

Don't trip over the Foundation.

Romans 9:30-33

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

Head starts and disadvantages

- How can broken people from messed-up environments end up being right with God?
 - 9:30 *What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;*
- How can law-abiding people fixated on morality and religion end up alienated from God?
 - 9:31 *but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.*
 - How could it be possible that the efforts of the best people aren't enough? – 9:32a *Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works.*
 - 9:32b-9:33 *They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

- Paul the Apostle blends Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 to help us grasp the situation.¹

Cornerstone, most often the large stone placed in the foundation at the principal corner of a building but occasionally...the top or final stone of a building.²

Q: Why would Jesus be a cause of stumbling or offense?

A: The problem is not Jesus. The issue is an obsession with me trying to be my own Jesus. Self-focus and obsession eventually lead to collapse.

How to build on rather than trip over the Foundation

- 1) Seekers, what advantage does your current Foundation have over Jesus?
- 2) Christians, ask: "What does God say about this?" Sexuality + Marriage + Finances + Truth + Others
- 3) Christians, because you have an immovable foundation, you're equipped to support and serve those God has given you. How can you serve those around you this week?

¹ Robert H. Mounce, *Romans, The New American Commentary*, vol. 27 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 206.

² Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 189.