The Sinner Who Believes Is Saved

Sadly, God's plan for man to be saved is often misunderstood because one or two verses of Scripture are taken out of their context and used independently of the rest of God's Word to say something they were never intended to say. Romans 10:9-13 is such an example of a passage. When used by itself out of its context, it can be easily misunderstood and misinterpreted to mean that man must do more than believe on Christ to be saved. When Romans 10:9-13 is used to say, "believe, confess, and call on the Lord to be saved," the confusion is obvious in that this comment seems to communicate that there are three things that man must do in order to be saved. The New Testament has over 150 passages which very clearly communicate that salvation is received by faith in the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures everywhere harmonize with this overwhelming body of truth. The fruitful walk in Christ of obedience to God, which includes confessing, water baptism, etc., follows believing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Believing is the opposite of doing anything. It is trusting in another to do what we cannot do. Therefore, God's message of grace is confused when salvation is made to depend on anything other than "believing."

In chapters 1-5 of Romans, Paul in detail explains that God's righteousness is given freely to everyone who places their faith in Christ. In Chapter 10 of Romans he then explains that the Jews did not have the righteousness of God, their salvation, because they simply did not believe on Christ (10:1-5, 16-21). In verses 1-5 of chapter 10, although Paul greatly desired his fellow Jews to be saved, he makes it clear that their zeal will not save them and that their attempt to make their own righteousness by keeping the Law will not save them either. Only Christ could supply them and now supply us with the righteousness of God. In fact, the purpose of the Law is simply to point a person to Christ, our true righteousness, not to make a man righteous - Romans 3:20, Galatians 3:24, 1 Corinthians 1:30. Once a person believes on Christ, His righteousness is put to the believer's account, giving him a right standing before God - Genesis 15:6, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:1. Therefore, the Law's usefulness has come to its end or goal for the one who believes on Christ - Romans 7:1-4; Romans 10:4. Since it is Christ's righteousness which makes us acceptable to God, there is no requirement or need to do anything else after believing on Christ in order to be saved. When you believe, you are saved - Ephesians 1:6, Titus 2:13-14; 3:4-7. This good news actually begins in Genesis and continues clear through the New Testament. See Genesis 15:6. The following is a sample of the at least 150 New Testament passages which proclaim this good news of salvation by believing in Christ alone. John 3:14-18, 36; 6:28-29, 40, 47; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 1:16; 5:1; 1 Corinthians 1:18 with Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 2:8-9. At least 115 of the 150 passages declare salvation depends on believing, while in the other 35 passages it is declared to depend on faith. So that there is no confusion between...
Therefore, in Romans 10:9-13, “confessing” and “calling” are results of salvation, not parts of a three-part formula to obtain it. Verse 14 as well as Scripture as a whole makes this clear.

The sinner who believes is free and can confess, “Jesus, my Savior, died for me!” Hallelujah! That’s good news to tell others about! Romans 10:15, 17.

Of course, this would be impossible for us since our works are valueless. Our works are the very thing that condemns us, for they are tainted with sin and the product of a nature that is at enmity with God - Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Ephesians 2:3. Thankfully, the weakest faith in Christ alone saves. He has done it!

In verses 6-8 of Romans 10 Paul further explains Israel’s unbelief. They, as well as us, have no excuse for unbelief because the gospel is not far away in Heaven or Hades. It is so close and accessible that it was actually “in their heart and mouth” Paul would go into the synagogue and proclaim the gospel when he visited a city - Acts 17:1-3. Romans 10:9 tells us that Paul preached the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Sadly though, although the Jews “tasted the good work of God” - Hebrews 6:5, they did not believe, causing Paul to echo the words of the prophet Isaiah in Romans 10:16: See Isaiah 53:1. God looks at the heart for belief or unbelief, not the mouth or the outward appearance - 1 Samuel 16:7; Luke 16:15. Yet, it is out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. If our heart has believed on Christ and is now occupied with or filled up with Christ, it is Him who will be confessed by our life and lips - Matthew 12:34; 5:16; Romans 10:14; 1 Corinthians 12:3; John 4:13-15; 1 John 4:16; Romans 8:16. So, Scripture is also crystal clear that confessing Christ with our life and lips follows salvation. Therefore, “confess” and “call” in verses 9, 10, and 13 of Romans 10 are results of salvation, not two parts of a three-part formula to obtain it. If we are to communicate to others the relationship between believing, salvation, and confessing Christ, we should be extremely clear, as clear as Scripture as a whole is, that man is saved by believing on Christ alone. Confessing Him with our life and lips follows or results from our salvation. If we are trying to communicate how one is to be saved, there are many verses in this paper which are much clearer and plainer than Romans 10:9-13 is by itself. If Romans 10:9-13 is used, verse 14 should always be included to make it evident that confessing does not precede salvation but rather follows it.

Here is a great comment in closing regarding the relationship between believing, salvation, and confessing. “The sinner who believes is free and can now confess, Jesus, my Savior, died for me!” Hallelujah! That’s good news to tell others about so that they too can be Set Free! Romans 10:15, 17.

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