

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #38

Romans 10:14-21

If ever there were a nation who had all possible information about God, it is Israel .

The reason Paul writes these verses is to show why Israel is lost, guilty, and condemned. Paul wanted Israel to understand that she had been a rich nation in her knowledge of God, but she was destitute in her relationship with God.

UNBELIEVERS WHO HAVE HEARD THE GOSPEL WILL NOT BE IN HELL BECAUSE OF THEIR IGNORANCE BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR REBELLION .

CONCEPT #1 – How God saves. **10:14-17**

In these verses, Paul gives us an inverted order as to how God saves people. The chronological process from a human perspective is that you hear the Word, usually presented by a messenger who presents the good grace news of Jesus Christ, and you believe and call on God for salvation. There are four specific steps Paul brings out in the typical process of salvation:

(Step #1) - God saves through faith . **10:14a**

In order for a person to be saved, he must believe on Christ and ask Him to be his Savior. He must call to God asking Christ to save him. You cannot be saved by works or religion, only by faith.

Paul's point here is that the Jews were so proud and had not believed on Christ and they were not about to call on Him for salvation.

(Step #2) - God saves through a message . **10:14b**

The Gospel of God's grace is not a secret to be hoarded; it is good news to be heralded .

The main point is that in order for a person to believe on Jesus Christ there must be a presentation of the message of Jesus Christ, for through the message people believe.

Now keep in mind that the purpose of this section is to show that Israel is guilty (**10:18**). So the real implication of this text is that unbelief really is manifested when the message has been heard.

(Step #3) - God saves through a preacher . **10:14c-16**

The word "preacher" (κηρυσσω) is one that means to proclaim and preach. A preacher is one who heralds the truth of God's Word (G. Abbott Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 246). There are four specific characteristics that Paul brings out in this text about a true preacher:

Characteristic #1 - A true preacher of God preaches Jesus Christ. **10:14c**

I would understand this to mean that a true messenger is one who will preach, proclaim, and herald the message that salvation is by faith alone in Jesus Christ through the pure grace of God.

Characteristic #2 - A true preacher of God is sent by God. **10:15a**

The word “sent” is one from which we get our word “apostle.” The word carries with it the idea of some official or authoritative person dispatching or sending someone out for service (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 54). God is the one who officially and authoritatively calls a preacher and dispatches him or sends him some specific place to preach.

(Type #1) - Preachers that God called directly - Jesus Christ called Paul (Acts 9:6), Peter, and John and others.

(Type #2) - Preachers that God calls indirectly - this is operative today.

1) God called some indirectly through the apostles - Titus - Titus 1:4-5

2) God called some indirectly through spiritual leaders - Timothy - I Timothy 4:14.

3) God calls some indirectly through ministry at a local church - Stephen - Acts 6:2, 5

Unless a man has been called by God, he will fail miserably in this life and most certainly the next life.

(Type #3) - Preachers that men call - do not pray, do not seek God’s wisdom, denomination appoints, or it is handled like a business deal.

(Type #4) - Preachers who call themselves. These think more highly of themselves than they ought. They have not really been called by God or have never been identified as having a gift, but they want to be in ministry for some distorted motivation.

(Type #5) - Preachers that Satan calls (II Cor. 11:13-15).

These are men who cannot and will not accurately handle Scripture, but they are able to stand up before people and say captivating things.

What Paul is saying here is that Israel had God-ordained, God-called, God-sent preachers and she would not listen to them.

Characteristic #3 - A preacher of God is beautiful to God. **10:15b**

His point is that those who proclaim the Truth of God’s Word are beautiful to God and beautiful to those right with God.

Characteristic #4 - A preacher of God is unpopular with most. **10:16**

Paul is quoting from Isaiah 53:1, clearly connecting the suffering Savior with the message the messenger is proclaiming. Isaiah predicted that messengers would come proclaiming the truth and not many would listen to them or believe them.

(Step #4) - God saves through the Word. **10:17**

What is it that produces faith? What should this church do to get people to believe?

1. Maybe we should try a new approach. Maybe we should unleash a new series of fantastic gimmicks. Maybe some famous athlete will help. Maybe he could get people to respond.
2. Maybe we should try some new psychological technique to reach the emotions.
3. Maybe we should use an entertainment approach.
4. Maybe we should pray for something supernatural.

Circumstances and times may change, but one thing stands forever true - faith comes through the hearing of God's Word.

The greatest thing that this church can do to produce faith is to see to it that God's Word is carefully and accurately preached from this pulpit.

When people come to church to hear God's Word accurately preached, faith is being produced.

CONCEPT #2 – How unbelievers respond. **10:18-21**

There are three main responses of unbelievers:

Response #1 - They respond by hearing. **10:18**

Unbelievers do come and listen. The problem for the unbeliever is not hearing.

Response #2 - They respond by knowing. **10:19-20**

Unbelievers know things about God. The problem for the unbeliever is not one of ignorance. In fact, Paul quotes Moses in **verse 19** and Isaiah in **verse 20** to prove that he was going to allow other people into the program other than the Jews. The Jews actually had in writing the entire program of God.

Response #3 - They respond by rebell. **10:21**

God, in His grace and mercy, stretched out His merciful hands “all the day long” but Israel proudly rebelled.

The message has been presented. You have heard the true Word of God. Will you repent or rebel?