

Romans 10:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

Analysis

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—Engys sou to rhēma estin (ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμα ἐστίν, "near you the word is")—the gospel is accessible, present, close at hand. Rhēma (ῥῆμα) emphasizes the spoken word, the proclaimed message, not abstract truth. It is en tō stomati sou kai en tē kardia sou (ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, "in your mouth and in your heart")—confession and belief, the two elements Paul will unpack in verses 9-10.

That is, the word of faith, which we preach—to rhēma tēs pisteōs ho kēryssomen (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν). Paul identifies the word of faith as the message we proclaim (kēryssō, κηρύσσω, "preach, herald, proclaim publicly"). This is apostolic gospel proclamation—objective, historical, Christological content. Faith's object is not faith itself (subjectivism) but Christ as revealed in the word preached. The gospel creates faith by announcing its object.

Historical Context

Deuteronomy 30:14 culminated Moses' covenant renewal, calling Israel to return to Yahweh with heart and mouth obedience. Paul sees this covenantal summons typologically fulfilled in the New Covenant gospel call. The early church's kerygma (Acts 2:14-39; 1 Cor 15:1-8) centered on Christ's death, resurrection, and lordship—objective historical facts demanding response. This "word of faith" was

revolutionary: salvation by hearing and believing a message, not by inheriting ethnic privilege or achieving moral perfection.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the accessibility of the gospel ("nigh thee") expose excuses for unbelief as willful rejection?
2. What is the relationship between the objective gospel proclaimed (rhēma) and the subjective response of faith?
3. Why is it vital that faith has specific content (Christ crucified and risen) rather than being generic religious sentiment?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλὰ	τί	λέγει	Ἐγγύς	σου	τὸ	ῥῆμα	ἔστιν	ἐν	τῷ
But	what	saith it	nigh	thee	G3588	The word	is	even in	G3588
G235	G5101	G3004	G1451	G4675		G4487	G2076	G1722	
στόματί	σου	καὶ	ἐν	τῇ	καρδίᾳ	σου	τοῦτ'	ἔστιν	τὸ
mouth	thee	and	even in	G3588	heart	thee	that	is	G3588
G4750	G4675	G2532	G1722		G2588	G4675	G5124	G2076	
ῥῆμα	τῆς	πίστεως	ὃ	κηρύσσομεν					
The word	G3588	of faith	which	we preach					
G4487		G4102	G3739	G2784					

Additional Cross-References

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

1 Timothy 4:6 (Faith): If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

1 Peter 1:25 (Word): But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Romans 10:17 (Faith): So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Galatians 3:2 (Faith): This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Acts 10:43 (Faith): To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Galatians 3:5 (Faith): He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

1 Peter 1:23 (Word): Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Isaiah 57:19 (Parallel theme): I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

Acts 16:31 (Faith): And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.