

PAUL (2): PASSION FOR ISRAEL'S SALVATION *Romans 10:1-21*

by Francis Dixon

The apostle Paul was dedicated to seeking the lost and pointing them to Christ who alone could save them. With Romans 10:1 we should link Romans 9:1-3. In this study we shall centre our thoughts upon Romans 10:1, in which there is a clear sequence of truth.

PAUL VIEWED ALL MEN AS BY NATURE LOST

The use of the word "saved" in Romans 10:1 implies that those he longed for were lost. Paul was thinking primarily of Israel, but all who are living apart from Christ are lost. If we are to win souls we must be convinced that those who are not Christians are lost – lost to God, to Christ, to salvation, to Heaven, and lost for ever unless they are brought to Him. **What is it to be lost?**

PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ Safe return of the Impact Africa team; for the wonderful experiences had as they ministered in South Africa
- ★ The opportunities as a team to share Christ one-on-one, distribute clothing to the homeless, encourage believers, and pray for the sick
- ★ Our partners – Multi Ministries and World Hope Prison Ministries who put together our itineraries and got us where we needed to go
- ★ His unending love, care, compassion and provision for the team at Challenge

1. To be lost refers not only to the life or to time, but to the soul and to eternity – look up Mark 8:36.
2. To be lost is to be living apart from Christ – look up Luke 19:10.
3. To be lost is to be perishing – look up John 3:16.
4. To be lost is to be out of the count, out of usefulness and out of fellowship with the Father – look up Luke 15:3-24.
5. To be lost is to be under condemnation – look up John 3:18.
6. To be lost is to be under God's wrath – look up John 3:36.
7. To be lost is to be bound for Hell and a Christ-less eternity – look up Luke 13:27.

PAUL BELIEVED THAT GOOD MEN, AS WELL AS BAD MEN, THAT RELIGIOUS AS WELL AS IRRELIGIOUS PEOPLE, WERE LOST

Paul speaks of his Jewish brethren and of their zeal to make themselves acceptable to God – look up Romans 10:2-3. The Jews were very religious, but in spite of this they were lost. No one is saved by law-keeping, good works or morality; we are not saved by our self-righteousness, for this is unacceptable to God – look up Isaiah 64:6; we are only saved by submitting ourselves to Christ's righteousness – look again at Romans 10:3; and this righteousness is imputed to us when we believe – look at Romans 10:9-10. Thus, the religious, moral Pharisee is lost, while the sinful publican is saved – why? Because the Pharisee trusted in his own righteousness (which could never save him), and the publican trusted in Christ's righteousness – look up Luke 18:9-14, and compare with Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-7.

PAUL HAD A DEEP LONGING FOR PEOPLE TO BE SAVED

He tells us that this was his "heart's desire". He had a passion for souls, like the Lord Jesus – look up Matthew 9:36, and compare Matthew 14:14. Paul's longing was so intense that he could say – Romans 9:1-3. The Amplified Bible renders verse 2: "I have bitter grief and incessant anguish in my heart." How Paul's patriotism

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shines out here! He longed for Jews to be saved because he was a Jew – just as a Chinese Christian will long for Chinese to be saved, a Romanian Christian will long for Romanians to be saved, or a converted drug addict will long for drug addicts to be saved. What a burden Paul had! – read Exodus 32, and particularly notice verses 31 and 32.

PAUL’S DEEP LONGING FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN EXPRESSED ITSELF IN PRAYER

Romans 10:1 tells us this – and such a true burden for souls will always be expressed in prayer. Notice five things about this soul-winner’s prayer:-

1. It was a shared prayer. He begins by calling upon his “brothers” and, as it were, gathering them in as responsible people to share this burden with him. We are all responsible to pray for the salvation of others, and we can all do this, even if we are “house-bound” - look up Acts 28:30-31.
2. It was a heart-felt prayer. This was Paul’s “heart’s desire and prayer”. His heart was in it, for “the heart of prayer is the prayer of the heart”. There were tears in Paul’s prayer – look up Acts 20:31.
3. It was a rightly directed prayer. It was directed “to God”, as all prayers should be. What wonderful things God can do in answer to the prayers of His people when they plead for the salvation of their friends and loved ones! – look up Jeremiah 33:3.
4. It was a definite prayer. It was “for Israel”. He did not pray, “Lord, save people!” He prayed, “Lord, save Israel!” – just as we should pray, “Lord, save John...or James...or Anne!” – look up Acts 12:5.
5. It was a specific prayer. He did not pray for people to be blessed, helped or guided; he prayed that the heart of their need might be met, that they might be “saved” – look up James 5:20.

PRAYER needed for

- ★ The ongoing discipleship of new believers in Australia and overseas
- ★ The prisoners in Malawi who received Christ. A small team visited Malawi after Impact Africa. They visited six prisons
- ★ Ananda and Grace Pula (Malawi) as they follow-up and start discipleship with prisoners
- ★ The health of the Challenge team, especially during the winter months

PAUL’S HEART-FELT PRAYER WAS ALSO ACCOMPANIED BY WORKS

His longing and prayer for men and women to be brought to Christ showed itself in three very practical ways:-

1. By the life he lived. Paul won souls by the life he lived – that is, by the life that Christ lived in him and lived out through him – look up Galatians 2:20 and Colossians 1:29. This was possible because he was available to the Holy Spirit – look up Romans 12:1.
2. By words he spoke. Paul won souls by preaching and by testifying to Jews and Gentiles, to many or to few, in prison or in the palace, in the street or in the synagogue, by day or by night. This was possible because his lips were available to the Holy Spirit – look up Psalm 63:3.
3. By letters he wrote. Thirteen (if not fourteen) are in our New Testament. Do you ever write to your loved ones and friends and testify to them concerning your faith in Christ? Paul’s pen was available to the Holy Spirit – look up Galatians 6:11.

Here, then, is the soul-winner’s prayer for Israel’s salvation, or for anyone’s salvation. Let us make it our prayer!

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