

## Romans 10:8b-13

“Oh yeah? Well, put your **money** where your **mouth** is.” That’s usually the phrase which is used when someone is trying to **goad** you into making a **bet** with them. In essence it says, “Sure, you can **talk** big, but **back up** those words - **support** them with some of your hard-earned **cash** - and **then** I’ll take you **seriously**.” Today I’d like to talk to you about **support** - support for your **faith**. What can you **do** to support your faith? Instead of putting your **money** where your **mouth** is, you can **Put Your Mouth Where Your Heart Is**. In other words, **back up** the faith which is in your **heart** with some well-chosen **words** and **actions**. As we elaborate on that theme this morning, we will want to look at the following questions: Where **is** your heart? **What** should you say to **back up** your faith? And **how** should you **say** it?

Let’s look at that first question. Where is your **heart**? In His famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “*Where your **treasure** is, there your **heart** will be also.*” So really, before we can determine where our **heart** is, we must determine what our **treasure** is. What is **your** treasure? What is **valuable** to you? In order to test your sense of **value**, think about these questions, and answer them for yourselves. Which is more **important** to you: to spend time reading Cinderella to your children, or to spend time reading Jonah and the Great Fish to your children? Which is more **relaxing**: to sit down and watch your favorite sit-com or sporting event on TV, or to sit down and study a chapter of the Bible? Where do you spend more of your **time**: in a church, in a gymnasium, in a bowling alley, or in a restaurant? Sometimes there is great **confusion** in regard to our priorities. In reality, there should be no question or doubt in anyone’s mind. Jesus gives us some perfect advice in the matter when He says, “*Do **not** store up for yourselves treasures on **earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in **heaven**.*”

Now certainly, we would **hope** that all of us have our hearts set on **heavenly** things rather than on **earthly** things. But is that actually the case? Are our treasures **earthly**, or **heavenly**? I’d like you to place yourself in the following scenario. If Jesus returned to judge the world **today**, you would be **ready** for Him, wouldn’t you? You have your **faith**, and that’s all you really **need**. But imagine that as you came before His judgment seat to receive your inheritance from Him, that Jesus would throw you a **curve**, and ask you to **prove** to Him that you are a Christian by telling Him the **good works** which you have done! After all, James tells us that “*a faith **without works** is **dead**.*” Would there be enough evidence in

your life to **prove** your Christianity? What do our lives **look** like on the outside? Do they clearly show God and the world that we are only **strangers** and **foreigners** here on the earth? Or do they show instead that we plan to put down roots, and **stay** here in comfort and ease for a good long time? Are our hearts focused on **heaven**, or here on the **earth**? Just from looking at the **outside**, what would Jesus see in **your** life?

That's a **frightening** thought, isn't it? If it **isn't**, it **should** be - because no matter who we are, we have fallen **short** of the perfection which God demands. Our works are simply **not good enough** to get us to heaven. But don't allow it to frighten you for too long, because fortunately, God isn't going to **look** at the **number** or **quality** of our works as a prerequisite to life in heaven. He operates on a totally **different** standard. Our text says, "*There is **no difference** between Jew and Gentile - the same Lord is Lord of **all** and richly blesses **all** who call on Him, for 'Everyone who calls on the name of **the LORD** will be saved.'*" The Lord **Jesus** is the object of our faith and of our confession, and Jesus saves **all** who have **faith** in Him.

There can be **no room** in our lives for **self-righteous** thinking, because there is nothing **in us** which makes us **better** than anyone else. As our text says, there is **no difference** - whether you attend church regularly, or you are hardly ever here at all. There is **no difference** - whether you give 50% of your income for the work of the LORD, or whether you give nothing at all. There is **no difference** - whether you are highly active in the work of the church, or you produce little or no activity. There is **no difference** - between a mass murderer and the most godly person you can think of. That's pretty hard to **swallow**, isn't it? But when we are talking about how God's kingdom becomes **ours**, it's **true** - there is **no difference**. We **all** receive God's kingdom in exactly the same way. We receive **faith** in our Savior Jesus Christ, by the grace of God **alone**. It's a **free gift**, whose value is far **beyond** earthly measure. It's a gift we couldn't even **begin** to pay for!

So, what should we **say** to **back up** and **support** this faith which God has placed in our hearts? Well, whenever we receive a gift from someone, the proper response is to say, "**Thank you.**" In our text God says it **this** way, "*Confess with your **mouth** that Jesus is **Lord**.*" When we openly **confess** our faith in Jesus as our Savior, we actually do **two** things. First we make it very clear that **we** are not in **control** of our lives. We have not **earned** any of the good things which we have **received**. We don't **deserve** them either. And secondly, we make it clear who **is** in control of our lives. Our **Lord**, our **Master**, our **Controller**, is **Jesus Christ**.

We **know** that with our **minds**, and we **believe** it with our **hearts**, but we don't always **confess** it with our **mouths**. Why not? What's our **excuse**? Our text says, "*The word is **near** you; it is **in** your **mouth** and **in** your **heart**, that is, the word of **faith** we are proclaiming.*" It's **not** as if we haven't been **told**! That precious message that Jesus is Lord is already **in** our hearts and mouths. All we need to do is **let it out**, by **speaking** the words. King David wrote in Psalm 19, "*The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are **sweeter** than honey from the comb.*" If King David were alive today, he would say to us, "How can you continue to **hold** that sweet, sweet Gospel message in your **mouth** without **choking**?" Peter and John would ask us the same thing. When **they** were faced with the option of **speaking** the message about Jesus, or possibly returning to **prison**, they replied, "*We cannot **help** speaking about what we have seen and heard.*" Regardless of the consequences, we **too** must tell about Jesus.

In Matthew 12 Jesus **Himself** said, "*Out of the overflow of the **heart** the **mouth** speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*" The confession of our **mouth** is the proof of the **faith** which is in our **heart**. Since we **have** faith, there can be no doubt that we must **confess** that faith with our words and actions.

But **how** should we do that confessing? As I said before, it all depends on what is in your **heart**. Now, I'm not going to propose that I can look into your heart and tell you how **you** should respond to God's love. Only **God** can do that. But I **would** like to give you three **suggestions** for God-pleasing responses. Maybe **one** or **all** of them will fit for **you**.

The **first** suggestion is: Let's stop **wasting time**. If you sit down and analyze where you spend your time, I think you'll be **amazed** at how much time you **waste** doing **nothing** at all - watching **TV** - listening to **music** - reading trashy **novels** - or mindlessly **surfing** the internet. People who **waste** time must recognize that those precious ticks of the clock are gone **forever** - never again to be **recovered**. Compare that with the Bible which tells us that we have many **important** things to do, when it says, "*Let us consider how we may **spur one another on** toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up **meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us **encourage one another** - and all the **more** as you see the Day approaching.*" If we stop **wasting** time on **unimportant** things, we will have all the time we need to **do** those things which are really

**important.**

The **second** suggestion is: Let's stop **wasting talents**. Perhaps you aren't even sure about what talents you **have**. Your family, friends, and even your pastors will probably be able to help you pinpoint some of the talents which you possess, and they may even be able to give you some suggestions for ways to **use** those talents in God-pleasing service. It's **important** for us to put our talents to **use**, because in His **Parable** of the Talents, Jesus said that **unused** or **wasted** talents were to be taken away, and given to someone else. Let's make sure **our** talents don't fall into someone **else's** hands.

And the **final** suggestion is: Let's stop **wasting money**. Take the time to add up every penny you spend during a month. You'll be **shocked** at how the pennies here and there add up to a considerable amount of money. If you don't have a **budget, start** one. If you **do** have a budget set up already, **use** it. And if you are already **using** your budget, make sure that it is structured with **God** receiving the **highest** priority. Our gifts are to be a **reflection** of the blessings which **God** has given to **us** - they are to be gifts which give **glory** to our God - and our God has asked very **few** of us to subsist at a **poverty** level. May we all strive to make our offerings to the LORD **proportionate** to what we have received from Him.

A combination of these three responses and **other** fitting responses to God's love as well, will result in **real glory** for our God. But don't be **shy** about your loving responses to our loving God. Be sure you **speak up** with your praise and glory to Him. See to it that your **words** and **actions** are loud enough to be **heard** over the clamor of the world around us. I **know** you can do it, because by the **grace** of God your **heart** is already in the right place. Now all you need to do is back it up, by **Putting Your Mouth Where Your Heart Is**. Amen.