Dear Raymond,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You cited Romans 10:9 and asked where a person stands who wants to believe with all his heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, but something in the mind continues to “add a question mark to that thought.” You wondered if such a person would be “saved” if he continually puts a “question mark” on that scripture. Would there be no hope for him? You wondered why you were unable to “just simply believe.” You said that you were “desperate” to know if you were “saved.”

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” (Romans 10:9-10)

Before we address the particulars of your question, it is important to know that you and the entire human race have been redeemed. God in his infinite wisdom and mercy foresaw that man would sin and would be in need of a redeemer. Therefore, he sent his Son, Jesus to pay the ransom price so that all of Adam’s fallen progeny (not just those who believe) would have an opportunity for everlasting life, either in heaven or on earth. Jesus’ sacrifice included all of mankind, regardless of when a person lived or whether he has accepted Jesus as his Savior now or not. “This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given at its proper time. (1 Timothy 2:3-6) “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22)

The above scriptures tell us that Jesus provided a ransom for everyone, some now, who are following Him and sacrificing their wills, and some later. Those who are sacrificing now have been called by God and look forward to a heavenly reward mentioned in John 13:33-36; 14:1-4; and 17:24. This heavenly destination is only for a very select few, who, if faithful, will have a change of nature from human to spiritual (Romans 6:5; 2 Corinthians 5:1-2; Revelation 3:20-21). However, the vast majority of mankind will be awakened on earth to a period of judgment, or decision, in which they will have an opportunity to willingly follow God’s laws of righteousness and perfect their characters. (See Isaiah 35 and 65:17-25.)

In Romans 10:9, the Apostle Paul’s use of the word “saved” refers to both heavenly and earthly salvation. In order to achieve eternal life in heaven, one must confess that Jesus is Lord and believe it with all his heart and live his life as a true disciple of Christ. If one is not in the heart condition to confess Jesus now, he will have an opportunity to do so later when Christ’s kingdom on earth is established. If, after the resurrection of all mankind on earth, he is still unable to confess that Jesus is Lord and believe it in his heart, then, after a generously long period of trial, he will be taken away. (He will not be saved.)
To whom was the Apostle Paul referring in Romans 10:9-10? He was referring to the Israelites and their unbelief. (See Romans 9:30-33 and chapter 10.) Had they all believed that Jesus was Lord, they would have had the opportunity to make up the entire heavenly class. Henceforth, they would be “saved” from judgment later.

Have you been “saved”? You and all of humanity have been redeemed. Your ultimate salvation, whether now (the heavenly reward) or later in the earthly kingdom, depends on your heart-felt deep and abiding faith in Jesus, your Redeemer. The apostle tells us that confession with the mouth is the outward evidence of faith in the heart. For any of us to have heart-faith, we must be thoroughly convinced that the scriptures are true and that God resurrected Jesus. If we have some doubt, we, as Christians, need to manage and dissuade the doubt through prayer and by actively dedicating ourselves to finding the truth in the Bible and proving it to ourselves. We are told to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

You said you were desperate to know if you were saved. The good news is that you have been redeemed. You are not lost. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, you will have an opportunity for life either on earth or in heaven. A heavenly reward is dependent upon your faith and the “work” you do in order to understand the word of God and live a life of righteousness while sacrificing your own will in order to do the will of God.

For your edification, we have attached a file entitled, “Who Lit the Fire in Hell?” We hope it will help alleviate your fears and clarify hell’s true meaning. We have also attached the short slide show, “A Ransom for All.” Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio