

When the Heart Believes, the Mouth Agrees

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Romans 10:8-13 KJV

The whole context of Romans 10:8-13 is where Paul is making a connection between the heart and the mouth. He is drawing from a passage in Deuteronomy 30:10-14, which refers to the Law (verse 10), and applies the connection between the heart and the mouth to the "word of faith" in Romans 10:8. Notice the similarity of the wording in Romans 10:8 to that of Deuteronomy 30:14.

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; Romans 10:8

10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, *and* if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

14 But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. Deuteronomy 30:10,14

The whole idea I think the Holy Spirit would have us glean from these verses is that if you believe the gospel that Christ died for your sins, was buried, and rose again the third day, your heart and your mouth will be in agreement. In other words, if you truly believe with your heart, your mouth (words) will agree (assent) with what your heart believes.

I had an opportunity about six months ago to witness to a man that I had known on and off for about 10 years. I always remembered him as being the most profane man I have ever met. As I listened to him in his usual mode of profanity, I was praying that I would get an opening to share the gospel with him. Somehow we got talking about health issues (he is over age 80) and I asked

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him what he thought would happen to him after he died. He didn't immediately give an answer but it did open up the topic of what he had been taught in church services he had attended over the years. I helped him remember about Christ and the cross and that by believing that He died for his sins that he could be in heaven after death. I then asked him if he believed that Christ died for his sins and he said that he did. I don't know if this was the first time he believed the gospel, but for rest of my visit, I didn't hear one more swear word. I now believe that he is saved because it was clear that his heart and mouth were in agreement before I left that day.

I don't think we are to glean the idea that you must believe in your heart and also confess with your mouth in order to complete the process of becoming saved. The instant you believe in your heart that the Lord Jesus Christ died for your sins you are saved and baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ for eternity and, at least initially, your mouth will begin to show evidence of that belief. The reason it is difficult to tell, on the spur of the moment, whether or not someone is saved is that, once saved, a person can fail to appropriate all they have in Christ. They fail to get into the Word so they can be led by the Holy Spirit to begin to evidence the fruit of the Spirit. In the story above the man may have been saved years earlier, but had drifted back into the works of the flesh (see Galatians 5:16-21) due to a lack of follow-up on his part and by whomever might have shared the gospel with him. You could receive salvation while attending a Billy Graham service, but never read the Bible, associate with other believers, or attend a church to grow in your faith. If you simply resume your usual mode of life you could reach the point where you are dominated by the flesh instead of being led by the Spirit (spiritual). Paul refers to these as "carnal" and "babes in Christ" (I Corinthians 3:1).

Verse 17 from the Galatians passage mentioned above describes this condition:

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Galatians 5:17

The idea here is that there is a constant warfare going on within all believers. If you are yielding to the flesh you can't do things that pertain to being led by the Spirit. Conversely, if you are being led by the Spirit, you can't do things that pertain to the flesh.

There is a story about an Eskimo who lived in a remote area of Alaska. He would only make it to the nearest town about once a month with the help of a sled and a team of sled dogs. Two of the dogs were opposites in color; one was

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black and the other was white. They were also at odds disposition-wise. Every time they were left alone for a short time, they would get into a fight until one of them would “yield” to the other. The Eskimo was in the habit of making bets with the town’s people on which dog would win the conflict. This went on for several months with the Eskimo always winning the bet by being able to accurately predict which one of the dogs would win out every time. After a few more visits, with no bets, the town’s people convinced the Eskimo to tell them how he was able to predict the outcome so accurately. He simply told them that the one he wanted to win was the one he fed the most. Isn’t that just like our struggle with the flesh against the Spirit? We all know very well how to feed the flesh. Paul writes in Romans 13:14:

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

This means we don’t expose ourselves to those things that would be contrary to the Spirit; we consciously avoid them. On the other hand we can make provision for the Spirit by feeding on the Word of God which is breathed by the Spirit. When we learn all the depth of the magnificent gift of God’s grace that demonstrates His love and goodness, we respond to overcome temptation and repent from fleshly activities out of gratitude, not out of fear of punishment. Gratitude is a much more powerful motivator to good works than fear can ever be. Paul writes in Romans 2:4:

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

In this chapter Paul is writing about the judgment and the goodness of God and I believe the point is that goodness wins out. Just think of a person who works for a real domineering, stingy, and mean business owner. When the owner is out of town does that person feel compelled to work extra hard to help build the owner’s business? ...probably not as much as the person would who works for a gracious, generous, and kind business owner. God is a righteous God and His judgment will be righteous and deserving for those who haven’t received, by believing, His gift of salvation that demonstrates His grace, love, and goodness. Your salvation isn’t a result of your good works, but your good works are a result of your salvation. Praise God for His goodness!

Frederick E. Lewis – December 2009

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Appendix I

Romans 10:9 – Textus Receptus

οτι hoti: that, because, since – conjunction

εαν ean: if, in case – conditional particle or conjunction

ομολογησης homologeo: to agree with, assent – verb – aorist

εν en: in, by, with – preposition

τω ho: this, that, these – definite article – dative – singular

στοματι stoma: mouth, face, edge – noun – dative – singular

σου su: you – personal pronoun – second person

κυριον kurios: Lord – noun – masculine – singular

ιησουν Iesus: Jesus – noun – masculine – singular

και kai: and, also, even, indeed, but – conjunction

πιστευσης pisteuo: believe – verb – aorist

εν en: in, by, with – preposition

τη ho – this, that, these – definite article – dative

καρδια kardia: heart – noun – dative – singular

σου su: you – personal pronoun – second person

οτι hoti: that, because, since - conjunction

ο ho: this, that, these – definite article – nominative

θεος theos: God – noun – masculine – singular

αυτον autos: him, his, their – personal pronoun - singular

ηγειρεν egeiro: rise, raise, arise – verb – aorist

εκ ek: our of, from, by, away from – preposition

νεκρων nekros: dead – adjective – genitive – plural

σωθηση sozo: save, make whole, heal – verb – future

οτι εαν ομολογησης εν τω στοματι σου κυριον ιησουν και
hoti ean homologeo en ho stoma su kurios Iesus kai
that if assent with the mouth you Lord Jesus and

πιστευσης εν τη καρδια σου οτι ο θεος αυτον ηγειρεν εκ
pisteuo en ho kardia su hoti ho theos autos egeiro ek
believe in the heart you that this God Him raised from

νεκρων σωθηση
nekros sozo
dead saved

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That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. KJV

For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved; Geneva Bible

That if you agree with the mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in the heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. (Therefore the heart and the mouth agree.) FEL

Majority Text

9 οτι εαν ομολογησης εν τω στοματι σου κυριον ιησουν και πιστευσης εν τη καρδια σου οτι ο θεος αυτον ηγειρεν εκ νεκρων σωθηση

Wescott Hort Text

9 οτι εαν ομολογησης το ρημα εν τω στοματι σου οτι κυριος ιησους και πιστευσης εν τη καρδια σου οτι ο θεος αυτον ηγειρεν εκ

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9 ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσης ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσης ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ.

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Appendix II

Romans 10:10 – Textus Receptus

καρδια kardia: heart – noun – dative – singular

γαρ gar: for – conjunction

πιστευεται pisteuo: believe – verb – present

εις eis: into, unto, to, for, towards, among – preposition

δικαιοσυνην dikaiosune: righteousness – noun – singular

στοματι stoma: mouth, face, edge – noun – dative – singular

δε de: but, moreover, and – conjunction

ομολογεται homologeo: to agree with, assent – verb – present

εις eis: into, unto, to, for, towards, among – preposition

σωτηριαν soteria: salvation – noun – singular

καρδια	γαρ	πιστευεται	εις	δικαιοσυνην	στοματι	δε
kardia	gar	pisteuo	eis	dikaiousune	stoma	de
heart	for	believe	to	righteousness	mouth	and
ομολογεται	εις	σωτηριαν				
homologeo	eis	soteria				
assent	to	salvation				

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. KJV

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth man confesseth to salvation. Geneva Bible

For the heart believes unto righteousness, and the mouth agrees to salvation. (Therefore the heart and the mouth agree.) FEL

Majority Text

10 καρδια γαρ πιστευεται εις δικαιοσυνην στοματι δε
ομολογεται εις σωτηριαν

Wescott Hort Text

10 καρδια γαρ πιστευεται εις δικαιοσυνην στοματι δε
ομολογεται εις σωτηριαν

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¹⁰ καρδία γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ
ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν.

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Appendix III

9 That <3754> if <1437> thou shalt **confess** <3670> (5661) with <1722> thy <4675> mouth <4750> the Lord <2962> Jesus <2424>, and <2532> shalt believe <4100> (5661) in <1722> thine <4675> heart <2588> that <3754> God <2316> hath raised <1453> (5656) him <846> from <1537> the dead <3498>, thou shalt be saved <4982> (5701).

10 For <1063> with the heart <2588> man believeth <4100> (5743) unto <1519> righteousness <1343>; and <1161> with the mouth <4750> **confession** is made <3670> (5743) unto <1519> salvation <4991>. Romans 10:9,10

3670 ὁμολογέω *homologeō hom-ol-og-eh'-o*

from a compound of the base of [3674](#) and [3056](#); TDNT-5:199,687; v

AV-confess 17, profess 3, promise 1, give thanks 1, confession is made 1, acknowledgeth 1; 24

1) to say the same thing as another, i.e. **to agree with, assent**

2) to concede

2a) not to refuse, to promise

2b) not to deny

2b1) to **confess**

2b2) declare

2b3) to confess, i.e. to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of

3) to profess

3a) to declare openly, speak out freely

3b) to profess one's self the worshipper of one

4) to praise, celebrate

5661 Tense-Aorist [5777](#), Voice-Active [5784](#), Mood-Subjunctive [5792](#), Count: 512

5777 Tense-Aorist

The aorist tense is characterized by its emphasis on punctiliar action; that is, the concept of the verb is considered without regard for past, present, or future time. There is no direct or clear English equivalent for this tense, though it is generally rendered as a simple past tense in most translations.

The events described by the aorist tense are classified into a number of categories by grammarians. The most common of these include a view of the action as having begun from a certain point ("inceptive aorist"), or having ended at a certain point ("cumulative aorist"), or merely existing at a certain point ("punctiliar aorist"). The categorization of other cases can be found in Greek reference grammars.

The English reader need not concern himself with most of these finer points concerning the aorist tense, since in most cases they cannot be rendered accurately in English translation, being fine points of Greek exegesis only. The common practice of rendering an aorist by a simple English past tense should suffice in most cases.

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3674 ΟΜΟΥ homou *hom-oo'*

genitive case of homos (the same, akin to [260](#)) as adv; ; adv

AV-together 3; 3

1) together: of persons assembled together

For Synonyms see entry [5807](#)

3056 ΛΟΓΟΣ logos *log'-os*

from [3004](#); TDNT-4:69,505; n m

AV-word 218, saying 50, account 8, speech 8, Word (Christ) 7, thing 5, not tr 2, misc 32; 330

1) of speech

1a) a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea

5743 Tense-Present [5774](#), Voice-Passive [5786](#), Mood-Indicative [5791](#), Count: 271