

**Title: Effort And Reward - Romans 10 1-14**

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**Read:**

<sup>1-3</sup> Believe me, friends, all I want for Israel is what's best for Israel: salvation, nothing less. I want it with all my heart and pray to God for it all the time. I readily admit that the Jews are impressively energetic regarding God—but they are doing everything exactly backward. They don't seem to realize that this comprehensive setting-things-right that is salvation is God's business, and a most flourishing business it is. Right across the street they set up their own salvation shops and noisily hawk their wares. After all these years of refusing to really deal with God on his terms, insisting instead on making their own deals, they have nothing to show for it. <sup>4-10</sup> The earlier revelation was intended simply to get us ready for the Messiah, who then puts everything right for those who trust him to do it. Moses wrote that anyone who insists on using the law code to live right before God soon discovers it's not so easy—every detail of life regulated by fine print! But trusting God to shape the right living in us is a different story—no precarious climb up to heaven to recruit the Messiah, no dangerous descent into hell to rescue the Messiah. So what exactly was Moses saying? The word that saves is right here, as near as the tongue in your mouth, as close as the heart in your chest. It's the word of faith that welcomes God to go to work and set things right for us. This is the core of our preaching. Say the welcoming word to God—"Jesus is my Master"—embracing, body and soul, God's work of doing in us what he did in raising Jesus from the dead. That's it. You're not "doing" anything; you're simply calling out to God, trusting him to do it for you. That's salvation. With your whole being you embrace God setting things right, and then you say it, right out loud: "God has set everything right between him and me!" <sup>11-13</sup> Scripture reassures us, "No one who trusts God like this—heart and soul—will ever regret it." It's exactly the same no matter what a person's religious background may be: the same God for all of us, acting the same incredibly generous way to everyone who calls out for help. "Everyone who calls, 'Help, God!' gets help."

**Think:**

Effort and reward that's the way your school or college works, that's the way most jobs work, that may even be the way parts of your home life work. It's simple you go to classes and learn, that's effort. You write essays and take exams, that's effort. Then you get given a grade, that's reward. You may have a job where you go to work that's effort. You may have to do chores at home, that's effort. Then you get paid cash, or get given an allowance, that's reward. See the whole world works on effort and reward. You put effort in and work on one thing to get rewarded or earn another. Life is simple and we all understand how it works. But then as normal God works by his own rules, I guess that's Ok as it's his world. With God it works like this. You do nothing and you get rewarded for free. Hmm sounds cheap doesn't it, maybe the rewards not worth having. I said you get it for free, I didn't say it cost nothing. No your reward of eternal life in Heaven cost a whole lot; it cost the life of the Son of God brutally nailed to a cross. So now we remember how much our reward cost, maybe we can start remembering that we can't earn our way into Heaven because the cost has been paid by Jesus. So we can stop feeling guilty and doing things to earn our way into Heaven, and start doing things because we are grateful that God has paid the cost. Next time you stack a chair at church, befriend a loner at school, do something for the elderly to help, remember why you are doing it. It's not effort and then reward with God, it's reward and then thanks.

**Pray:**

Lord of the world I thank you for my reward, please give me opportunities to show my thanks today. Amen.

**Action:**

OK you have the reward, what are you going to do right now to show your thanks? Cherrio.