

aired on KALS November 4, 2003

Romans 10:6-10

6. “But the righteousness that is by faith says: ‘Do not say in your heart, “Who will ascend into heaven?”’ (that is, to bring Christ down)
7. ‘or “Who will descend into the deep?”’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
8. But what does it say? ‘The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,’ that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:
9. That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
10. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

A couple of weeks ago we shared the fact that I Peter 3:16 warns that Paul’s letters on the subject of salvation are hard to understand and often distorted.

A case in point would be our Scripture passage today, especially Romans 10, verse 10. Notice that verse 9 is in the future tense and so reads, “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” So the

meaning here is that confession of Jesus as Lord and believing in His resurrection are two pre-requisites to salvation. Notice verse 9 ends with the phrase “you will be saved,” the future tense, which grammatically means salvation takes place some time after the pre-requisites are met.

Now take note of the fact that verse 10 is rendered in the past tense. Romans 10:10 reads, “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” The phrases “are justified” and “are saved” are in the past tense. This sudden change of tense indicates that belief and confession complete the New Testament requirements for salvation. This rendering is commonly taught and widely accepted in Christian circles today.

But logically, the verb tenses in Romans 10:9 and 10 should be the same, or at least logically compatible. Interestingly, the verb tenses for these verses are consistent with one another in the original Greek texts. Alfred Marshall’s interlinear translation, published by Zondervan Press, gives the following word for word translation: “Because if thou confessest with the mouth of thee Lord Jesus, and believest in the heart of thee that God him raised from (the) dead, thou wilt be saved; for with heart (one) believes to righteousness, and with mouth (one) confesses to salvation.” In this text, in verse 10 one confesses with a view to salvation. And this agrees with verse 9’s future tense phrase “will be saved.”

Therefore belief in Jesus' resurrection and confession of Jesus as Lord are pre-requisites to salvation, and do not necessarily complete the salvation requirements of the New Testament.