

**DESIDERATA<sup>1</sup>**  
**WHY SINCERITY CAN'T SAVE**  
**ALDERWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**ROMANS 10:1-13**

**BIG IDEA: SINCERITY CANNOT SUBSTITUTE FOR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR**

I. LET'S GET BEYOND THE THEORETICAL

**Verse 1a**, "*My heart's desire* and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved."

A. How Much Do I Really Care?

"I will open Africa to the Gospel or die trying." – **Rowland Bingham** (the longest surviving of the 3 original founders of Sudan Interior Mission. He died in Africa of a heart attack.)

1. When Billy Graham's wife, Ruth, was the mother of a prodigal, she wrote this little prayer/poem: *If I could stand aside and see him walking through Those Splendor'd Gates thrown wide, instead of me – If I could yield my place to this, my boy, the tears on my upturned face would be of joy!*

2. **Dr. James Kennedy** puts it: *If God would dip all pastors in hell for a fraction for a second and then yank them up by their shirrtails - as they're standing there smoldering and their clothes and skin are full of black soot, and their shoes are half melted off, I think their commitment to the Great Commission would substantially increase.*

B. How Much Do I Pray?

**Verse 1b**, *My prayer* to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

"I used to think that prayer should have the first place and teaching the second. I now feel it would be truer to give prayer the first, second, and third places, and teaching the fourth." – **James O. Fraser** (China)

1. We pray about the things that are really important to us.

- Even atheists pray when something is really important to them. *Newsweek* magazine reported that 13% of Americans are atheists or agnostics. That's not surprising but here's what is: *One in five of them admits to praying daily.* (John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1997, 030302)

2. **Howard Hendricks**, *You may not take prayer seriously, but God does.*

II. LET'S GET OUR THEOLOGY OF SALVATION STRAIGHT

A. Misguided Zealousness Is Actually Disobedience. **Romans 10:2-4**, *For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.*<sup>3</sup> *Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.*<sup>4</sup> **[For] Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.**

1. Examples of misguided zealousness:

- Mormon missionaries
- Filipino men who get crucified
- Jews: **Barrett**: *No nation had given itself to God with such devoted and courageous zeal as Israel.*

2. Christ is the end of the Law; and the fulfillment of the Law. But here He is also the end of the Law, i.e., the end of it as being conceived as a way to attain righteousness.

B. Salvation by "Doing" Is the Great Lie. **Romans 10:5-7**, *Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them."*<sup>6</sup> *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) [as if we had to accomplish Christ's incarnation. God already did it for us!]<sup>7</sup> "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that*

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<sup>1</sup> *Desideratum: Something considered necessary or highly desirable.*

is, to bring Christ up from the dead). [as if we had to accomplish Christ's resurrection. **God already did it for us!**]

1. The broad way that leads to destruction. **Matthew 7:13** *For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.*
  - **Verse 5, [For]** *Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them."* --Quote from **Leviticus 18:5**
    - **Meaning #1:** The Jews didn't take the Law seriously enough or they would have realized that they were sinners and needed a Savior.
    - **Meaning #2:** The Law truly pointed people to Christ.

**NOTE: Best to take both as true here (per Leon Morris)**

2. The narrow way that leads to everlasting life. **Matthew 7:14** *But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*
  - **Verse 6, ad sensum quotation from Deuteronomy 30:11-13,**

C. Salvation's Terms Are Not Obscure. **Romans 10:8-12**

1. The Gospel is as close as your mouth.
  - What could be easier than **saying** you believe in Jesus? *Jesus is Lord.*
    - *This is confession of the deity of Jesus.*
  - Quoting **Deuteronomy 30:14**, *No, the word is **very near you**; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it..*
2. The Gospel is as close as your heart.
  - What could be easier than **believing** in Jesus in your heart?
3. The Gospel has a life-time money-back warranty
  - **Verse 11**, *As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."* Quoting from **Isaiah 28:16** *So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will **never be dismayed.***
4. The Gospel knows no ethnic or national boundaries.
  - **Verse 12**, *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—[for] the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him...*

III. LET'S FACE THE CENTRAL SALVATION FACTS

**Verse 13**, *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Quoting from **Joel 2:32** *And everyone **who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved**; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls.*

- A. God Is the Great Pursuer--**C. S. Lewis**, *I never had the experience of looking for God. It was the other way round; he was the hunter and I was the deer. He stalked me,...took unerring aim, and fired.* (in *Christian Reflections*)
- B. God Is the Great Celebrator--**Matthew 22:2**, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. 4 "Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet." 5 "But they paid no attention and went off-- one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them".*
- C. God Holds Every Person Accountable
  1. This gets us into the sovereignty of God vs. the free will of man.
  2. The Bible says that every human being is held accountable for what he decides about Jesus.
  3. "Send some more messengers, and give the Aucas, instead of fierce hearts, soft hearts. Stick their hearts, Lord, as with a lance. They struck our friends, but You can stick them with Your Word, so that they will listen, and believe." (A **Quichua** Indian's prayer for a neighboring tribe who killed 5 missionaries in 1956)

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