

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

**Topic:** In Pursuit of Salvation



**Bible Verse:** “..but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone."

**Romans 9:31-32**

**Thoughts:** As a young boy, I loved a good car chase scene on TV. The bad guys are being chased and eventually the authorities catch up with them. We want the police to “get the goods” on the bad guys and bring them to justice. Authorities today are trained to travel at high speeds. Thanks to improved communication equipment, GPS tracking and drones, they can also stop criminal activity with technology. Being in “hot pursuit” of the bad guys has really changed in today’s world.

Spiritually, we are to be engaged in another kind of pursuit. Are you pursuing the things of God, or the things of the world? Are you pursuing your plan for your life, or God’s plan for how he wants to use you? Are you pursuing everlasting life with God, or just how to better your earthly life for the here and now?

Paul writes in the above verse that there is a proper way to pursue the things of God. To pursue God’s salvation and hope, we could make the mistake of pursuing it by works. Paul calls that the “stumbling stone”. Believers who tried to chase after it by means of the Law attained nothing. But those who pursue it by faith, attain eternal life. In other words, there is a right and a wrong way to pursue salvation. The wrong way is to think that we are doing something to earn it. The right way is to come back to God’s saving grace in Christ. We receive salvation by faith.

God meets up with us quickly at the Cross, and there we discover that there is no need to strive after anything else. Christ’s work on the cross is finished and there is nothing you or I could do to improve upon it, or add to it. Christ accomplished all!

See in the Gospel, God is actually chasing us. He is traveling at high speeds with his Word! He calls us to repent and confess our sins (Mark 1:15). He is calling us to confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and submit to Him in every area of our life (James 4:7).

What will He do when He catches us? He and all the angels will rejoice (Luke 15:10) and then He will write you a ticket! No, not for going over the speed limit, but for entrance into the City of God. Amen.

**Life Application:** Have you ever tackled a project in completely the wrong way? How far did you get? What turned you around, so that you were able to reach your goal? Sometimes we pursue God in the wrong way, but the Word of God always turns us in the right direction.

Is it possible to be very religious but not truly seeking to know God?

Yes. Sometimes we omit prayer and talking with God, and make discipleship only about the religious behaviors that others see on the outside.

**Prayer:** *Gracious God, Help me to pursue you in the ways that you have highlighted: Prayer, your Word and by receiving the salvation in Christ, that has already been won for me. Use me daily for Kingdom purposes. Amen.*

Have a wonderful September! ---Pastor Chris