

Romans The Marks and Benefits of True Faith Romans 10:5-13

Listen to God's Word as I read to you from Romans 10:5-13. We will go through it verse by verse, as we often do. Listen to God's Word.

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. ⁶ But the righteousness based on 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 abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Lord, give us ears to hear what you're saying to us. Even now we pray in your name. Amen.

My wife and I were hiking in Oak Mountain yesterday. Had a great time. Beautiful trails. We're thankful for the topography here. And some years ago my wife and I were on another hike a little bit higher in another state, and we were intending to go to a mountain lake. And to get there you had to cross a stream a number of times. The stream was the heaviest at the bottom. We'd crossed the stream any number of times, and we knew it would be a little bit tougher this time because it rained a lot. We were early in the season. The snowmelt was still coming off. The water is going to be cold and high, but we were disappointed when we arrived and found that not only was the water high, it was very high. There was a little plank that people had put from Boulder, the boulder that allowed us to cross the stream. That plank was usually about two feet above the water. Today it was about a foot below the water, so we weren't going to cross there. We looked around. There was a Ford that some people had arranged with some well placed rocks. If you forded it most years it was about up to here, but this year it was about up to here and going fast and very cold and at the time we had three daughters and only one son in law. And, and so my son in law and I crossed together, hooped at the cold and then, you know, ran back and walked across safely and just had a safe for everybody. My daughter's crossed and my wife is a little bit less adventurous. was hesitating now we understand that because the water was very cold, she heard us howling at the cold. That was part of it. and the water was running fast. And so I offered her a solution to the problem. I said you could climb on my back and I could carry you across. And she looked at me and look, said theoretically, maybe, but not necessarily in

real life. Now, she knew that about 12 years earlier I had carried someone about four miles off one of the big peaks. She knew that. But I did it when I was 45, and this is now the 55 year old version of her husband. And she wasn't so sure.

On the other hand, if we were to get to the lake and have the hike, this is the bottom of the hike for to get there. We've she's got to get across somehow she had to decide, if not in theory, but in fact, I was strong enough to carry her over the lake, to cross over. Now you may realize I'm referring or alluding to something Jesus said through Jesus.

John chapter five we cross over from death to life. That's one way in which salvation is described in the Bible. It's a crossing over a bridge or stream, a chasm from death to life. Now you have to believe that Jesus can save. But yes, you have to also trust him. If you would climb on his back and let you actually rest on him, be cared for by him, and in that way receive his salvation. That's described in this passage. Now Romans 10 has one more visit to the question of the law of God and what the law can and cannot do. And the passage begins in verse five by telling us that it's at least theoretically possible for us to be right with God by the law. Look at what verse five says.

It says Moses writes about the righteousness that's based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. If anyone could perfectly keep God's law, they would be saved by that. The problem is that no one is strong enough. To put it differently, we're all as weak or weaker than or much weaker than my wife, who did not have the ability.

So she thought that day to cross that stream. We cannot cross the stream now, when we hear about a righteousness that's based on living by commandments, we have to recognize that Paul is labeling something that was in people's minds at that time. In fact, throughout the ages, there are three approaches to the law of God or the law in general, or the law of the gods and all the religions of the world.

There are religions that are essentially ethical systems. Stoicism in Jesus day, Buddhism today, ethical societies, ultra liberal churches that just say, look, there's a way to live, live that way, life will be good. That's one approach. A second approach is all the other serious religions of the world, including Islam, and some versions of Judaism which say God gives laws and if you obey them, more, maybe five times more than you disobey, you'll be within the favor of the gods. And then there's Christianity that says, God gives a law. You can't keep it. Your only hope is in Christ and God's salvation through him. You will never be good enough to keep the law. You will never be good enough to cross over from death to life on your own. Now it's still true that Paul says, Moses says there is a value in the commands.

If you can keep them, you would live by them. Now when he says this is actually quoting Deuteronomy chapter 13, if you're the kind of person that likes to look it up, you might want to do that later on Deuteronomy chapter 30 says, the word is near you. This commandment I am giving you is not too hard for you.

The word is in your mouth and in your heart, so you may obey it and live by it. So it seems in Deuteronomy 30, as if, as if God through Moses is saying, look, you can do this. It's it's possible. But in fact, what he actually says is, this is the word that's near you. The word is this I set before you the way of life and prosperity, or the way of death and destruction.

For I command you today to love the Lord your God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments. That is to say, when Moses declares the law of God, truly he says, the first statement in the law of God is Love God. The first commandment is love the Lord your God with the heart, soul, mind, and strength.

In other words, the first commandment is to believe in God and to trust God to climb on his back. In the previous verse, verse four, Paul says that Christ is the end of the law. Now an end can mean a couple of different things. And then in English and as it turns out, in Greek and some other languages, can mean the goal or can mean the terminus.

So at a worship service like today or any day, the end is to glorify God. The goal is to hear from God and glorify him, and to believe in them more than ever. Right? But it's also true that we could talk about the end of the service, which occurs when we have the benediction and everybody leaves. Now we can talk about the end of a hike.

The end of a hike is to go see the beautiful lake at the top, and maybe we'll see mountain goats and streams and the waterfalls up there and so forth. That's the end. That's the goal, to enjoy beauty. But it's also true that when you reach the lake, you have stopped hiking. It's the end of your hiking. You get it to ideas.

And so in the Bible, we have to understand is that Jesus is the end of the law in both ways. The law points us to Christ by saying, look, you need to first commandment is to believe in God. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. As this passage says, the end of the law is to love and trust in Christ and the end of legal striving comes the end of efforts to be good enough, for God comes when you see that Christ is the one who's good enough, and you rest in him.

So Christ is the end of the law. And the law above all always points us to the Lord himself. And that is why we can read in verse six that God's Word, God's will, God's commandments, God's ways are accessible. You don't say to yourself, verse six, I'm going to climb into heaven. I'm going to do glorious things in order to earn God's favor.

No, I'm going to descend into caves in the depths of the earth and dig Christ up from the dead. Don't say to yourself, don't say to yourself, I'm going to send to the heights, and I need to ascend to the heights. Don't say to yourself, I have to dig into the earth, to mines or deep oceans. There's nothing you have to do with laborious effort.

It's near you. It's close at hand. All you need to do is believe in your heart. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and you'll be saved. Now, this is a serious Bible studying, Bible teaching church for many years. So I want to just add a little bit of something. If

you look at the law of God in the Old Testament, and I know some of you are reading through the Bible this year, so you might soon be getting to the book of Leviticus.

You may say, what is the law of God have to say? How is it described in Leviticus? And the answer is that all the law of God always points us to God's grace. The law of God also points us to God's glory, to his majesty, to his supreme authority. In other words, when you read the book of Leviticus, if you do this year, you will find that dozens of times God gives a command and then says, I am the Lord.

I have the right to command you to do whatever I command you to do. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. I'm quoting I am the Lord. Respect sojourners. Treat them well. I am the Lord. Don't worship idols. I am the Lord. Don't defraud people with unjust weights and measures. I am the Lord 40 times God says that.

But it's also true that about 90 times altogether. In the book of Deuteronomy, God says, I brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall have no other gods before me. That is to say, I have acted for you first. I'm the Lord. Leviticus says I'm the Savior. Paul, of course, brings them together. Confess that Jesus is Savior and Lord, I am the Lord is Leviticus. I am the Savior is Deuteronomy. And about 60 times the Lord says, I have made a covenant with you. That's why you listen to my law and follow my ways. I was talking to somebody just this week, and I was reminded of an illustration that I hope works for you. And it goes like this. There was a man on to hire somebody for his a Christian ministry, and it was very difficult to hire the right person, but he had to hire somebody.

There were jobs that had to be done. They needed help, and they could not find anyone who had the necessary skills, but they had to hire somebody. And so the man hired a young woman, and he said to her, look, you do not have the skills we need. We're going to try to inculcate those skills in you, but you will fail. But we are hiring you because we know that you believe in what we're doing. We know that you're intelligent. We know that you're hardworking. We know that you're willing to learn. Therefore, when you fail, don't feel bad. We knew you would fail. We're bringing you into our team anyway. Now this, to some of us, sounds like an analogy of what God does with us. God, of course, doesn't harass, but he brings us onto his team, the family of God. And he does not say to us, look, I know you'll be perfect. He says, look, I know you will fail. You will fail. But if you believe in the cause, the cause of the kingdom, and you're with us in the doctrine, and you're willing to learn good enough. You're accepted.

Let me say the same thing a different way. The law of God does not come to us and instruct us. That's what Paul saying does not come to us, to instruct us so that we may gain God's favor. It instruct us because we have his favor through Christ. By way of analogy, I don't hug my children or my grandchildren, hoping that by hugging them, they will start to love me. I hug them because they love me, because I love them. There's all the difference in the world between giving a hug or giving you half because your loved and trying to earn it. We don't try to earn God's favor. We have his favor through the

gospel and then the law becomes our friend. If we try to earn our way to salvation, it's our terrible enemy. If we have life in the covenant and trust in God, then it is our friend, he said. It's like the different way if you have a coach in your life, it could be a music coach or teacher of music. It could be a sports coach, it could be a business coach. You might be learning some skill set. If you have a coach that you trust, you believe they know what they're doing and they give you counsel.

They say, do this. You're not doing this again to earn their favor. You're doing this because you have a trust relationship and they're saying, this is the way life works. This is this is the way of blessedness. That's what the Word of God says. That's how the law is a blessing to us. That's how it proceeds. Obedience proceeds from faith.

Now our passage, verses nine and ten are crucial to it. Our passage says that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved. Well, starts with confession, but I want to focus first on believing in our culture. When we say believe or I believe something, we're often using the word in a way that isn't all that close to the way the Bible speaks.

When we say, I believe, we often mean, I don't know. I believe he's from Dallas, I believe she's from Philadelphia, but I don't really know its way of confessing her ignorance. That's the way we talk. Mark Twain kind of, punched it up a little bit and said, Faith is believing. What you know, ain't so. That is to say, faith is the opposite of believing.

So we might say, I have faith that my team is going to beat your team when the other team when your team has 38 point underdogs. And then somebody might say, well, he has a lot of faith, meaning he's a fool. That's the way we talk sometimes. You also have another way of talking about faith or believing in someone that goes like this.

I believe in John or Jennifer or Mary or Blair. That's a lot closer when you say, I believe the biblical way of speaking. When I say I believe in a person, you mean I trust them? They're doing something a little strange, but I'm going to give them the benefit of the doubt because I believe in them. That's closer to the biblical definition.

Now, theologians over the years have said faith has three parts. Bible's not got one verse. It says this, but it's a summary of what the Bible says. The three parts are knowledge. If to know what the Bible says, what God says in His Word, knowledge, assent spelled with two s is not AC and going up, but assent, meaning agreement and trust. Those three know it's true and you put your trust in it.

So back to Debbie climbing on my back. She knew that I could put my leg strength was sufficient to carry her across, and she assented to it. Do you think Dan is strong enough? I do, the question was, did she trust me? Right. So here's a chair over here.

And I know there's an illustration that is familiar to many of you about chairs and faith and so forth. This is a little bit different illustration. How many of you would agree that this is a chair? Everybody, you know enough about chairs to know this is a chair for leg

seat, etc., who thinks that this chair would actually support my weight? I mean, have you seen chairs collapsed under the weight of people? Yes. Do you think it's going to happen this time? Does it look like that kind of a chair? Do I look like the person that's heavy enough to crush a metal chair? No, but. But I have to actually get in the chair for it to support me. If I'm tired, I have to actually get in the chair right? There's no good in saying I think it's a chair. I think it could hold me up if I'm tired. I got to sit in it. Now, I say this because it is possible to go to church. You know, all the doctors who read the Bible know all the doctrines.

My dissertation advisor, I hate to say this, probably new. The Christian faith better than 9,598% of all Christians. But he didn't believe it. He knew it as a piece of intellectual property. This is what Christians say. He knew the content of the faith, but he didn't say yes to it. And then there are other people who say, I know the content and they say yes to it, but they don't actually trust in Christ.

Now, when we trust in Christ, we know the doctor. We know what God says. There's a belief that and there's a belief in to say the same thing differently. The belief that God sent his son, he died and he rose. God raised him, I believe that, but I also have to believe in God. I have to believe in Christ.

And if you're a true Christian, you are willing to confess that with your mouth you have to say, I know it, and I believe it intellectually, and I trust it. Now I'm going to tell you that when I first confessed my faith, I was eight years old. I was not a Christian. I was in third grade. I was eight and a half. And for some reason, I don't remember why all the boys in my third grade class were going to join the church by professing faith and the peer pressure. I still remember sitting on the grass. It was very green grass near a sidewalk about ten yards from the church building. The west wall. I remember sitting there thinking, I've gone to Sunday School enough. I know what, I know what it's all about. My friends believe it and I don't. Will I have the courage to stand up and say, I'm not joining the church with you? I did not have the courage and it was bad for me. It's bad for a person to confess faith falsely because all you have is doctrinal knowledge and maybe some kind of intellectual assent.

You have to actually trust in Christ, which praise God, happened ten years later when I was a college freshman. We have to believe in Jesus Christ. Believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He's the Savior. He's the Lord. When we say we confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior, the word Lord is loaded. The word Lord is the main name of God in the Old Testament, the Preexistent one, the creator, the sustainer of the universe, Almighty God, when we say Jesus is Lord, we're saying Jesus is creator, he sustainer, he always existed.

We're saying that he is omnipotent. the present all powerful. We're saying he's good and kind and merciful, every bit as much as God the Father. That's a loaded statement. We believe that Jesus is Lord, but we don't just believe he's Lord, we believe he's also Savior. You believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead.

You will be saved. That's what the Christian faith is.

You have to desire to please this God whom you trust. That's what Hebrews says. Without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. I to actually believe it, not just know the words. That's what the faith is. Believe it with your heart or passage says believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead and then you'll be justified.

What's the heart? Well, in our culture today, we mostly say it's our emotions. Certainly faith is emotional. There is an emotional component. We should love God and find peace and rest in him. But the heart is not just the emotional side of a person in the Bible. The heart is the core of your being, your deepest convictions that drive all that you do.

The Bible says, above all, guard your heart, because from it come the wellsprings of life. All of life, every word, every deed springs from your core convictions. So you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. That's what it means to believe in the Lord. But you also have to confess it. Now, I told you that I confessed falsely when I was eight, but I'm going to tell you a story about a man who confessed Christ truly.

If I got it right, maybe 1006, I think it's 1675 years ago. Anyway, it was a long time ago. His name was Victorinus. His heyday was 350 A.D.. Augustine and his great book, *The Confessions* describes Victorinus. He was the greatest philosopher and teacher of his day. He was so good that in his 50s they took a statue of him and put it in the Roman Forum, not after he died way beforehand, because people wanted to honor the man, that everyone who was noble and prominent wanted to have as the tutor of their children. He was an idolater. He defended with a voice that terrified his opponents. Augustine says. Polytheism, worship of Jupiter and Hermes, and all the rest. Mercury. Because he was a good philosopher, he studied his sources to refute Christianity, which is growing. In that day he had to read about Christianity. To do that, he had to read the Bible, and he did read the Bible. As you read the Bible investigated more and more, he slowly became convinced that Christianity was true. He had a friend named Simplicity on its implications, was also a prominent person. And in one day Victor split up to Simplicity, honest and said, did you know that I'm already a Christian? And the honor said, I shall not believe that or count you as a Christian unless I see you in the church of Christ now.

Simple. You honest. A good Christian, did not think that going to church makes you a Christian. What he meant was you've got to side with God's people in public because you've opposed God's people in public. And Victorinus just laughed and said, do walls then make a Christian? But the truth is, a Victorinus on us was afraid. He was afraid that his fame, that statue had just been put up one year earlier, that fame would lead people to turn on him, to hate him. And so he was reticent to confess his faith. But he kept reading the Bible, and he found the words of Jesus who says, whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my father in heaven, whoever denies me

before men, I will deny before my father. And slowly he drank in courage and walked up just simply on us and said, let us go to church. I wish to become a Christian now, he explained himself. He said I publicly defended idolatry. How can I remain silent in public about my faith in Christ? And so he went to church to become a Christian. This would verify and seal his faith. And he did what Christians did in those days. And what we do this day. He went to a class. He went to a catechism class. He memorized the words of the confession, which was a custom in those days. We read questions to people and they say, yes. And those days you had to memorize all the words and victory. You remembered all the words. And before the day when he and others were to confess their faith publicly, some Christians came up to and said, you know, this could be dangerous.

I mean, your life could be forfeit because of this. You can confess your faith privately to us. He said again, no, publicly, I denied Christ publicly attacked Christ. Therefore publicly I must confess Christ. And then the day came for the people to mount the steps in a large church building, and people recognize them. This is what Augustine says. Augustine's exact words. When Victor Rinus mounted the steps to affirm the confession of faith, there was a murmur of delighted talk as all the people who knew him spoke his name, and who there did not know him. A suppressed sound came from the lips of all its Victor Rinus. He proclaimed his faith with ringing assurance, and all of them wanted to clasp him to their hearts, and they embraced him in their love and their joy.

Now to proclaim your faith, to confess your faith that Jesus is Lord is a galvanizing event. It takes courage. But friends, it also builds courage. When you confess Christ, it takes courage. But every time you do, your courage grows. The how do we confess Christ today? Of course, there are times we confess our faith is beginning of a worship service.

But I tell you that every time you come to church, even coming in, even though you know what? Even if you arrive at 1107 and you missed the confession, coming to church. Coming to church is a confession of faith and the mere act of reading the Bible with me and listening and paying attention to me or any other preacher, past or in the future, is an act of faith.

We had someone present their child for baptism this morning, as you heard from Stephen, to present your child for baptism, to take the sacraments is to profess your faith. To read Christian literature. This week I'm reading and Debbie's reading a little bit to a book by a man I know named Dan Hollander. Wonderful writer. The book is called The Deep Rooted Marriage.

To read Christian books instead of secular books all the time is to confess your faith, to go to work, and to seek to be kind and just and merciful, just to confess your faith, to make a promise. And realize it's going to hurt you greatly. To keep that promise and keep the promise anyway, is to confess your faith, to pray alone is to confess your faith,

to pray in public is to confess your faith in the hour of death, to keep calling on Jesus, to enter the last moments of your life fearlessly and with hope, is to confess your faith.

There are many ways we confess our faith. Our culture does not encourage this. Businessman said this very recently. He said, you know, in our society, we're always looking for an angle, trying to grow, trying to grow our business, our business is the best. I'm the person you should hire as your consultant. We end up constantly confessing ourselves. Isn't that true?

Promote your cause. You promote your people. You need to confess Christ. That's a blessed thing to do. Now, Paul says, if we believe in Christ, you will be justified with the heart. One believes and is justified. We've talked about justification before, but it's good to say it one more time. To be justified is to stand before God as judge, and to have your life appraised.

For God to look at your life and declare you to be innocent, cleared of all charges despite the things that you've done. Westminster says. Justification. Our confession of faith says justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he pardons all of our sins and it counts as righteousness for the sake of Christ. Because what of what Christ has done? Because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone?

Now, let me use simple illustration. A couple of years ago in Saint Louis, there were a couple bank robbers, real bank robbers, and they went into a bank with guns and shot the place up. And then they got in a car, begin to drive off as fast as they could, and while shooting the place up and then shooting it, the police had been alerted were pursuing them. They actually hit a couple policemen. Not seriously. No one was no one was, you know, killed. No one's life wasn't in danger. But they hit a couple policeman bullets and the policemen fired back and killed one of the robbers. And of course, there's an inquiry because this is the real world, and not one of those shows in which 48 people are killed in five minutes. Real inquiry. And they said these policemen were justified in using deadly force, that is to say, an act which looks bad. Killing someone is actually not counted against them. Now, of course, the difference between robbers and us is we didn't do things that look bad. We did things that are bad, but we are justified because of the work of Christ imputed to us, received by faith.

That's the gospel. That's what do you believe or you're thinking about believing and wondering if you believe. And then promises come in the next verses. Verse 11 says this. It says everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame. One of the problems with sin is that it's shameful. If I gave you 30s right now and said, I'm not going to talk for 30s, you could all think of something you're ashamed of.

And there's a good chance it's a sin now. We can be ashamed of things that aren't sins. You can be ashamed that you're poor. Your clothes are shabby. Your car's age, that your friends can go out to eat, and you can't. And you can feel ashamed of that. You shouldn't. I would say. But the first problem of shame is guilt. And the Bible says that

when we trust in Christ, our shame is gone. The shame of sin is gone. Furthermore, actually the shame of things like bad clothes, bad hair, bad car, bad whatever it is, is also covered by Christ who adopt us into his family. You know, the experience of being a pretty weak basketball player to pick up game and you're just ashamed. You know you're going to be picked last, but somehow or other, the captain of the best team chooses you first. He says. I want Jacob on my team. I want Adrian on my team. And the fact that you're chosen removes the shame. The best player on the court sees something in me. Guess what? Jesus is better than the best player on the court.

And that takes away our shame. Our shame is gone, and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And there is no difference between Jew or Greek, male or female, slave or free. As the Bible says, it's available to all of us. So the question then is so what follows? So let me spell it out.

You may have heard it a hundred times. You may have heard it three times. The first thing of this passage asks of us is that we trust in Christ, that we say, I've heard the doctrine. I say yes to it, and I'm a climb on Jesus back and cross over from death to life. Or I do believe in Christ.

I have climbed on his back and I'm going to keep doing that every day. My life when I've strayed, when I've added, when my faith has grown. Somehow, though, I'm going to say I keep on climbing on the Lord and crossing over from death to life. And we should also keep on confessing Christ, whether it's boldly and out loud, as victorious did, or in small and humble ways.

But just reading a Bible by reading Christian literature, by maybe making it clear that you do something at work, you act in a certain way because you're following Jesus who does things this way. And maybe a hint because people are not willing to listen. But maybe someone will pick up the hint. Of course, then we also, I'm saying share our faith.

Paul says that the word is near you. I meditated on that preparing for today. And what does it mean? The word is near you. It means it's accessible. It's kind of like an Apple product. No matter how bad you were at technology, you're always kind of close. If you have an Apple product in your hand, if you just keep pressing buttons long enough, something good will probably happen.

And I have to say, there are elements of the Bible. They're kind of like that. I mean, the world came from somewhere than just pop up. So there must be a creator, a maker. Doesn't that make sense? Can't even a secular person say that kind of makes sense. And if there's a creator, isn't it kind of sensible to say he would care about what he made?

Yeah. And wouldn't you agree that if he cares about it and things go wrong, he would try to remedy it? Doesn't that make sense? Yeah. Now Jesus Christ, Son of God, son of

man, coming and dying and rising again is not something that a secular person will immediately say. Oh yeah, that totally makes sense. They may resist that.

They may find that strange. But a lot of the faith is kind of accessible. Now, there are other parts that are not accessible. I talked to a young man. I'll call him Justin at this service. Last service he was Jason. But this is a real conversation. Not long ago. And, he said to me, hey, Dr. D, I was, sharing my faith with somebody, and, we're having a good conversation all sudden in the middle. This person is atheist who? One who knows I'm a Christian. We're having a conversation about the faith. I know he's an atheist. He knows I'm a Christian. All a sudden, in the middle, he kind of bursts out into anger and says, You Calvinists, you Calvinist, with your suffocating, sovereign God. I just can't stand it anymore. And just then was stunned. I mean, it was a perfectly nice conversation. And he exploded. He said to me, you know, what's really interesting is that I never mentioned Calvin or the sovereignty of God. I don't know what he what he was so upset about. And I said, listen, any time you talk about what God is really like, you're going to end up saying words like, Lord, not just Savior. Those people want a Savior. They want to deliver. They want help. When you say Jesus is Savior and Lord, it's going to sound suffocating to some people because you're telling them that they're no longer in the center of their life, that God is, and that's going to offend a secular person. So you hear what I'm saying? There are parts of the Christian faith that are kind of nearby to a secular person, but the Holy Spirit has to come to actually transfer that person from.

I can accept a few Christian ideas to trusting in Jesus as Savior and Lord. If you share your faith, you want to make sure you say both, because that's what Paul says. Believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord, not just the Savior. Now, if you do believe that Jesus is Savior and Lord, then I encourage you to rest in that your shame is gone. Your guilt is gone. You're right with God. He's your Lord. He's your God. His law is not a burden. It's a good God. He loves you and has given you His Word that you may live well with him, and that is a blessed life to live.

Let's pray together. Father, I pray that we would love you, believe in you.

I pray that we would believe what you say and believe in you who speak. And pray that we would receive the easy parts of the faith that you care about us, that you would desire to rescue us. We can trust you to carry us from death to life. And Lord, I pray that we and everyone here would believe the harder parts that your Lord, we're not.

The center sure feels like we are. Sometimes we live that way. Lord, I do pray that we would know you as you are. Love you and trust you as you are, and have all the blessing, eternal life and the goods of this life as a consequence. Now hear us, Lord, as we sing back to you your truth.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.