

Romans 10

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, May 10, 2026
PASSAGES	Romans 9:30–33; Romans 10; Deuteronomy 30; Isaiah 8; Isaiah 28; Joel 2; 1 Corinthians 1; Romans 3; Romans 7; Romans 12
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:07:40 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

Righteousness was always going to be a gift, and a gift is exactly what hardworking people trip over. Christ is not the law's cancellation but its goal — and because God himself is the sender, his promises have never rested on whether we cooperate.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ What Israel stumbled over was not God's hostility. It was his generosity, offered on his terms alone — which is unbearable if you have been working hard on your own righteousness.
- ◆ “End of the law” translates *telos*, and the ambiguity is the point: not only where the law stops, but what it was aiming at the whole time.
- ◆ Jesus does not merely hand out righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He *is* those things, and they are ours because we are in him.
- ◆ Paul takes a passage about doing the commandments and puts the words in the mouth of the righteousness that is by faith — because if the whole Torah points to Christ, then so does Deuteronomy 30.
- ◆ You cannot be baptized into a section of Jesus' life. You are joined to the whole person, which means a flawless lifetime of obedience is yours too.
- ◆ Behind every sending church and missions agency is a higher sending agency. The voice in Isaiah 6 asking “whom shall I send” is God's.

- ◆ Israel's problem was never a shortage of witnesses. They heard, and they understood. What was missing was faith.
- ◆ The open question this morning was not whether God will finish what he started, but whether we will join him with soft hearts or hard ones.

► 1:07:40

Matt has said all along that his aim in Romans is to show the letter to be more beautiful than we first thought, and God through it more beautiful still. He has been especially eager to preach chapters 9 through 11 — the stretch where the train of glory seems to veer off somewhere confusing, and you start to wonder whether God is secretly dark in some corner you have not been shown.

Where chapter 9 left us

► 1:08:14

The sovereignty of Romans 9 turned out to be sovereign *mercy* — God's ability to keep his promise to bless every family of the earth even when the people carrying that promise fail to cooperate. Pharaoh is the case study: God did not manufacture the stubbornness, he pressed pause on a rebellion Pharaoh had already chosen and magnified it so the whole world could see his name. Which sets up the question underneath this whole section. If Israel by and large rejects Jesus, have the promises stalled? Nothing remotely like it. God has never needed our participation.

The stumbling stone

► 1:12:56

Matt backtracked a few verses, having declared chapter 9 finished a week early.

“Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works.”

ROMANS 9:30–33 ↗

The fulcrum here is effort. By Paul's own account his countrymen were zealous and hardworking; the Gentiles, comparatively, were not laboring over Torah righteousness at all. Since faith is by definition

not a work, a salvation given as a gift is precisely the thing a diligent person cannot receive. “The point of stumbling wasn’t God’s random capricious hatred,” Matt said, “but his radical generosity on his terms alone.” He added that the redeemed still trip over it from time to time.

► 1:14:42

The stone Paul quotes is borrowed. In [Isaiah 8](#) it is the Lord of hosts himself who becomes a sanctuary and a stone of offense; in [Isaiah 28](#) God answers a people who have made a covenant with death by laying a tested cornerstone in Zion. The rock is God, and what he offers annuls the covenant with death.

Zeal without knowledge

► 1:16:14

“My heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

ROMANS 10:1–4 ↗

The knowledge they lack is not knowledge of Torah. It is the mystery kept hidden through the ages and now revealed — God incarnate, crucified, raised. And verse 1 is nonsense if the door has been bolted from the inside: you do not pray for the salvation of people who are not permitted to repent.

► 1:17:17

“End” is *telos* — the root behind *telescope* and *telephone*. In English as in Greek the word can mean a thing winding down or the purpose it was driving toward, as in the ends justifying the means. Matt noted that the ambiguity happens to land the same way in both languages, which is not always so convenient. Jesus is the law’s goal and its completion, not its cancellation.

“And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”

1 CORINTHIANS 1:30–31 ↗

Read that carefully, Matt urged: he does not merely give us these things. Our righteousness is Christ the person. Our sanctification is Christ the person. Our redemption is God made man — and both the kingdom and the King are our inheritance.

What Paul does with Deuteronomy 30

► 1:19:10

In Romans 10:5–8 Paul stages something strange and delightful. He gives the speaking part to “the righteousness based on faith,” and then has it quote Moses.

“It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea... But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.”

DEUTERONOMY 30:11–14 ↗

► 1:21:06

Moses’ point was that obedience is not exotic. You do not have to go to Nepal and contemplate one hand clapping in a cave, or go under the ocean and talk to sharks, or cross a desert to find out what it does to your soul. God said it out loud in a booming voice and wrote it with his own finger on stone. It is right here. Just do it. “And then, of course,” Matt said, “we still couldn’t do it.”

So Paul reaches into a passage about keeping the commandments and finds Christ in it — no one has to ascend to heaven to fetch him down, or descend to the abyss to bring him up, because he has already come and already risen. Which is legitimate, Matt argued, because the Old Testament does not exist in isolation from its own completion. If the whole Torah points to Jesus, then so does Deuteronomy 30. Paul deliberately puts belief in the risen Lord where adherence to the law used to stand.

You cannot order Jesus à la carte

► 1:23:48

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

ROMANS 10:9–10 ↗

► 1:25:55

Here Matt pressed the point he clearly cares most about. We are not saved piecemeal. “You can’t be baptized into just his left leg or only his baby years,” he said. “You are locked into the roller coaster of the whole thing Jesus did. There’s no getting out halfway through this ride.” We are baptized into his death and so expect a resurrection like his — but also into a complete lifetime of flawless obedience, manger to tomb. God did in Christ what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. The righteousness of God has been shown apart from the law, though the law and the prophets bear witness to it; the law was a guardian until Christ; and now we serve in the new way of the Spirit, not the old way of the written code.

Which is why there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. Everything is already maxed out and overflowing in Christ — where would you go from there? And the promise Paul lands on, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, is lifted from Joel 2, where the name belongs to God.

Who is doing the sending?

► 1:27:26

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?”

ROMANS 10:14–15 ↗

► 1:29:19

This is the verse that puts the mission back on our shoulders — or seems to. Matt slowed down on the last clause. Sending is not what happens when churches convene a conference and make God’s plan go. “There’s a sending agency, if you will, even higher than our missions organizations.” Paul has been quoting Isaiah all chapter, and in [Isaiah 6](#) the voice asking “whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” is God’s own. He directs and empowers his messengers, and he is not short of them. His train has no brakes.

They heard. They understood.

► 1:31:13

And in any case, chapters 9 through 11 are not about a people who never got a witness.

“Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” — faith comes by hearing, and Paul’s grief is over a message that was heard. Did they not hear? Indeed they have; their voice has gone out to all the earth. Did they not understand? Moses and Isaiah answer that one too:

God has been found by those who were not looking for him. The gospel in Paul’s day had already exploded with a life of its own. This is Pharaoh again — God hardened his heart, but Pharaoh hardened it first, and God made a name for himself either way. It was simply the hard way.

All day long I have held out my hands

► 1:34:53

Then Matt turned it on the room, and did it by naming the assumption out loud: that God’s promises ran forward under their own power in Paul’s day, but in the modern era it is somehow all up to us again. Is the church’s noteworthy incompetence going to void anything? Does the knowledge of the glory of God covering the earth depend on whether we rally, get organized, and finally obey? Scripture has never once testified that it does.

“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

ROMANS 10:21 ↗

That, Matt said, is God’s default posture — not a single attempt withdrawn at the first refusal. He is still the great sender, still patient, still holding the door open through Christ. True for us, true for our friends, and true for “the people that we’ve written off but he hasn’t — the people that he’s still pursuing even though we no longer try because we feel like it’s too big of a miracle.”

► 1:35:56

So the closing question was not whether God will finish. It was what a willing response looks like once you are no longer carrying the weight of the world’s evangelization. We cannot shoulder it, and we are not asked to. God will have his bride, and she will be radiant. The room was given a few quiet minutes to ask him about the state of their own hearts before the prayer teams came forward.

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- Romans 9:30–33
- Isaiah 8:13–14
- Isaiah 28:16
- Romans 10:1–4
- 1 Corinthians 1:30–31
- Romans 10:5–8
- Deuteronomy 30:11–14
- Romans 10:9–10
- Romans 6:3–5
- Romans 8:3–4
- Romans 3:21
- Galatians 3:24–25
- Romans 7:6
- Romans 10:12–13
- Joel 2:32
- Romans 10:14–15
- Isaiah 6:8
- Romans 10:16–17
- Romans 10:18
- Romans 10:19–20
- Romans 10:21

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Where does a gift you did not earn still feel like an insult to the effort you have been putting in? What does that reveal about how you are pursuing righteousness?
2. Matt said the knowledge Israel lacked was not knowledge of the scriptures but knowledge of Christ himself. Where might that same gap be in you?
3. If Jesus is the telos of the law rather than its cancellation, how does that change the way you read the Old Testament?
4. What would it mean to take seriously that a whole lifetime of flawless obedience is credited to you because you are joined to the whole person of Christ, not part of him?
5. Name someone you have written off as too big a miracle. What is one thing you will do this week toward the person God is still holding out his hands to?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uj2BFyLxC-w&t=4060s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.