there came a shame that brought fear. But then God spoke to them and made the promise of grace which would make salvation possible for them, and for the entire human race that was to descend from them.

There is a day of judgement coming. Hebrews 9:27 says "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

Those who will not bow before God here below will then be bowed in spite of themselves. Phillipians 2:10 and 11 say, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In that day, men's hearts will be naked for all to see. Those who have had their sins blotted out by the atonement provided by the death of Jesus Christ will be able to stand boldly before God. But those who have refused to acknowledge Him and to confess Him as their savior will be brought to open shame and confusion!

The world today lives in an artificial state of self-deception: men actually think of themselves as good, or at least no worse than anybody else. But the judgment will come and remove all this: men and women will not only go to Hell and the Lake of Fire; they will go there, having to face what they really are for all eternity. That will be the worst Hell of all!

II Timothy 1:12 says, "... I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

One day a lady saw a butterfly inside the house, flying around a picture window. On the outside a bird was pecking at the window and the butterfly was wildly trying to escape. "Silly butterfly!" the woman laughed. "You're just as safe as if that bird were a million miles away."

Jesus is like that window for us. If you and I are in Christ, we are on the inside and Satan is on the outside. Satan

can try as hard as he wants to capture us and take us to Hell, but Christ is between us and Satan - we are completely safe.

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12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Throughout the entire book of Romans, Paul emphasizes the importance of faith as the one way to God. He implies everywhere that Jews and Gentiles are saved in exactly the same way. But, in this verse, he is no longer merely implying it; now he states it conclusively, "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek."

Earlier, in Chapter 3, verses 21 through 23, Paul wrote, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

In that passage, Paul declared that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles in sin. And, here in verse 12, he declares that there is no difference in salvation.

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13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This is the great simplicity of the Gospel. It sets before us the open way to God and lets us know how easily God can be reached and how accessible He is to each of us at all times. God has made the way of salvation so simple that you cannot claim any excuse whatsoever if you don't lay hold of it and make it your own.

You may be unwilling to listen to the truth. You may stifle the voice of God as easily as you reach out your hand to turn off the television set. But you are fully accountable and will give answer to God for what you have done with this good news.

The good news is that you may be saved - that eternal life may enter into you and that you may enter into eternal life. God has done everything that is needed to reconcile you to Himself. And, everything that He has done is included in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

What does calling on the name of the Lord mean? In a moment of distress, you may cry, "Lord, help me!". But that is not calling upon the name of the Lord, unless there's more in it than just your desire to escape your distress.

To call upon the name of the Lord is to believe all that His name stands for; to know Him as your own Savior and Lord; to approach Him through the altar of the cross, to recognize that there is no strength in yourself, but that all power dwells in Him; and to commit yourself to Him in faith, trusting Him to hold you safe and never let you go!

To call upon the name of the Lord means to exercise true faith. True faith has two parts: belief and trust. Suppose that I move to a new town and start a new job. When I get my first paycheck, I go down to the local bank and ask the banker, "Can you keep my money safe for me?" When he assures me that they can, I say, "Prove it!"

So the banker takes me on a tour of the bank. He shows me the steel vault with its massive door and locks. He shows me the security cameras and other safety devices. He extols the honesty and integrity of his employees. And he shows me the bank's records, which testify that the bank has never lost a penny of the money left in its care.

Then I say, "I believe it; I believe you can keep my money safely." But if I then walk out of the bank with my paycheck still in my pocket, I have not exercised faith. I have believed, but I have not trusted. If I had deposited my paycheck in the bank, I would have been exercising faith.

Some people say, "I believe everything you say about Christ. I believe He was born of a virgin, that He lived a sinless life, that He died on the cross, that He rose from the dead, and that someday He's coming back to earth." But that is not enough to save anyone. Even the devils believe that much. In order to exercise faith, one must not only believe all these things about Christ, he must trust Him with all he has for time and eternity.

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If you haven't already yielded to Jesus as your Lord and Savior, do it today! Believe Him today! Trust Him today! Then tell somebody about it!

Hallelujah! Amen!

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