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Sermon Notes

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Christ is the End of the Law

Romans 10:1-4

Introduction: Functioning in a World of Mystery

Technological wonders we simply accept

Cell phone

Television remote

ALSO: Theological mystery... God's sovereignty, human responsibility

Eternal Predestination and Energetic Prayer

Eternal Predestination and Energetic Preaching

I. Paul's Heart-felt Prayer for Israel

vs. 1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

A. Paul's Astonishing Love for His Persecutors

1. Jews constantly opposing him... at every turn
2. They would listen for a while, then raise a riot out of pure rage
3. When Paul would flee the town for his life, they would find out where he went next and they would follow him there
4. In the next town, Paul would try to begin again, but the Jews would turn the Gentiles against him
5. The Jews stirred up riots in many places, including Thessalonica and Jerusalem itself

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed the Lord Jesus and the

prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men¹⁶ in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

6. Christ predicted this aggressive Jewish persecution of the Gospel:

Matthew 23:34 Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.

7. YET: Paul has tremendous compassion on his hostile persecutors

vs. 1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

8. Christlike compassion!!

Matthew 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

B. Heartfelt Prayer

1. Cold prayers are powerless

2. Part of prayer's purpose: to rescue us from cold, loveless indifference to the plight of others

Genesis 4:9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

3. What Paul says about his prayer: heartfelt

a. "good pleasure", "will", "desire"

b. "of my heart"... combined... a deep desire, a passionate longing

c. "prayer" = "entreaty"... passionate request, deep, powerful prayer

Hebrews 5:7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

C. Theological and Spiritual Implications

1. Romans 9: Greatest chapter on God's Absolute Sovereignty in the Bible
2. Romans 10: Clear chapter on Christian's responsibility to the lost
 - a. To pray for them passionately and faithfully
 - b. To go even to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel
3. God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility: BOTH taught
 - a. "hypercalvinism" = only God can bring the elect to Himself; so it would be arrogant for us to try
 - b. Some misunderstand true Biblical faith that embraces the sovereignty of God over the elect, that embraces predestination, that embraces the facts stated in Romans 9

Romans 9:11-12 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad-- in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls-- she was told, "The older will serve the younger."

Romans 9:15-16 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Romans 9:18 Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

- c. They feel that to agree with these clear statements leaves no room whatsoever for human involvement in evangelism and missions
 - d. Some "Reformed" people themselves say that there is no command to pray for the lost to be saved... they say that God knows the elect, and our prayers mean nothing in His eternal counsel
 - e. BUT they forget that God predestines not only the people to be saved, but the MEANS by which they are saved... and the passionate heartfelt prayers of God's people and the courageous traveling of the missionaries were both ordained to achieve His ends in election
4. Many examples from church history
 - a. Monica for Augustine

From Book III, Chapters 11-12:

And now you did "stretch forth your hand from above" and drew up my soul out of that profound darkness because my mother, your faithful one, wept to you on my behalf more than mothers are accustomed to weep for the bodily deaths of their children. For by the light of the faith and spirit which she received from thee, she saw that I was dead. And you heard her, O Lord, you heard her and despised not her tears when, pouring down, they watered the earth under her eyes in every place where she prayed. You did truly hear her!

Nearly nine years passed in which I wallowed in the mud of that deep pit and in the darkness of falsehood, striving often to rise, but being all the more heavily dashed down. But all that time this chaste, pious, and sober widow--such as you love--was now more buoyed up with hope, though no less zealous in her weeping and mourning; and she did not cease to bemoan my case before you, in all the hours of her supplication. Her prayers entered your presence, and yet you allowed me still to tumble and toss around in that darkness.

Monica became so discouraged by how long it took the Lord to answer her passionate prayers for her son, she went to visit a bishop. She talked with the bishop about the fact that Augustine was now wrapped up in the false doctrines of Manicheism, he said that God would lead Augustine eventually out of it... she heard this but was not satisfied: Augustine related this:

When he had said this she was not satisfied, but repeated more earnestly her entreaties, and shed copious tears, still beseeching him to see and talk with me. Finally the bishop, a little vexed at her importunity, exclaimed, "Go your way; as you live, it cannot be that the son of these tears should perish." As she often told me afterward, she accepted this answer as though it were a voice from heaven.

When at last Augustine was converted to the true faith, Monica felt her entire purpose in life had been accomplished, and she was ready to die:

"Son, for myself I have no longer any pleasure in anything in this life. Now that my hopes in this world are satisfied, I do not know what more I want here or why I am here. There was indeed one thing for which I wished to tarry a little in this life, and that was that I might see you a [true] Christian before I died. My God hath answered this more than abundantly, so that I see you now made his servant and spurning all earthly happiness. What more am I to do here?"

Within

b. Hudson Taylor for the Inland regions of China

c. "Praying Hyde" for India

John Hyde, Prebyterian missionary to India in the 19th century:

With periods of outright persecution by natives, and few, if any conversions, Hyde began leading his fellow missionaries in intercession for India. So deep was his call to prayer that by 1899 he began spending entire nights face down before God. In a letter to his college he wrote:

Have felt led to pray for others this winter as never before. I never before knew what it was to work all day and then pray all night before God for another... In college or at parties at home, I used to keep such hours for myself, or pleasure, and can I not do as much for God and souls?"

By 1908, John Hyde dared to pray what was to many at the convention an impossible request: that during the coming year in India one soul would be saved every day. Three hundred sixty five people converted, baptized, and publicly confessing Jesus as their Savior. Impossible -- yet it happened. Before the next convention John Hyde had prayed more than 400 people into God's kingdom, and when the prayer union gathered again, he doubled his goal to two souls a day. Eight hundred conversions were recorded that year, and still Hyde showed an unquenchable passion for lost souls.

At the 1910 convention, those around Hyde marveled at his faith, as they witnessed his near violent supplications, "Give me souls, oh God, or I die!" Before the meeting ended, John Hyde revealed that he was again doubling his goal for the coming year. Four souls a day, and nothing less. During the next twelve months John Hyde's ministry took him throughout India. By now he was known as "Praying Hyde," and his intercession was sought at revivals in Calcutta, Bombay, and other large cities. If on any day four people were not converted, Hyde said at night there would be such a weight on his heart he could not eat or sleep until he had prayed through to victory. The number of new converts continually grew.

d. George Mueller's prayer list

A.T. Pierson's classic biography:

He was an unwearied intercessor. No delay discouraged him. This is seen particularly in the case of individuals for whose conversion or special guidance into the paths of full obedience he prayed. On his prayer list were the names of some for whom he had besought God, daily, by name, for one, two, three, four, six, ten years before the answer was given. The year just before his death, he told the writer of two parties for whose reconciliation to God he had prayed, day by day, *for over sixty years*, and who had not as yet to his knowledge turned unto God: and he significantly added,

"I have not a doubt that I shall meet them both in heaven; for my Heavenly Father would not lay upon my heart a burden of prayer for them for over threescore years, if He had not concerning them purposes of mercy."

This is a sufficient example of his almost unparalleled perseverance and importunity in intercession. However long the delay, he held on, as with both hands clasping the very horns of the altar; and his childlike spirit reasoned simply but confidently, that the very fact of his own spirit being so long drawn out in prayer for one object, and of the Lord's enabling him so to continue patiently and believingly to wait on Him for the blessing, was a promise and prophecy of the answer; and so he waited on, so assured of the ultimate result that he praised God in advance, believing that he had practically received that for which he asked.

One of the people Mueller prayed for for decades came to faith in Christ after Mueller had died! The Lord heard all those requests but never let Mueller see the results!

D. Application Question: Are You Praying for the Lost?

1. Do you have some lost relatives, and are you beseeching the Lord daily for their salvation?
2. Parents, do you have some lost children, who are wandering from the fold... or who are still little and have not yet grown into their life as disciples of Jesus Christ?
3. Spouses, do you have a lost husband, a lost wife? Are their names on your lips constantly?
4. Neighbors: are you lifting your lost neighbors up
5. Co-workers: I made a list of all the people in my department, and prayed for their salvation on a daily basis... also begged God for and kept a record of gospel opportunities
6. Providence Baptist Church: 3x3 program!!
7. Unreached people groups: Global Prayer Digest
 - a. Do you have a people group you are praying for
 - b. Personal testimony from Nepal

The Nepali Church has grown from 29 believers in 1959 to around 500,000 in 3,000 congregations today (Operation World)

Rate of Evangelical growth in Nepal is third highest in the world...6.17%

- c. Take on a prayer project... choose an unreached people group and begin praying daily for a vital church-planting movement to begin there
- d. Joshua Project or the Global Prayer Digest or the International Mission Board can help you with your choice

E. Just Because You Can't Understand It, Don't Reject It

1. Don't reject the doctrine of eternal unconditional election because of prayer
2. Don't reject the doctrine of unceasing intercessory prayer for the lost because of election and predestination!!

II. Israel's Ignorant Zeal

A. Paul's Testimony About Israel: Zeal

Romans 10:2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.

1. Paul's own life avid witness
 - a. Paul's zeal for the traditions of the elders and for God was unmatched
 - b. He was willing to travel long journeys to fight heresy
 - c. He was willing to harden his heart against the cries of Jewish Christians, of children crying for their mothers, of wives crying for their husbands
 - d. Paul's zeal for Israel was like a raging furnace
2. Jews burned with a zeal for God
 - a. Pontius Pilate had a bellyful of this zeal
 - b. The Jews were willing to be slaughtered in huge numbers rather than allow the Romans to set up their idols in the temple area
 - c. In the generation after Christ, their zeal for Israel and against the Gentile invaders of their homeland led them to fight the Romans at Masada
 - i) This war against Rome absolutely decimated Israel... the slaughter was unimaginable

Decades after Jesus' death, Zealots engineered a revolt against Rome. The uprising was brutally stamped out and ended with Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD. Survivors fled to Masada, a fortress built by Herod near the Dead Sea. Today, the excavated remains of Masada have become a national symbol for all Israelis.

Here 900 Zealots held out until the year 73. Then, the inevitable day came when 15,000 Roman troops breached its walls. Since it was late in the day, the Romans delayed the final attack until dawn. That night the survivors met and voted for suicide, rather than for capture.

The survivors drew lots and chose 10 men to slay all the rest. Each man lay down on the ground with his wife and children and embraced them. Together, they awaited the blow from the men chosen to deliver it. When the 10 executioners had, unflinchingly, completed their task, they drew lots again to see who would kill the other 9, and then, take his own life.

At dawn, the Romans poured through the breached walls. Fires burned quietly everywhere. A ghostly stillness hung over the air. Finally, 2 old women and 3 small children came out of hiding to tell the story. The contemporary Jewish historian Josephus concludes his report of Masada with these striking words:

"When the Romans saw the mass of slain, they were unable to take pleasure in the sight, even though the people were their enemies." -Jewish Wars FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS

This was the level of the zeal the Jews had for their Holy Land and for the temple

That same zeal led them to scream for Christ's death!!!

- d. The Jews screamed for Pilate to crucify Christ with a heated passion
- e. THEREFORE: The Jews were ready both to die and to kill for God
- f. Christ testified to their zeal for the Law

Matthew 23:15 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are."

Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices-- mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law-- justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."

B. Without Knowledge

- 1. Christ predicted this zeal without knowledge

John 16:2-3 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. ³ They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

- 2. What didn't they know? Rather WHO... God Himself!!

John 7:28-29 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, ²⁹ but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."

John 8:19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

John 8:54-55 Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵ Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word."

John 17:25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me."

Amazing! The Jews burned with zeal for a God they really didn't know! They did not know His person, His holiness, His righteousness... especially, they didn't know His Son, who came to reveal Him to them

In rejecting the Son, they rejected any possibility of true knowledge of God:

Matthew 11:27 No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

3. If they had KNOWN God they would have welcomed God's Son and His Messengers... but all they ever do is kill them!!

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.

John 14:7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.

Any zeal the Jews displayed for God was ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, and it did not bring them one bit closer to God... for their zeal was for a false God of their own imaginations

This ignorance of God was inexcusable in the ultimate sense, but both Peter and Paul use it to explain the Jewish rejection of Christ

4. Peter spoke of this ignorance:

Acts 3:13-17 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.... ¹⁷ "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders."

5. Paul spoke of it himself

1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

6. ALSO they did not know the righteousness that God alone can give... they preferred their own righteousness, as we shall see

7. BUT there is a ZEAL that saves, and it is Christ's alone...

C. Christ's Zeal Was Perfect: For God's Glory Alone

1. Jewish zeal for the temple and for their own righteousness led to their destruction, by the Romans and ultimately by God on Judgment Day
2. Christ's zeal for the true house of God and for the glory of God led to His own death and to our salvation

John 2:14-17 *n the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵ So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."*

3. Christ's zeal saves our soul... but it is a perfect zeal; based on a perfect knowledge of the true God, His holiness, His righteousness, His character, His plans

But what was Israel's zeal for? If not for the true God, what was it for?

III. Israel's Central Failure: Rejecting God's Righteousness

Romans 10:3 *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.*

A. Israel Did Not Know "The Righteousness of God"

1. Perhaps the perfection of God's own character... how incredibly holy God is
2. Better, the righteousness of faith, the righteousness that COMES FROM God
3. This gift of righteousness is the glorious good news of the gospel

Romans 1:16-17 *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

Romans 3:21-24 *But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

4. This righteousness is totally perfect... it is the righteousness of Jesus Christ Himself, His perfect obedience to the Father every second of His earthly life, His perfect love for God and love for neighbor... in the gospel, this righteousness is offered as a free gift to all who believe

5. But Israel DID NOT KNOW this righteousness

B. Israel Sought to Establish Their Own Righteousness

1. "Seek" = what they were zealous for; what they lived for everyday
2. They were not seeking God, they were seeking to establish themselves
3. "Establish" = set in place and cause to stand... like they were building a structure for all the world to admire... LOOK WHAT I CAN DO!!!
 - a. Day after day, they awoke and began the day with zeal
 - b. They followed certain legalistic patterns that covered every action of the day... their every thought was self-directed, not God-directed
 - c. They did the ritual handwashings, they offered their morning sacrifices, ate only kosher food approved by the Law of Moses
 - d. They carried on their business in the manner prescribed by the holiness teachings of rabbinic traditions
 - e. They fasted and prayed openly to be seen by other people... they tithed everything they got, they zealously studied the Laws to find their own righteousness
 - f. They sought human approval and praise for their righteousness, and when they got it their pride swelled further
 - g. They were building a massive temple to their own righteousness... every brick set in place was an action of lawkeeping, and the mortar that held the whole structure together was PRIDE
 - h. The whole structure was as pleasing to God as the prideful Tower of Babel, built by pagans who were seeking to make a name for themselves... these lawkeeping Jews were no different

C. Israel Did Not Submit to God's Righteousness

1. "Submit" = yield to, obey, put oneself under the authority of
2. The free offer of God's righteousness comes with a command to obey it
3. It says to put down their bricks of lawkeeping and their trowels coated with the mortar of pride
4. It says to humble yourself under God's perfect righteousness... to humble yourself deeply and from the heart... to SUBMIT to a perfect righteousness that Christ wrought, to accept it as a gift by faith

5. But this is the very thing that Israel could not do!
6. They REFUSED to submit to Christ, REFUSED to submit to Christ's call to be a spiritual beggar
7. "No," they said... "I will stand on my own merits! I have built an amazing tower of personal achievement in righteousness... stand in awe of what I have made and give me what I have earned!"
8. This is their reward:

Isaiah 2:12-18 The LORD Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted (and they will be humbled),¹³ for all the cedars of Lebanon, tall and lofty, and all the oaks of Bashan,¹⁴ for all the towering mountains and all the high hills,¹⁵ for every lofty tower and every fortified wall,¹⁶ for every trading ship and every stately vessel.¹⁷ The arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,¹⁸ and the idols will totally disappear.

IV. Christ is the End of the Law for Believers

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

A. Israel Misunderstood the Role of the Law

1. The Law did not GIVE righteousness
2. The Law exposes unrighteousness, and reveals sin

ESV Romans 3:20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

NIV Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

3. The Law stands over us and threatens to crush us, to destroy us with wrath

Pilgrim's Progress: "So Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr. Legality's house for help: but, behold, when he was got now hard by the hill, it seemed so high, and also that side of it that was next the way-side did hang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the hill should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still, and knew not what to do. Also his burden now seemed heavier to him than while he was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burnt: here therefore he did sweat and quake for fear. And now he began to be sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly Wiseman's counsel."

4. The Law shows arrogant human hearts that they need a Savior
5. Unfortunately the Jews reached a truce with the relentless demands of the Law and actually believed they could keep it fully and stand acceptable to God based on it

Matthew 19:16-20 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" ¹⁷ "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." ¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁰ "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

AMAZING!! This rich young ruler actually believed he had kept the command to “love his neighbor as himself”

The Jews misunderstood the Law’s function... and that was ultimately to point to Christ, to bring us to Christ

So Paul says, Christ is the END OF THE LAW... but what does this mean?

B. First: Christ is the End of the Ceremonial Law

1. With the death and resurrection of Christ, the ceremonial law of Moses was fulfilled
2. The laws of circumcision and diet were no longer needed, for Christ had been identified as a Jew
3. The sacrificial system’s laws were fulfilled, for Christ’s death made that system obsolete... the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the era of the Mosaic priesthood and animal sacrifice was ENDED forever

Hebrews 8:13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

C. Second: Christ is the End-Goal of the Law: The Law a Tutor to Bring Us to Christ

^{NAU} ***Galatians 3:24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.***

1. The Law humbles our efforts at self-salvation
2. The Law is ultimately designed to bring us to Christ

3. In this way, “Christ is the END of the Law”... it is the finish-line, the end goal and result: to make you realize your need for Christ

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

4. The only way the Law can give righteousness is to bring us to Christ
5. That was its function... and when the Law had carried us to Christ, it had finished its work in us

D. Third: Christ is the “Perfection” of the Law

1. The word “end” (telos) also means perfection
2. Christ perfectly obeyed the law, and frankly was an even better picture of the righteousness of God than the Law ever was
3. Christ is the perfection of the Law in that the Law demonstrated Christ’s holiness and perfection
4. The perfect righteousness Christ displayed is thus GIVEN FREELY as a gift, NOT EARNED as a wage or reward for successful lawkeeping
5. Perfect righteousness is available, BUT ONLY TO THOSE WHO BELIEF

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

V. Application

- A. Prayer for the Lost
- B. All Non-Christian Religious Systems: Seeking to Establish Their Own Righteousness
- C. Unregenerate Baptists: Seeking to Establish Their Own Righteousness
- D. Rejoicing in Perfect Righteousness Guaranteed in the Gospel
- E. Understanding that Christ is the End of the Law... a Life of Freedom from Legalism