

With the heart man believeth

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Alex Murdo Macleod

[0 : 00] We may now turn to words in the chapter we read in the epistle of Paul to the Romans chapter 9 and we may read that verse 8 again, Romans 10 reading at verse 8.

But what says it? The word is nigh thee even in thy mouth and in thy heart. That is the word of faith which we preach.

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 for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

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

Now there are two main ideas set before us in that verse.

[1 : 18] The one faith or believing and the other confession. And Paul says to the Romans that man believes with the heart unto righteousness and that he confesses with the mouth unto salvation.

the connection between these two concepts we believe the faith mentioned here and the confession is in a real sense similar to the kind of connection we find between believing our faith and works especially in the epistle of James.

James lackens faith without works to a body without the spirit or without the soul which means that the body is dead.

the true faith of those who are saved he lackens to a body that has the spirit or soul is still in it and therefore is alive.

here he associates faith and confession with the mouth and we believe that the confessing with the mouth in this verse is representative of not words merely which we can speak out with our mouths but of our lives as a whole so that our living our practical living gives expression to the faith by which we are justified and is therefore an evidence a sure evidence a proof that we have that particular faith that justifies and because it is the faith that justifies it and its fruit in our lives are unto salvation that is what Paul states here that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation and I should like to think as simply as we can and for a little on these concepts first of all this believing faith that is so repeatedly mentioned in the Bible and in Paul's writings and which clearly has such a significant place in God's blessing of his people he tells us here first of all about this faith that it has a very special object now as I said

[5 : 24] I am going to try and deal very simply with these truths tonight it is a faith that has a special object now if one were to ask some people what faith do they have upon which they build their hope of heaven and eternal salvation they would if they were honest tell you that it is their belief that there is a God that God exists and they have no doubt that their belief is in the existence of the true God it is difficult if not impossible to persuade anybody that their belief in a God is a belief in a false

God most usually only God himself the true God can convince passion of the sinfulness the real sinfulness of anything including the sin of idolatry or belief in a false God so everyone who believes in the existence of God are convinced in their own minds that their belief is in the true God but whether it be belief in the existence of the true God or not the question facing us at this moment is is that the faith that is known as saving faith on which there is so much emphasis in the Bible well you might say there is a difference inevitably between someone who believes in the existence of a false

God and another who believes in the existence of the true God I mean it would be foolish of anyone to think or to believe or judge otherwise there is a vast difference between belief in the existence of the one living and true God and a God of one's own imagination salvation some of you perhaps read or if you didn't you may have heard how at one point in his life the well known Scottish saint of last century Rabbi Duncan who had for long questioned if not positively doubted the existence of God at all one day was made to dance with joy because all of a sudden he had come to believe that God exists that there is a God and then some people if you were to ask them perhaps the bent of their mind is in slightly at least in another direction perhaps their confidence is based more positively upon their conviction that they believe that the

Bible is the word of God and probably they regard such people they regard that this is the distinguishing mark as it were par excellence of the Christian faith and of Christian people they are individuals who are persuaded in their minds of the truth of the Bible the scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to them are without question the very word of God and perhaps if you are going to ask them they would tell you that their belief is total as far as they can assess themselves and their faith their confidence is total that the scriptures are the word of God if you were even to ask them did they for a moment question any one verse in the

Bible whether it was or was not the word of God they would declare quite honestly that they had never questioned the truth of any word of scripture and the question is is that the faith that saves now when we turn to this context we find the Holy Spirit through Paul declaring in verse nine that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus the Lord Jesus and shalt believe now you listen carefully very intently to the word of

[11 : 37] God in regard to the question what is saving faith and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved now we'll just go back upon these few words which obviously express what Paul meant to be of the very essence of saving faith the Lord Jesus if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved everyone who has saving faith believes that

God is he believes in the existence of the one living and true God and I dare say that he believes also that the Old and New Testaments are the living words of the living God but there is something additional here he confesses the Lord Jesus and he believes that God has raised him from the dead so you might say that there you have a belief in one particular passion as to his birth his life his death his burial and his resurrection from the dead by the power of

God by the power of the very one living God in whom you say you believe now you can see that there is a wide a very wide ranging perspective brought into focus by the words of the apostle additional to believing in the existence of God additional to believing the inspiration of the scriptures as God's holy word there is something brought in no doubt that binds these two together the living God and the scriptures because within the scriptures the same living God in whom you believe reveals his glory in a particular way you will find that although there is a variety of ways in which he speaks although there are many forms in which his mind and wisdom come to the notice of men who can read his word and learn his word the revelation as it were concentrates in a very special way upon a certain person and that person is here named the

Lord Jesus first first of all everyone who knows with faith the name Jesus knows the Jesus of whom Paul here speaks as the Jesus who has a central place in the revelation that God has given us now have you made that discovery in your heart you will notice it is that faith that indwells the heart have you in your heart as it were found out for yourself that amongst all the character amongst all the events amongst all the changes recorded for us in the living word of

God there is one whose name is Jesus who is different from all others the event of whose birth is unique who is like so many in many ways but who is so different so vastly different from all others not from some of the others but from all of the others that he stands out apart elevated transcendent in the revelation that the scriptures of the old and new testaments give to us in this world of sin Jesus have you discovered in your heart how unique he is in his conception a term that people preserved people do not customarily use publicly at least but you see those who have faith know that there is a conception that must be believed and that must be confessed where the

[18 : 24] Christian faith is in exercise and where the Christian witness is made forth in this world there is a unique conception the conception of this Jesus in the womb of a mother who was a virgin in other words a conception that occurs not according to the normal laws of God in creation but a conception that occurs miraculously a conception that is itself however momentary as an event a conception that is in itself a breaking in upon the creature's experience and even upon the laws that govern creature experiences the divine being breaks in upon these experiences so that there is a special revelation of the glory of the one living

God in the very beginning of the life of this man Jesus miraculously conceived in the womb of a virgin and the Jesus who is born and who grows through infancy boyhood and youth in the world have you in your heart or perhaps your vision your understanding is like a dim glimmering of light but is there in your heart the effect of a discovery of the unique nature of that boyhood of which so little is revealed so little written in his own word about the experiences of his boyhood have you in your heart discovered something of the uniqueness of that man

Jesus of Nazareth does that follow you all the days of your life and in all the journeys and amidst all the changes of your life does that follow you a heart's conviction of the uniqueness of this man the Lord Jesus do you discover in your heart a refusal to allow even one other to enter into the same position in comparison with him is there in your heart as it were a conviction that sees in his brilliant light of glory as a man something that makes all others even the holiest the saintliest who ever lived on earth to pale into insignificance beside him have you discovered in your heart that the

Lord Jesus in his teaching in the earth has given a revelation of wisdom and in addition has set forth claims for himself even upon you that no other man ever dared to bring upon the consciences and understandings of men in other words that this man Jesus has to do with you as none other even those to whom you are bound with ties that are inseparable in this world that this man Jesus has a claim higher and stronger and more lasting upon you upon your heart and upon your life and have you discovered his strange death as being a death that not only differs from most other deaths in its mode the manner of his dying nailed to a cursed tree but have you discovered in your heart that even in comparison with those who were on either side of him at the actual event of his crucifixion dying physically the same kind of death he remains still apart as he was in his birth and during the course of his life he remains in the throes of death while visibly accompanied by two other men dying the same kind of physical death he is still as far apart alone in his uniqueness as he ever has been is there something in your heart that responds to that truth regarding

Jesus of Nazareth and when you look upon him as his body is brought down from the cross and with loving hands enclosed and placed in Joseph's tomb have you ever discovered an account of any burial now some here have wept their hearts have been broken witnessing burials in this world and some no doubt will remain with broken hearts because of these burials there is a sense a true sense in which they shall never rise above them in the sense of forgetting about these burials these bodies are interwoven in a way in a very living real way in their hearts affections as the living souls who indwelt them but dwell in them no more but

[25 : 57] I ask you who have experienced such feelings as a result of the burial of a beloved one is the burial of this man still unique in your heart experience is it apart even still from every other burial and then you think of his resurrection something unique indeed although we are told in the holy word of God that at the time of his own the bodies of many others came forth from their graves and entered into the holy city and every time I think of these words of scripture my response to them is this well they must be among the strange the most obscure mysterious words in all the

Bible what is meant by the holy city who were the saints who arose from their graves where did they go they were seen of many did they remain for long or for short where they were seen did they return to their graves and there is no answer to any of these questions for us in God's word mystery upon mystery but however long and deep men may meditate on such strange words there still remains a resurrection that is a part the resurrection of Jesus and have you thought upon his visits to his own following upon his resurrection have you thought upon the effect of that wondrous event upon downcast spirits that were at times no doubt on the brink of despair if for no other reason than that their understandings were battled by events and by the events concerning

Jesus especially and soon there were men who would turn the world upside down because of the effects of the man Jesus upon their hearts as the risen Lord whom they now knew to be the victor over death and over the grave and with their eyes they beheld him ascending up into heaven and thereafter they knew him not just as the babe born of the virgin Mary at Bethlehem and all inhabitants of the earth to whom every tongue shall confess before whom every knee shall bow and who shall be acknowledged universally as

Jesus Christ the Lord and you see that is the next term you have here believing in the Lord Jesus have you in your heart discovered that this Jesus possesses a glory a glory that surpasses infinitely all the wonder and majesty of his human nature now these are strong claims to make about any being but we have to make this claim concerning the Lord Jesus that the revelation of majesty and glory in and through his human nature was at the same time a veil that hid a greater glory that he possesses for he is the

Lord Jesus in the beginning John says was the word and the word was with God and the word was God by him all things were created and without him there was nothing made that was made and the word was made flesh the living God was made flesh he is creator of all things out of nothing by the word of his power he is the one by whom all creatures and creation are sustained in existence he is the one who governs the providences of all creatures visible and invisible in heaven and on earth in a most holy wise and powerful way because he himself is

[32 : 14] God now in your heart is there a belief in the Lord Jesus in Jesus as Lord and in the Lord as Jesus have you discovered that there is a person who is God and man in two distinct ages and one person forever no he tells us that it's a believing with the heart and all of us know how with our minds we can believe and believe truly that is believe with a strong and powerful conviction of the truth of what we are told or what we read because our understanding is satisfied that it is a statement of fact and not of fiction and we believe and we are honest and upright in our belief because we consider that we have sufficient grounds for believing it as fact and not fiction or error but this is a believing in the heart believing all that I have said regarding this passion and believing in the heart or with the heart now

I have before tried to explain here what is meant by the heart in scripture we know that the physical heart is regarded by most anyway there are some of another opinion but by many if not most that the physical heart is looked upon as a central organ in our physical structure and the heart of which the Bible speaks in reference to the soul of man is surely also to be regarded in that same way as central in our spiritual structure our soul consists of various faculties as we say there is in our soul a capacity for understanding there is the capacity for choosing for willing there is in our soul a capacity for passing judgment upon anything confronting us even upon our own thoughts our own words or actions that is our soul functioning as conscience there are in our soul affections that is the power either to love or to hate our affections and there is in our soul the power to remember the power of imagination all of these are functions of the one living soul and central to them all there is what the bible calls the heart the heart and the bible therefore on the one hand exhorts men to keep the heart with all diligence for out of it it says are the issues of life and when god commands us to come to himself to turn away from idols to serve the living god to follow him closely commands us son give me thine heart for god knows if we withhold our heart no matter what other aspects of our lives we may give or claim to give to him we are not truly we are not sincerely and uprightly consecrating ourselves to god we are in either pretending to be hypocrites or we are self deceived making ourselves to believe that we are something which we are not if we come short in giving the heart to god just as the body then is of one substance and as many organs and members forming different functions the heart one writer says being central so the soul comprising the whole

inner man is composed of different parts organs with different functions the heart being central spirit heart mind conscience all enter into the structure and activity of the soul they all work in harmony and quite possibly overlap but there is an accuracy of using scripture that is very interesting and important it is inconceivable that spirit soul mind heart conscience are all only names for the same thing it is certain that just as the body has an exact histology that is a structure and physiology that is action by that structure so the soul has its structure and clearly defined action each part performing the function assigned to it and all the parts working together in the utmost harmony it was asked of

Ananias why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart that was the seat as it were of all the purposes of man be they good or evil the fountain whence issued forth all the countless kinds of thoughts in the mind of man the condition of the heart determined the functioning of the conscience determined the choices that a man willingly made determines the nature of our affections whether it is God we love with all our soul heart mind or whether some other object has the place of

God as the supreme object of our love the Bible as we all know declares very very plainly the Lord Jesus who knew the hearts of men declared that those things which proceed out of thee mouth come forth from the heart and they define the man evil thoughts murder adulteries fornications theft false witness blasphemies all of these things that pollute God's creation they're issued forth out of the one polluted fountain which is the natural sinful heart of man but do you believe in your heart is there faith in your heart has there begun to grow in such a barren soil as your heart a flower so full of beauty so spiritual and heavenly as a gift from God as faith in the

[42 : 15] Lord Jesus whom God has raised from the dead and then again there is confession with the mouth and just a few thoughts on what Paul probably meant by confessing with them as I said it is probably symbolic or representative of the outward demonstration of the effects of saving faith in the heart and every one of us knows that someone with faith or we ought to know and be ever mindful of that fact that someone who really is a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ that he or she is different that they have become different from what they were in unbelief different from what other men and women and children are who are still and believers and even within the small circle of a family that they are different and that the difference can lead them into a position of choosing between their nearest and dearest relations in the world and following the

Lord Jesus long ago I met a Jewess who was witnessing amongst her own people and she was then in old age in her late 60s and she told me that as a young student in a German university she had been converted to Christ and from that day on she had been disowned by her own family at least I would say over 40 years had passed when her faith in the Lord Jesus had compelled her not unwillingly but willingly to deny the blessing for such it is on the natural level of membership in a household she chose to follow

Christ more recently we had a visitor here who had been of the Sikh religion a young man also I would say in his early or mid twenties at least he did not look any more than that who had been threatened with violence by his own brother his own brother had threatened him with physical violence even to the taking away of his life if he did not deny his new faith and return to his old one but he chose to live in these conditions rather than deny his saviour confessing with the mouth people who have this faith in their heart I think inevitably feel constrained to join the company of those who are like minded with themselves and who are those well those who have the same faith those who have the same

Lord Jesus as their Lord it is a faith that works by love as one might expect when it is a faith that you have in your heart it involves your affections in in a relationship with the Lord Jesus in whom you believe and you cannot help but look out for those who are of a similar spirit and disposition and you find them in the world hard and bad and cold as the world is there are men and women boys and girls young and old rich and poor who have in their heart this faith in the Lord Jesus whom God raised from the dead and they are brought together in him and through him by this faith that works by love

I am a companion David says to all those who worship thee in fear they are one family and they are drawn to one another not only secretly in their heart but openly as members of the one church which is the one mystical body of Christ and then those who have this belief in their heart they surely are people who come together in order to worship this Lord whom they have discovered as their Lord in whom they believe as their Lord they worship him and you will notice how after the crucifixion of Jesus the disciples in their sorrow and sadness seemed to find consolation to some extent through this fellowship that they had one with another they were living in fear of their

[48 : 19] Lord's enemies who were their enemies also and I suppose their very fear as well as their positive affection one for another that their very fear was a means of binding them more closely together and so it is still true that the varied experiences in this life of God's children who believe in the Lord Jesus bring them together they are used to some means by himself of binding up more strongly the spiritual bond that he creates between them as not only objects of his love but as those who love him in return and every one of us knows that we are subjected to trials in this life and that we are subjected to temptations in this life and

I conclude with these few words addressed to the younger members of the audience not just school children but some older than school age you too know that as long as you are here you are compassed about surrounded everywhere with temptation you shall meet with some who are displeased with you school boys and school girls they know this you shall meet with some who are not very happy with you in your company unless you are ready to use swear words and curses like themselves temptation temptation to what temptation not to confess the Lord Jesus but to deny him every foul word on any man's lips or woman's lips for that matter is a denial of the

Lord Jesus who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth whose lips were pure and spotless and perfect who uttered no word but words of truth and purity and righteousness and holiness ever with his lips foul language is a denial not a confession of the Lord Jesus some would have you to be prepared to lie with your lips like themselves some would have you to steal with your hands like themselves would wish you to cast aside all restraints of conscience in gaining filthy advantage or lucre in whatever form like themselves following their advice or their example is that denying of the

Lord Jesus refusing and moreover rebuking are more like a confession of the Lord Jesus which is the duty and the privilege of everyone who believes with the heart that he is the Lord Jesus and that God hath raised him from the dead that is the challenge then not just to believe but to show forth your faith as a faith that makes you a faithful loyal follower of the Lord whom you in your heart trust for your salvation even unto death that you refuse to deny him many have done that that is the ultimate test that this faith meets within this world and there were men not just score of them not even hundreds of them there were thousands of men and of women young and old who confessed the

Lord Jesus at the cost of their blood may God bless these thoughts to us let us pray do thou grant thy blessing to each one of us here gathered before thee this night do thou challenge us directly thyself by thy word and by thy spirit and make us to respond to thee in honesty of heart either in submission to thy command to take up our cross and follow thee are in rejection to our everlasting peril of thy word of command and exhortation forbid oh Lord that any of us should choose to perish but that all of us should choose salvation we confess that only thy mighty power makes us willing to thou then for thine own name sake by that power working within our heart enable us not only to believe upon thee but to deny ourselves to take up our cross and to follow thee confessing thy name wherever we are found in this world be it amongst friends our foes and the glory shall be thine forever amen