

Romans 10:5-15^{vi}

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down) “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

^{vi} About the Second Reading: Romans 10:5-15

In this passage, Paul compares the right relationship to God (“righteousness”) that comes through a strict adherence to the Mosaic law to that which comes by faith. In contrast to a slavish adherence to this law, which is ultimately futile, the righteousness that comes by faith is entirely attainable. It requires no superhuman effort such as ascending into heaven or descending into the abyss. Such feats have already been accomplished by God in Jesus’ incarnation and resurrection.

People need to accept the “word of faith” proclaimed by the apostle. This acceptance is

manifested both through inner conviction and outer profession. These signs of faith are rooted in the work of God, affirming that Jesus is God incarnate and that Jesus now lives.

The first of these professions of faith, “Jesus is Lord,” was particularly central for the early Church in areas where the people believed in “many gods and many lords” (1 Corinthians 8:5-6). It is the earliest and simplest creed of the Church.