

## SESSION 7

# Committed to His Mission



### QUESTION 1:

*What's your typical response when you lose something?*

## THE POINT

God desires for all people to hear and respond to the gospel.

## THE PASSAGE

Romans 10:9-17

## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Every year, thousands of people get lost or hurt in our national parks. In 2017 alone, 4,194 search-and-rescue incidents were reported.<sup>1</sup> The National Park Service has trained personnel to lead these searches, but friends and loved ones naturally want to help. The reason is obvious: someone they care for is lost.

Families will spend whatever it takes to get their loved ones back safely. Well over three million dollars are spent each year funding these searches, but it is money well spent.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise lives would be lost.

As much as we would desire to help rescue a loved one who was *physically* lost, God has a greater desire for those who are *spiritually* lost. It is estimated that over two-thirds of the world's population are without Christ and in need of a "spiritual search-and-rescue."<sup>3</sup> One way we reflect our commitment to Christ is by sharing His commitment and desire to reach those who do not yet have a relationship with Him. Being committed to the mission of God means that each of us looks at this monumental task as our own personal responsibility and calling.

## Romans 10:9-10

**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.**

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

### DIGGING DEEPER

#### TO CONFESS: A WORD STUDY

Paul used the Greek *homologeō* twice, highlighting public allegiance to Jesus. In Romans 10:9-10, Paul set forth three pairs of related truths in describing how an individual receives salvation.

First, Paul linked confessing with the mouth to believing with the heart. Faith and confession involve doctrinal content; namely, the lordship of Christ. An avowal of the lordship of Christ affirms His deity. The public confession “Jesus is Lord” flows out of an inward heart attitude of trust. Faith inevitably flows outward in a public pledge of allegiance to the person of Christ.

Second, Paul linked righteousness with salvation that originates with a person’s believing with his or her heart. Salvation means that God provides humans with righteousness as a gift through Christ.

Third, Paul linked believing Jesus is Lord with His being raised from the dead. As it was with the women who finally recognized the resurrected Christ at the empty tomb, and Jesus’ post-resurrection encounter with Thomas and his subsequent confession of faith, so it has been for followers of Jesus through the centuries: Christ’s death and subsequent resurrection confirm His lordship.

Confession is an important part of a Christian’s experience. The act of confessing “Jesus is Lord” serves as a public oath of allegiance to the Person of Christ as full Deity. Many Christians correlate confession with the beginning of the Christian life. The acknowledgment of our status as sinners and our profession of allegiance to Jesus express integral aspects of Christian conversion.

Mark A Rathel, “To Confess: A Word Study,” *Biblical Illustrator*, Fall 2008, 56-58.

Romans 10:9-10 provides a powerfully concise explanation of the gospel message—and it's not the route to a relationship with God promoted in other religions and worldviews. Our human tendency is to think we must *do* certain things to deserve salvation, and certainly God could've called for that. He could have designed things so that we would have to follow a list of dos and don'ts to have a relationship with Him. But God did not do that for a very simple reason. He knew we could not do it. God knew we could never be perfectly obedient and follow all the rules, so He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus came to this planet and did what we could never do. He lived the perfect life of obedience to God we could not. His obedience was so complete that He even gave His life as a perfect sacrifice to pay the price for our disobedience.

This passage boils the Christian life down to one thing: belief. Paul used two verbs in writing about this, but these two things are “two sides of the same coin.”

- ▶ **Confess.** “Jesus is Lord” is the earliest Christian confession, and these three words pack a lot of meaning. *Lord* is the same Greek word the Jews would've used to refer to God Himself. This statement is an acknowledgment that Jesus of Nazareth is fully God.

How can we know that Jesus is God? We look at His life. He taught like no other, and the miracles He performed gave credence and authority to what He said. Jesus said, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6) and also, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). And then there's the resurrection. Christianity is centered on this key event, the moment God raised Jesus from the dead. By this singular event, God the Father authenticated Jesus as the Son of God.

- ▶ **Believe.** Our confession is an outward expression of our belief in who Jesus is: the resurrected Savior and Lord, the Son of God.

Confessing and believing are not steps one and two for salvation. In fact, the order of these two things in verse 9 is reversed in

verse 10. They go hand-in-hand. What we believe in our heart we will openly confess. Our “role” in salvation is as simple as that.

That’s why this message is called the gospel—the good news—of Jesus Christ. We have no greater news than the truth that Jesus Christ made our salvation possible when we were hopeless in our sin. All that remains is for us to acknowledge that truth and put our faith in Him. “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

**QUESTION 2:**

***What did believing in your heart and confessing Jesus with your mouth look like for you?***

---

**Romans 10:11-13**

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

**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.**

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

Critics of Christianity have ridiculed it because of its exclusiveness: Jesus is the only way to God. We embrace that truth about Jesus, but let’s also embrace another truth: the *inclusiveness* of the gospel. A relationship with God is available only to those who trust in Christ, but such a relationship is open to any and all who trust.

Earlier in this letter, Paul gave us the somber truth: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). Sinners need God’s salvation, and since all have sinned, it follows that God’s salvation is available for all who repent and believe. By

quoting Joel 2:32, Paul could not make it any clearer: “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

When Joel first gave this prophecy in the ninth century BC, he was referring to the Jews living in Jerusalem, but the promise can be readily expanded to include the Gentiles. As God’s chosen people, God called the Jews to be “a light of the Gentiles” (Isa. 42:6). From the beginning of God’s covenant relationship with Abram, He promised, “in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). That blessing ultimately came through Jesus Christ, who brought salvation to all peoples.

The kingdom of God is the polar opposite of a country club or a fraternity. In those organizations, the people who are already members decide together which outsiders are worthy to be admitted. Thankfully, that’s not how God designed His plan of salvation. God doesn’t have one plan of salvation for one group and a different plan for another group. Instead, any and all who look to Christ and call on Him receive eternal life.

- ▶ The gospel is for people we like and people we don’t like.
- ▶ The gospel is for our friends and our enemies.
- ▶ The gospel is for people we would love to see become believers and also for people we think deep down don’t *deserve* to be saved.

*The good news of Christ really is for everyone!* Therefore, we should pray as fervently for the boss who treats us poorly as we do for a close friend. We should desire the salvation of the person of another belief system as we do for a family member. We can only be committed to the mission of God when we have the same heart for people that God has. After all, God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4).

### **QUESTION 3:**

***How do these verses both encourage and challenge you?***

---

## Romans 10:14-17

**14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

**15** And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

**16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

**17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We have focused on the opportunity before all to trust the good news of Christ, but let's focus now on our responsibility in this.

Being committed to the mission of God means we also have to be committed to share the mission of God. A popular phrase says, "Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." Of course we should live our lives in such a way that the gospel is evident through the way that we live. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). But this clever saying misses one key truth: Speaking the gospel is not optional. It is necessary to use words.

Paul made a direct connection between people calling on the name of the Lord for salvation and the necessity of their *hearing* the gospel. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" And to clarify his point, Paul asked, "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Trusting in Christ does not happen in a vacuum. It calls for someone to preach the gospel.

Preaching is a noble task we identify with those who publicly proclaim the Word of God to a group. That idea certainly applies in this passage, but the privilege of proclaiming the gospel is



not limited in those who stand on a platform or behind a pulpit. We are all called to proclaim the gospel to those we engage in conversation.

**QUESTION 4:**

***What obstacles might keep you from sharing the gospel?***

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” Lest we think we haven’t been sent anywhere yet, remember the commission Jesus gave us at the end of His ministry: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matt 28:19). We’ve already received the charge to go. Jesus Himself sent us; therefore, we are to proclaim the gospel of Christ to those we encounter as we go.

For many, being sent means packing up and moving to another country to share the gospel. For others, being sent means talking to the person sitting right next to them. Both ways call for intentionality. We go with a desire to share the gospel. We have to go to the people who need to hear the message—and we need to give them the message.

We are not responsible for how others react or respond to the gospel; we need only to be faithful to the call to go and speak. But if we don’t step out and go with intentionality, they will never have an opportunity to respond to the gospel. People are all around you who might call on the name of the Lord and become your brothers and sisters in Christ. They are in your neighborhood and your coffee shops. They are in your school and workplace. They are in your circle of friends and even in your family.

In light of all we have learned about God’s heart for those who never have heard the gospel and His desire for them to come to the knowledge of the truth, how can we not change the way we live? Each of us has a short amount of time to make an impact for the kingdom of God. Let’s seize the opportunity before us to join in the fight for our future brothers and sisters with whom we will one day stand before the throne of God.



**QUESTION 5:**

*What practical steps can our group take to see the gospel spread to all people?*

**ENGAGE**

*Look at the list of people groups. Circle the ones you've heard of. Then place a star by the ones for which God has given you a burden to pray, give, or go. Then answer the questions.*

|             |             |               |              |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Han Chinese | Welsh       | Kenyans       | Samoans      |
| Peruvians   | Guatemalans | Nova Scotians | Bangladeshis |
| Uighurs     | Albanians   | Libyans       | Nevadans     |

What are some ways you can pray for the people groups you've starred?

What are some ways you can give for the people groups you've starred?

What are some ways you can go to the people groups you've starred?

## LIVE IT OUT

What will you do to give people the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel?

- ▶ **Write.** Take time this week to write out your testimony. Being committed to the mission of God to take the message of the gospel to those who haven't heard it must begin with a clear understanding of your own story and journey to Christ. Write it down so that when you're given the opportunity you can share it with clarity.
- ▶ **Share.** This week share the gospel with someone. Pray that the Holy Spirit would give you an opportunity and then look for that door to open. When it presents itself, simply share your story of how Jesus changed your life. Invite them to call on the name of the Lord and be saved.
- ▶ **Go.** Pray about being part of God's mission around the world. For some of you that might mean giving financially to missions. For others that might mean actively supporting a missionary with your time, prayers, and support. Still others might sense the call to go yourselves. Pray that God will use you, and that you will have the courage to answer His call.



### END NOTES

1. 2017 Annual SAR Dashboard, *National Park Search and Rescue Service*, <https://nps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/b526c87ae21f4a669eb6c9238c2c4bcf>.
2. Ibid.
3. "Christians remain world's largest religious group, but they are declining in Europe," *Pew Research Center*, April 5, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/05/christians-remain-worlds-largest-religious-group-but-they-are-declining-in-europe/>

# COMING NEXT QUARTER

---

## WHEN EMOTIONS RISE

- Session 1 **Walking in Grief** (Psalm 116:1-9,15-17)
- Session 2 **Shaking Off Fear** (Psalm 91:1-6,9-16)
- Session 3 **Embracing Joy** (Psalm 95:1-3; Luke 2:4-14)
- Session 4 **Redirecting Anger** (Psalm 35:1-3,13-18)
- Session 5 **Overcoming Worry** (Psalm 23:1-6)
- Session 6 **Weathering the Blues** (Psalm 31:1-8)

## SPECIAL FOCUS

**Created for a Purpose** (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

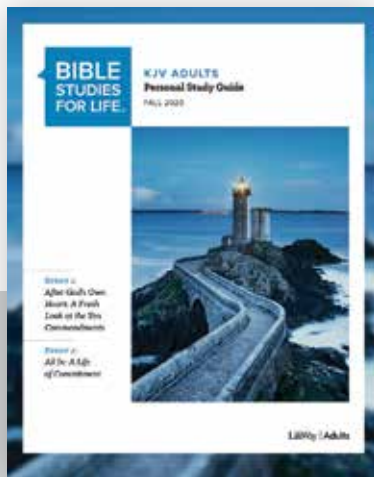
## SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES: BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS

- Session 1 **The Benefit of Spiritual Disciplines** (1 Timothy 4:1-10)
- Session 2 **Knowing God** (Psalm 119:17-24)
- Session 3 **Intimacy with God** (John 17:1-5,21-26)
- Session 4 **Maintaining Focus on God** (Daniel 9:1-7,17-19)
- Session 5 **Connecting to Christ's Body** (1 Corinthians 12:12-24)
- Session 6 **Joining God's Work** (John 15:1-8)

BIBLE  
STUDIES  
FOR LIFE.

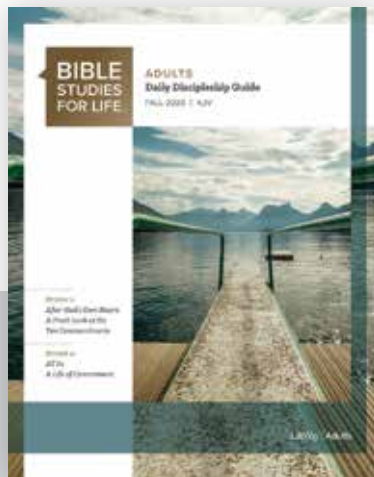
# FROM SUNDAY TO EVERYDAY

WITH THREE DIFFERENT KJV OPTIONS



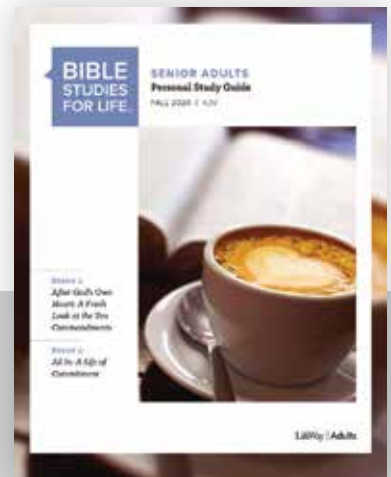
## KJV ADULTS

This is an excellent option for groups that have a broad age range. Participants are encouraged to study prior to attending the group time. Both a *Personal Study Guide* and *Leader Guide* are available.



## DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE (KJV)

This new resource is an alternative approach to the traditional *Personal Study Guide* and *Leader Guide*. It includes five daily devotions to read after the group meeting to reinforce the learning all week. No pre-meeting study is required. This resource includes a *Leader Guide* and is a great option for Young Adult and Adult groups.



## SENIOR ADULTS (KJV)

Now senior adults are able to enjoy the *Personal Study Guide* and *Leader Guide* in the KJV translation. Content is geared specifically to senior adults and is in large print.

[biblestudiesforlife.com/kjv](http://biblestudiesforlife.com/kjv)

LifeWay

---

## AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART: A FRESH LOOK AT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

People want to live life on their own terms, but God has given us a succinct and clear path to follow through the Ten Commandments. Obedience to these Commandments leads to a rich and full life. King David knew this. Through David's life and psalms, he gave us good examples of what happens when we follow the Ten Commandments and bad examples of what happens when we don't.

**Tony Evans** is senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship and president of The Urban Alternative.

---

## ALL IN: A LIFE OF COMMITMENT

Commitment is a rather loose word in our culture, but we have no greater idea of what commitment means than when we look at the commitment Christ made for us. Our response to Christ calls for nothing less than a full, all-in commitment to Him. In this study, we will dig into what that commitment entails, and in the process, we will discover there is no greater place to be than "all in" for Christ.

**Matt Carter** is the Pastor of Preaching and Vision at The Austin Stone Community Church in Austin, Texas.

