

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on October 8, 2017**

**"How Do We Think? How Do We Act?
Part 8 of Exegetical Series
(Romans 10-11) Mirror Bible"**

[In today's sermon, "How Do We Think? How Do We Act? Part 8 of Exegetical Series (Romans 10-11) Mirror Bible", Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows how to apply Paul's teachings in our everyday lives.]

Notes

Introduction:

- Today, it will be good for us to go back and look at what Paul is telling us in these two chapters of Romans and what it means for us.
- We know that Scripture is about belief and response.
- So, in light of salvation, which Paul is writing about, how does a Christian think?

In light of Salvation (Romans 10-11):

- How does a Christian think or believe?
- And, what is the Christian PrACTice or response?
- Now we might call acting or doing is kind of a practice not unlike the practices of various types of professionals.
- We know that doctors and lawyers have a practice which means they continue to apply what they know to various situations, which they get better at.

- In Romans 10:1-21, we looked at 21 verses.
- And in Romans 11:1-36, we looked at 36 verses.

- And out of those combined 57 verses, at least 41 of these verses that Paul uses to address belief and 16 verses to address response.
- So what is it that makes a believer or a Christian different from say a not-yet-believer?
- What are the thoughts, based on revelation from Scripture, of a believer?

- Now our thoughts are informed by any number of things on a day by day basis.
- It comes from Hollywood; it comes from Madison Avenue and especially from commercials.
- There are constant things that are informing our thoughts.
- But a Christian will give heed and notice as to how Scripture should form our thoughts.

- So as we study Scripture and develop a relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit through conversation and curiosity and contemplation, we're asking the question, "What should we think and how should we act?"
- And those two things, thoughts and action, form the basis of our formation.

- We're being formed by the things we hear and by the things we do.
- But Paul goes on to address in chapter 12 that we shouldn't just be conformed but rather transformed.
- And how are we transformed? – by the renewing of our minds by the Holy Spirit.
- So, from Scripture, what are the beliefs, what are the thoughts we should hold and what actions should we do?
- We are transformed on a daily basis through right beliefs, through pure actions, through letting God live in us and love through us by the Holy Spirit.
- Paul tells us that we should participate in that process.
- And as we participate, we are transformed.
- And out of that comes a flourishing relationship with Jesus, which this life is all about.
- Now if we have a flourishing relationship with Jesus, not only is life better, but we get better at life.
- So, what are we to believe?
- Pastor Craig went through those 57 verses of Romans 10 and 11, and categorized them into 14 different beliefs that Paul brings out and emphasizes for us to know.
- If we are left to our own devices, we can think any number of things based upon the pressures life brings to us, based upon the upbringing we had, what society has taught us.
- So as we look through the beliefs that Paul stated here, we should ask ourselves "Do I get this?" "Does that make sense?" "Do I believe this?"
- And if you don't that's OK, but challenge yourself, "Why might I not believe that?" Is it something totally new that I haven't heard before? Or is there just something about that where it's just difficult to get my mind around?

What are we to believe?

1. In Jesus, humanity is already justified and made righteous both past and present. (10:3,6,10)
 - Now that's what we call a game changer.
 - That changes the entire way we think and view ourselves, as well as how we think and view others, and as we express our faith we have to others.
 - And we can also say that we now can live in relationship with God without fear, without shame, without guilt, without doubt, because through the eyes and the lens of Jesus, God the Father sees every one of us here as righteous and justified and forgiven and included.
2. Righteousness is experienced by faith and trust that Jesus did it. (10:4,10)
 - So for that to be real and for us to live in relationship with God, we have to trust and believe what Jesus did, even though it's difficult to believe at times.
 - It's out of faith and out of trust that we can truly experience God's blessings.
 - If we don't believe what Jesus did for us on the cross, then we're likely to live out our lives with self-doubt.

- But when we do believe that Jesus did it, then we can let go of our own human lives of sin and fear and shame and perhaps addictions we've struggling with or a past we're not proud of.
 - Jesus has washed our slate clean.
 - So we have to believe that Jesus did it all, and it's through that trust and belief that we can accept that.
3. Requirements of the Old Covenant law were fulfilled in Jesus. (10:4)
- We have to truly believe that to embrace the New Covenant.
 - What Jesus brought was entirely different than what Moses brought.
4. Through faith Jesus is no longer a distant promise, but is now present. (10:6,7,8)
- Paul said this in three different verses.
 - You see, we're not going through life today alone – Jesus is not somewhere off in the distance – that God is not up somewhere on the North Star unattainable.
 - Jesus is here and He's present and He walks us through the issues and problems of life.
 - So we know that the things that we face, be it financial issues, be it health issues, be it a loss of a loved one, we're not going through them alone – Jesus is experiencing that with us.
 - Jesus gives us that hope and that peace and that joy, which all comes through Him.
 - Isn't it better to go through life's difficult moments with the reality that Jesus is right there with us and when we go through those flames of trials and hurt that we have a Provider, that we have a Healer, we have a Brother right there with us, sometimes even carrying us when we can't go it alone?
5. We are saved now by belief in our inclusion (10:9; 11:26)
- When we believe we are included because God reconciled and redeemed all humanity through the blood and life of Jesus, then salvation has come to us.
 - Salvation is a present reality. It's not a future off in the distance kind of a thing.
 - Salvation is here now, it's present and it changes us.
6. Jesus represents the fulfillment of the promise of God to redeem and include all humanity (10:11; 11:9,11,15)
- Now "all humanity" is not just those who sit in church or those who have a relationship with God and don't sit in church.
 - But, rather, God's plan through Jesus, has reconciled all of humanity whether they believe in Jesus or not.
 - Disbelief can't change what God has already accomplished through Jesus.
 - Paul repeats this important fact in four different verses.
7. Our identity is established and revealed in Jesus (10:12,13,14)
- Our identity is NOT where we work all our lives, our identity is NOT the rungs on the corporate or social ladder we've managed to climb or achieve.

- Our identity is NOT what we have or don't have. Our identity is NOT the size of our bank account. Our identity is NOT how good or well our family has lived.
- Our identity is established in only one thing – and that is Jesus Christ.
- When we realize that our identity is Jesus and Jesus alone, then it doesn't matter what comes or what goes, what we have or don't have.

- Jesus is always there; He doesn't come and go; He not here today and gone tomorrow; Jesus is there residing within us forever, which is our true identity.
- And when we really grasp that, then the things that come to us, whether good or bad, whether sickness or health, whether rich or poor, Jesus doesn't move!
- Therefore, our identity doesn't move either, because Jesus is a constant in our lives.

8. The gospel message is Jesus, Himself. (10:17)

- That's what we share, that's what we offer to others

9. God doesn't reject us or push us aside despite how stubborn we are, but extends mercy to all. (11:1,28,32)

- God never rejected Israel.
- And as stubborn as we can be at certain times in our life, God will never push us aside and reject us.

10. Grace is received freely by faith without obligation or works on our part; and God will never take it back (11:6,7,29)

- So, as Paul pointed out, the nation that God called were a stubborn, stiff-necked people.
- Even so, God never rejected them even though He got a little intense with them at times, because He saw a better world through them that they didn't see themselves.
- And that scene in Jerusalem where Jesus wept because the people were not willing to receive Him shows that Jesus had not rejected Israel and also didn't force them to respond to Him.
- So no matter how stubborn, rebellious and stiff-necked we can be, our Father in heaven will never ever push us aside but rather extends mercy to us.

- We need to realize that grace is received by faith without works or obligation on our part and that God will never take it back.
- Now when we begin to see that grace has been given to us, we begin to change, we begin to live out a different life.
- There should be no fear in any one of us that God's grace will ever stop in our lives, which gives us tremendous hope.

11. Jesus removed the burden of obedience without faith in him (11:10)

12. But, disbelief perpetuates burdens (11:10,20,22)

- So there is something here that a Christian does differently, so to speak, in that they believe, have trust, and have faith in the One who has extended grace to them.

- And when we get caught up in disbelieve, all it does is add to our burdens.
- But Jesus removed that burden of obedience.

13. God continues to pursue not-yet believers (11:23)

- Scripture tells us that the Father, Son and Spirit continue to pursue people who do not yet believe and always will do so.
- So, it's our role then to simply participate in that process.

14. Humanly we simply can't imagine how resolved God is to accomplish his plan of salvation but must simply agree with it. (11:33,36)

Conclusion to these tenants of belief:

- Pastor Craig challenges us this week to take a look at this list and read through these 14 tenants of belief Paul offered to the church at Rome and think through them.
- We need to ask ourselves, "Do I believe this belief, or do I struggle with it?"
- Now we know that out of belief then comes action.
- And out of the relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit flows our obedience.
- And so beliefs make a difference.

- Of these 57 verses of Romans 10-11, 41 of these verses or approximately 78% of them, Paul talks about beliefs.
- And the remaining 22% of the verses, Paul talks about response or action.

How are we to respond?

1. We need a heart-felt, mission-minded concern for not-yet believers – a must-have on our prayer list (10:1)
 - So how do we do that, because that doesn't come naturally to us?
 - We would call this a super-natural love and concern for other people.
 - This has to come from the heart of God to us.
 - As a denomination, we used to call non-believers as "lost." Now the word "lost" is an appropriate word in the past, but today it's a politically charged word – nobody likes to be called "lost".
 - The term, "not-yet-believer" is a better way to describe people who have not yet responded to God's message.

 - Now, if we don't have a heart-felt concern for not-yet-believers, we need to put that on our prayer list.
 - A lot of us have a difficult time with this because of the wiring of our hearts through past teachings.
 - And the only thing that's going to change our perspective comes through the Holy Spirit.
 - Pastor Craig asks us to continue to pray and ask that God changes our hearts so that we heart-felt concern for not-yet-believers.

2. We are to share our faith and the gospel message of inclusion in Jesus – through prayer, training and practice (10:8,11,14,15; 11:31)

- Since Paul mentions this in 5 different verses, it's an important point.
 - Several have approached pastor Craig about joining a small group that focuses on the disciple making process.
 - So, please respond to pastor Craig if you would like to be a part of this small group.
 - Now we must remember that we don't share the gospel message with others on our own.
 - The Holy Spirit is the One who changes hearts. The Holy Spirit is the One who brings about spiritual growth in our lives.

 - And the Holy Spirit will bring about numerical growth if in fact that is what He has planned for us.
 - Now for this to happen, all of us have to have a heart for those who are hurting and a heart for those who yet don't have that relationship God.
 - If not-yet believers came into our church will they feel that absolute love, will they feel conveyed to them that they should have no fear, no shame, no guilt, no doubt, will they feel they are happy to be received by us?
 - Now, if we can't show that to them, why would the Father bring those to us, if we can't deliver?

 - Pastor Craig has a lot of confidence in our congregation because he has seen our love expressed to him, his wife and family.
 - We have to realize that there are more people invited to God's dinner table.
 - But they may not have the best manners (spiritually speaking) in what they believe or how they live, but they still need to have a place at the table and feel welcomed and accepted by us.

 - So, how would someone coming in to our church with a different mindset view the things we do or don't do?
 - How would they view announcements? How would they view us praying intimately for people, name by name, when they don't have a clue as to who these people are?
 - Perhaps intercessory prayer should be more general, praying for things going on around the world such as the tragedies that have happened in Los Vegas, Houston, Florida and Puerto Rico.

 - Now there's nothing magic about praying for others here in church as opposed to praying for them in our homes.
 - So thinking mission-minded is different than just thinking about our brothers and sisters.
3. We must be humble in our approach to others and can't look down on other beliefs and practices – through training and practice (11:1,18,19)
- Once again, we do that with training and practice and a heart for others.
 - Pastor Craig has said in the past that it's not important that he is right all the time in what he says.
 - But, rather, we must always relate, love and share, as he strives to do.
 - And we can do that without shame, fear, guilt and doubt, because that's who we are.

Question and comment segment:

- Today six members made comments.

Closing Prayer