

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Israel's Failure, Part 6

Scripture: Romans 10:11-15

Code: 45-80

Let's open our Bibles for our study tonight to Romans chapter 10...Romans chapter 10. Our theme in this particular tenth chapter is the ignorance of Israel. The key verse, verse 2, "I bear them witness that they have a great zeal for God but not according to knowledge for they being ignorant."

The Apostle Paul is trying to explain why Israel rejected the gospel. He has been presenting for many many chapters the gospel of salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And he knows that in the presentation like this somebody is going to ask the question: if this new message, this new gospel, this truth that you're giving us is really true, is really from God, why then do the Jews who had received all the rest of God's revelation reject it? How can it be so if Israel doesn't believe it? And so therefore in chapters 9 and 10 he explains the unbelief of Israel.

In chapter 9 he explains it by virtue of the sovereignty of God, that is it was God's plan that it be so. And in chapter 10 he explains it by the unbelief of Israel. Israel has rejected the gospel on the one hand because it is in the plan of God. Secondly, because of unbelief. And you have again that marvelous duality that really covers all events of human history and divine redemptive history and that is that God's sovereignty and man's volition act together in some fashion which we find difficult to resolve. But Paul is saying, "Yes, Israel has rejected...but that is as it is planned," chapter 9, "and that is due to their own ignorant unbelief," chapter 10.

The Apostle John said, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not," and Paul is explaining to us why that is the case. It isn't that Israel was indifferent to God. It isn't that they didn't care about God. They cared a lot about God. They pursued God. It isn't that they were indifferent to Scripture. They cared about Scripture. They pursued the knowledge of Scripture. They were vehement in the pursuit of religious matters. They had a zeal for God, verse 2 says. But it was not according to knowledge. They were concerned for God. They were concerned for His Word but not according to the truth. They sought God but in a wrong way. And there's one bottom line basic reason, and if you understand this you really have a good handle on why all people who disbelieve disbelieve, and it is this, they love their sin so much they weren't willing to accept a gospel that would cause them to have to confess it, repent and turn from it. That's the basic bottom line. In their case it was not ignorance, it was willful sin.

In John chapter 3, that is explained to us in a very familiar passage, John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation that light has come into the world, and that light is Christ, and men love darkness

rather than light...and here's why...because their...what?...deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that does truth comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Why do men disbelieve? Because they love their evil. They do not want to come and have it exposed. They reject the gospel because it is a gospel that sheds the shining light of conviction on sin. And people who aren't really...aren't willing to be exposed as sinners, who aren't willing to turn from their sin aren't going to hear the message. That's why Jesus said to the religious leaders of Israel, "I can't minister to you because I have not come to call the righteous to repent." And says, as long as you will not allow your sin to be exposed, I can't help you.

And so, it is ignorant unbelief because of a love of sin. To put it in other terms, it is the parable of the soils in Matthew 13 that helps us with this. You have a sower sowing seed, nothing wrong with the sower and nothing wrong with the seed. The sower is adept, he throws the seed well. The seed is the Word of God and you can't improve on that. And the sower sows the seed and some are hard and the seed never penetrates at all. Some are soft and it penetrates for a little while but there's a rock bed underneath and it dies. Some soil is filled with weeds and as the seed falls and dies and decomposes and starts to grow, the weeds choke it out. And then some is good ground and it flourishes and brings forth fruit. The point is, it isn't the sower and it isn't the seed, it's the what? It's the soil. And where you have soil that loves evil, soil that is hard and unplowed and never turned over by conviction, or never cleaned out of its weeds and the love of the world and the love of evil, there cannot be the growth of the seed that gives life.

The issue then is a love of sin. And in the case of Israel they did not respond to the gospel because they wanted it the way it was. They wanted to indulge themselves in the present sinning rather than be called to a transformed life.

This is really nothing new. In Isaiah chapter 30 and verse 9 we read, "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the Lord, who say to the seers, or the prophets, See not. And to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Can you imagine that? They would rather hear lies than the truth. "Get out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the holy one of Israel to cease from before us. Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, Because you despise this word and trust in oppression and perverseness and rely on them, therefore this iniquity shall be to you," and so forth and so on. In other words, they weren't interested in the truth. They wanted to hear lies. They wanted to hear smooth things. They wanted to be pacified. They wanted to be indulged in their sin. And that was nothing really very new at all. In fact, you will find many other passages in the Old Testament that speak of the same kind of attitude where the hearts of men are not even interested in the truth of God. They are utterly resistant to it because of a love of sin.

In Job 24:13 it says of sinful people, "They are of those that rebel against the light. They know not its ways, nor abide in its paths." And the reason they don't is because they rebel against it. They're not interested at all in responding to it. In Proverbs chapter 1 verse 29 it says, "Because they hated knowledge and didn't choose the fear of the Lord they would have none of My counsel." They hated knowledge and they did not choose to believe the things of God. That's a willful choice based upon the love of sin.

Now as you come into the New Testament, it is very clear that the people of Israel love their own indulgent sins. And they did not want to turn from them. They loved their false religion. They loved their works righteousness. They loved their adulteries. They loved their lying. They loved their extortion. They loved all of that stuff. And in Matthew chapter 11 as the Lord confronts the cities of Galilee, He says, "Woe unto you, Chorazin, woe unto you, Bethsaida, if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell. If the mighty works which had been done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day and it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you." In other words, you've had all the information and all the exposure to all the miracles and all the truths and you've rejected and the reason is love of sin...love of sin.

We find in John chapter 7 verse 7 another Scripture that speaks very pointedly to this matter. It says, "The world cannot hate you...Jesus speaking...but it hates Me because...very important statement...I testify of it that its works are evil." You ought to mark somewhere in your mind and in your Bible John 7:7. Jesus says the world hates Me and My message because I tell it that its works are evil. That's the issue. Sinful people do not want to be confronted about their sinfulness. They want to go on in entertaining their sin and indulging themselves in vice and evil as they have in the past. It's only the desperate. It's only the ones who have had enough, the ones who want to abandon it, who want to turn from it who truly come to God.

In fact, in Romans chapter 1, do you remember verse 32 which says, "They know the judgment of God that they who commit such things are worthy of death but they not only keep doing the same but they have pleasure in them that do them?" They know the message of truth. They know the judgment of God. They keep doing it, keep doing it, keep doing it without repentance, without change, without a desire to be different.

Paul writing to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:12 says they have pleasure in unrighteousness...pleasure in unrighteousness. First Peter 2:8 says, "They stumble at the Word being disobedient." They are disobedient. They want to live against the law of God, and that's the basic bottom line.

So, when you look at the nation Israel and you try to understand their unbelief, you must realize that it is not the unbelief of ignorant people in terms of doctrine, it is not that they really were ignorant because they never had a message. It isn't that they were ignorant because they didn't hear the truth. It is that they were ignorant because they never allowed themselves to perceive it because they wouldn't let the message in because it unmasked their sin. They were guilty of willful unbelief because they loved their sin. And that's the way it usually is. Oh, granted, there are some people in the world who may be ignorant of the gospel of Christ and we need to reach those people and if their hearts are open God will reach them and does reach them. But of those people who have been exposed to the truth to any degree and will not respond, it is because of the love of their sin and thus they are ignorant.

So, Israel loved its sin. They had a zeal for God and a zeal for religion but it was not according to the truth because they rejected the truth due to the love of their own sin. In fact, would you notice the last verse of chapter 10? God says, "All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and contrary people." That was the issue. They were just disobedient...contrary, they wanted to go their own way.

Now as we look at this marvelous chapter, Paul shows us how this ignorance manifest itself. It is the ignorance of willful unbelief due to the love of sin. And it manifest itself in various facets. First of all, we've learned they were ignorant of the person of God in verse 3. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness," they didn't know how holy God was. Secondly, we've learned that they were ignorant of the provision of Christ. Verse 4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes." They were ignorant of the provision of Christ. Like Mimonedes(?), the great Jewish philosopher of the twelfth century who wrote, "He did not meet with success and was slain," and that's his commentary on Jesus. They didn't understand the provision of Christ.

And thirdly, we've learned that Israel was ignorant of the place of faith. They didn't understand faith. Verse 9 sums that up, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." They didn't understand the person of God. They didn't fully understand the provision of Christ. They didn't understand the place of faith. They were in the ignorance of willful unbelief because they loved their sin. They would not believe the truth and so they were left in their ignorance.

Now for our lesson tonight, I want us to look at the fourth element. Israel was ignorant of the proportions of salvation. I like the word "proportions," I think it fits better this context. I want you to see in verses 11 to 18 that they did not understand the proportions of salvation. And by the proportions I mean the extent, the measure, the breath, how far it really reached.

Now having affirmed in verses 5 through 10 the place of faith, Paul moves immediately to the proportions of salvation. How far it extended. And this is why, listen very carefully because we mentioned this many times but it's important in this text. The Jews had a very difficult time accepting a message that was also given to Gentiles. Very difficult. They rejected the gospel in the ministry of Paul partly because it seemed impossible that a salvation which included Gentiles equally with them could ever be of God. You see, they were convinced that they were the chosen people. They were convinced that God had something special for them and the fact that the Gentiles entered into that convinced them that it couldn't be their message, their revelation from God. So Paul here says they were ignorant of the proportions of salvation. They were ignorant of the extent of saving faith. They were ignorant of how far the gospel was intended to reach.

And he begins the discussion in verse 11, look what he says. "For the Scripture says," what's the first word then? "Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be disappointed." Whosoever believes on Him, that is a quote from Isaiah 28:16 and he quotes Isaiah, one of their favorite and most beloved prophets. And what he is saying is that salvation by faith has always been God's plan, whosoever believes on Him shall not be disappointed. But more than that, he adds this word "whosoever" with emphasis. And what he is saying is that even Isaiah said the extent of the gospel is to anybody, it's the "whosoever" that you need to underline. It's the "whosoever" that is the issue here. It shows that anyone who believes in Him is not disappointed, anyone. And the word "ashamed" in the Authorized really is the word to be disappointed, to be disillusioned. It can be the word to be defeated. It's the same...comes from a root that's the same as the root for the verb in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, the Jew first and also to the Greek." It isn't the idea of shame as we think of it, it's the idea of disappointment. Paul says I'm never disappointed in the gospel. I am never disillusioned by the gospel.

In other words, it always accomplishes the work that God intends to accomplish. I've never known anybody who became a Christian who was disappointed. I've never known anybody who came to Jesus Christ who was immediately disillusioned. The gospel is a proven product, a proven commodity. And that's what he means, whosoever believes on Him will not be disappointed, amen? We've experienced that in our own lives. "For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation."

Paul has no fear that the gospel won't work its power and that it won't work its power on anybody, on whosoever. And he quotes Isaiah as the source of a whosoever gospel, a gospel that extends to whosoever believes. It's a marvelous balance to the heavy sovereignty in chapter 9, isn't it?

You have the sovereign decree of God all through chapter 9 and you have the whosoevers in chapter 10. On the one hand it is the decree of God. On the other hand it is the whosoever believes.

Now Isaiah in the text, the Hebrew text, actually says "He that believes...he that believes." And that's general. That's as general as you can get. Paul adds the word "whosoever" just to show the general intent of Isaiah's text. Whosoever is a stronger term. And this isn't the first time we've seen this. Go back to verse 33 of chapter 9 and the end of the verse, "Whosoever believes on Him shall not be disappointed." It's the same text, the same reference, the same thought.

So it is a gospel for the whosoever. As God offered salvation in the Old Testament to whosoever, He offers it in the New Testament to whosoever. As whosoever believed in God in the Old Testament is not disappointed, so whosoever believes in Christ in the New Testament is not disappointed. In the true nature of God's redemptive plan was to extend to everybody, Jew and Gentile. And the only barrier to salvation is not racial, it's not cultural, the only barrier to salvation is personal rejection. It's not a Jewish gospel. God is not a Jewish God.

Now the Jewish people had a hard time with this, they really did. They really struggled with this. The classic illustration, turn back in your Bible to Jonah...Jonah. Just a few books back into the Old Testament. And it says in Jonah 1, "The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before Me."

Now Jonah was a prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II in the northern kingdom of Israel. And Jonah's time of ministry would be somewhere between, I think, 750 and 800 B.C. His name, by the way, means dove...or messenger of peace. Israel was prosperous. In fact, I don't know if you remember but during the time of Jonah and the time of Jeroboam II, Israel had extended its borders all the way east to the place of Damascus. So they occupied a tremendous amount of the original territory that had been promised to Abraham. And there was a time of peace except for the fact that the Syrians and the Assyrians kept raiding them. And they had these sort of guerrilla raids all the time. They therefore grew to hate the Syrians and the Assyrians who were to the east, the capital of Assyria was Nineveh. They were not Jews, they were Gentile people. They were pagan people.

Nineveh was a monstrous city. You notice it says that it was a great city, well I mean great. The population is estimated to be about 600,000 people and historians say it was a three-days journey across the city. That's a large city for the ancient world. Nahum the prophet called it a bloody city. He said it was a city full of fraud, full of lies, full of robbery, full of sensuality, full of violence, full of witchcraft, full of idolatry. And the Assyrian soldiers were known for their cruelty and their brutality. And the Jewish people really hated them. And God says to Jonah, "Go to them...go to them." And he knew what for, he was a prophet. Go preach to them. That just really went against his grain. Why should the marauding evil pagan Gentile Ninevites get in on the blessing of God?

Now God had a reason for sending him and I think I can give it to you in a very simple statement. He sent Jonah to Nineveh to preach a message of salvation to the Gentiles to shame Israel. That's right,

to shame them. Because they were so resistant to doing that and they probably said, "Oh, they wouldn't believe, they're so steeped in paganism, they're so steeped in idolatry, they're so steeped in witchcraft, they're so far down the proverbial tubes in terms of their evil and their sin, we wouldn't bother to go to those pagan Gentiles, those godless things." And so they just isolated themselves and they never went. And so God gave them one classic object lesson. One prophet went one time, preached one time and the whole place repented. Now that's a lesson, folks. It shamed them by the fact that a heathen city would repent at the first preaching of a strange Jew that came into town. Israel's reluctance to reach the Gentiles was thus rebuked by the tremendous ministry and result of Jonah's work.

Well, you know the story. Jonah didn't want to go. So in verse 3 he rose up to flee. Got on a ship and he got thrown out of the ship, swallowed by a great fish, vomited up, even the fish couldn't tolerate disobedient prophet. Finally he got the message and he went. And he preached and chapter 3, you can read it yourself, the whole place repented...the whole place. God saw their works, they had turned from their evil way and God repented the evil He said He would do unto them and did it not. They had a revival in a pagan city. Unbelievable.

You say, "What was Jonah's response? He must have been excited, thrilled." Chapter 4 verse 1, "It displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very mad." He was furious. He was angry. And his anger was all about the fact that he couldn't stand the thought that Gentiles entered into the covenant with him...what right did they have? "And he prays to the Lord and says, Kill me, I can't...if there's one thing I can't take, it's Gentile believers. Kill me." God was gracious, God didn't kill him. But that just gives you a little idea, now you can go back to Romans 10, of how tough it was to break those Jews loose to reach Gentiles. I mean, they wouldn't even...if they went into a Gentile country and came out, they shook the dust off...you remember that expression, "Shake the dust off your feet, or shake the dust off your robes?" They didn't want Gentile dust taken into Israel. They wouldn't go into a Gentile house because they thought Gentiles houses were defiled. They wouldn't eat with a Gentile utensil, or a Gentile plate or drink out of a Gentile cup because they thought they were defiled. They didn't even want to touch Gentiles. In fact, the Jewish prayer every day when they rose in the morning was, "I thank God that I'm not a woman, a slave or a Gentile." They were reluctant to share anything, even their faith in God.

So when the message of salvation came in the New Testament through the Apostles and it started extending itself to the Gentiles, it became something the Jews did not want to receive. And you remember the strategy of the Apostle Paul when he went into a new city, always went to the Jews first. Went to the synagogue and tried to win as many Jews as he could and then to the Gentiles. Listen, if he had gone to the Gentiles first he never would have been able to back in to the synagogue. So he went there first because they were so resistant to anything that was a Gentile thing. And so the gospel as it extended to the Gentile world from Acts 8 on, as it began to move out into the Gentile world, first the Samaritans, and then the utter most part of the earth, as it moved out it

became more and more detestable to the Jew. And you follow that as you flow through the book of Acts. They rejected it, and rejected it, and reject it and reject it and finally in almost a climactic thing they see the Apostle Paul as a great threat to Judaism who preaches this Gentile gospel. And in the twenty-first chapter of Acts the Apostle Paul comes into the temple and people stir up the people and they grab the Apostle Paul and they cry, "Men of Israel, help. This is the man that teaches all men everywhere against the people, against the Jews, against the law, against this place and he brought Gentiles into the temple and polluted the holy place." See, they saw Christianity as something very distasteful.

And the whole city was moved. The people ran together, took Paul, drew him out of the temple and at once the doors were shut. And you remember the story, how they read the...the Romans really rescued him and put him in prison for his safety for they would have killed him. Very hostile. Did you read the L.A. Times this morning? The front page article? The rabbis militantly aggressively against the Christian missionaries are now putting up posters all around Israel that say, "Kill the missionaries...Kill the missionaries." They detest anything that smacks of a Gentile message. And there's hostility in Israel today, let me tell you, toward the gospel and there was hostility then.

And so, what I'm saying Paul is saying here is that they didn't understand the proportions of the gospel, the proportions of salvation but they saw it as a Gentile message. And therefore they could not receive it, they would not receive it. And when folks came and tried to teach them, they threw them out. They thought it was doing God service, John 16:1 and 2 says, to kill people and put them out of the synagogues.

Now notice verse 12. He says, "Whosoever believes on him shall not be disappointed," in verse 11. And then he says, "For there is...and this is dynamite...no difference between the Jew and the Gentile." Man o man, I mean, you just can't say anything more devastating than that. These people who were so zealous of their identity, who to this very day have preserved themselves through all the centuries because of a zeal for their own racial identity and a zeal for their own religious heritage, whether they believe it or not. These people who believe so strongly that they are different than Gentile people are told by Paul there's no difference...no difference. What a statement. What a statement.

The word "difference," diastole means distinction or division. There's no division, no separation, no difference at all. Galatians chapter 3 says the same thing in verse 26. It says, "For you're all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, many of you have been baptized into Christ, and put on Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, you're all one in Christ Jesus." And that's what is true of us as Christians. We are all one. There's no Jew and Gentile. We don't recognize that as a distinction in terms of knowing God. And so he says, "Whoever believes, there is no difference, there's no difference." Now listen, folks, not only are Gentiles included, but are you ready for this? There's not even any difference..no difference. I mean, maybe you could get them to

say, "All right, we concede, the Gentiles can believe. They could be proselytes. They could believe, but that's as far as we'll go." No. There isn't even any difference, there's just no difference.

In Ephesians, may I remind you of chapter 3 verse 1 where Paul says, this is the unique direction of his special ministry as an Apostle? He says, "God has given me a very unique stewardship and a very special message and what is the message?...Ephesians 3:6...that the Gentiles or the pagans, if you will, the non-Jews, should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." That is his message that the middle wall of partition is broken down, chapter 2 verse 14 says. And the Jew and Gentile are made one in Christ.

Now Romans 10, so beautifully in verse 12 says, "There's no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, because the same Lord over all is rich unto all that...what?...call upon Him." That's another way to say "whosoever." The "all" here is like the "whosoever." All who call, it doesn't matter who they are, Jew or Gentile, He is equally rich unto all of them. The Jews were looking for a national deliverer, not a universal Savior. They were looking for a very Jewish kingdom, not one that included Gentiles, to say nothing of one that said there's no difference at all. And so, they didn't see the proportion of salvation. They didn't see that the Lord is the same Lord over all.

Now by the way, that is a very important phrase. The same Lord over all, what a title. It's interesting in the Greek that the word "Lord" here is in the predicate. "The same" is the subject. "The same" is Lord over all. The same one, the same Lord implied. So we could say it the same Lord is Lord over all. The idea is sovereignty that there's one Lord and the same Lord is Lord over all. And, "Rich unto all." In what sense is He rich? Rich in mercy, rich in grace, rich in love, rich in anything you need to cover your sin and give you salvation. He is rich enough to grant all that a man needs and all that he asks for. It doesn't matter who he is, He's equally rich, He's equally Lord over all.

In fact, the word "rich unto all" is a word that means to be full. It talks about the fullness of goods or the fullness of resources. He is the same Lord over all and He is equally rich toward all. No difference in the Jew, no difference in the Gentile. Well they just didn't understand that. That was just not a part of their system of belief...all equally could come to Christ and He would be rich toward all and be the same Lord over all.

And then the end of the verse says, "All that call upon Him." That's the only condition. All that call upon...didn't matter what they were, just calling upon. Now the idea of calling on God here in this text is the idea of expressing faith toward God. It is the idea of being a believer. It is the call for salvation. You know, we learned a lot in the Bible about God's calling men, well this is men calling God and this is the other side of that saving work of the Spirit. God calls men and men in response call back. Calling on God is the idea of calling on Him for salvation, calling on Him for forgiveness, calling on Him for mercy, calling on Him for grace. Calling that has the elements of Romans 10:9 and 10, the element of belief, true belief, the element of confession of sin and the lordship of Jesus Christ.

So, all who call, whosoever believes, those are the key phrases in these two verses that express the tremendous breadth and proportion of salvation. And then just to really nail it down, verse 13 says, "For whosoever..and there's that word again, whosoever, and this brings both of those concepts together...shall call." You have the whosoever in verse 11, you have the call in verse 12, and now he brings it together, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." And somebody might say, "Well, where did he get that idea?" And he'll just say, "Well I just got it out of Joel 2:32, it comes right out of the Old Testament, it's a quote from Joel 2:32.

This isn't anything new. Salvation, Old Testament and New Testament, has always been for whosoever calls, whosoever seeks God. By the way, calling on the name of the Lord in the Old Testament is an interesting phrase. It primarily refers to worship, it refers to calling out to God in terms of adoring wonder and praise, speaking of His majesty, extolling His virtue, humbling yourself beneath His sovereign power. It is an Old Testament expression of true hearted worship. You find it Psalm 79:6, you find it Psalm 105:1, you find it in Psalm 116 verses 4 and 13. You find it in many other places. Calling on the name of the Lord is the idea of worshiping the true God with a true heart. And in the New Testament it is to call upon the name of the Lord whose name is revealed in Jesus Christ...whose name is revealed in Jesus Christ. And when you call upon the name of the Lord, that means all that He is and all that He's done and all that He claims to be. The name of the Lord means all that He is. That's the essence of His name.

So to say one who calls on the name of the Lord is not just desperately crying, "Lord, whoever You are, wherever You are, whatever You want, please..." so and so. No. The name of the Lord is clearly defined, who He is, what He's done, explicitly revealed in Scripture, calling on the name of the Lord specifically in an act of faith that includes the attitudes of verses 9 and 10 is all that is necessary for a person to be saved.

By the way, as a footnote you might want to mark in your thinking. In Joel 2:32 this refers to God, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," it refers to God. In this text it refers to Christ and therefore this text equates God with Christ. It is one of the strongest texts in the epistles to make that equation. We know He's talking about Christ because verse 9 says, "Confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, believe in your heart God's raised Him from the dead, you'll be saved." And so calling upon the name of the Lord is revealed in Jesus Christ, is the same as calling upon the name of God for they're one and the same.

Now notice at the end of verse 13 it says "shall be saved." The person who calls on the name of the Lord, whoever they are, anyone who does is going to be saved. The one who recognizes His deity, that's part of His name...the one who respects His authority, that's part of His name...the one who honors His majesty, that's part of His name...the one who believes His Word, that's part of His name...the one who commits to His sovereignty, that's inherent in His name...the one who hopes in

His mercy, that's part of His name...the one who loves Him as Lord and Savior, that's part of His name...that one is saved. And the word "saved" means delivered...delivered. Those who call on the name of Christ in faith are delivered...delivered...delivered. Good word, the word saved. It's a word that speaks of that which we're rescued from. We studied it when we looked at verse 9. By the way, the Hebrew form, Yasha(?) is used over 200 times in the Old Testament. The New Testament word sozois used, I think, a hundred and six times and the noun form which is used often by Paul is used 45 times. So there you have three hundred and some odd times that the word "saved" is used in the Scripture. Very important word. God has come to save men, to deliver them from sin and suffering and death and hell. And who is that salvation offered to? Well verse 11 says, "Whosoever." Verse 12 says, "All that call," and verse 13 says, "Whosoever shall call."

So, the emphasis here is on the extent of salvation, the proportion of salvation. It's as wide as the world of those who believe. And for all who believe on God's terms there is offered salvation, eternal deliverance from death and hell.

Should the Jews have known this? Sure they should. They should have known it. They had Joel 2:32, didn't they? They had Isaiah 28:16. They knew the story of Jonah. They knew that God sent Him to the Ninevites. They knew that God had a burden for the Ninevites who were wicked people. They knew that God's heart was toward redemption for those people and they knew that there was a revival and they were in fact redeemed. They had all that revelation about the proportion of God's saving grace, God's saving power. They knew that.

Paul wants to reinforce this and so we look at verse 14. This reinforces the universal proportion of the saving message, marvelous verse. It says this, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

Now what is he saying? Listen carefully, this is a very simple process of logic, listen to me. If only those who call on the name of the Lord can be saved...is that true? We just learned that, right? Only those who call on the name of the Lord can be saved. In other words, only those who ask can be saved. Only those who ask on God's terms. Only those who ask properly, understanding who Christ is, who God is and what the salvation provision is, only those who come on God's terms and ask can be saved. Then none can be saved who don't call, true? If only those who call are saved, then none can be saved who don't call. And none can call unless they believe, right? And none can believe unless they hear. And none can hear unless somebody tells them. And nobody can tell them unless they're sent. Humph.

So, God has a whole plan laid out. You see, how are they going to call on one in whom they haven't believed? They're not. And how are they going to believe in Him of whom they haven't heard? They're not. And how are they going to hear without a preacher? They're not. And how are they

going to preach except they be sent? They're not.

In other words, if God doesn't send preachers who preach the truth so that men can believe and call on the name of the Lord, they can't be saved. Boy, what a statement. What it says to me is you don't get saved by some mystical meditation. You don't get saved by contemplating eternity or space or going in yourself or getting in a yoga position, or looking at the stars or meditating. You can't be saved unless you call on the name of the Lord, all that He is. And you can't do that unless you believe and you can't believe unless you've heard and you can't hear unless somebody tells you and nobody is going to tell you unless they're sent. That's the flow.

So, the point is God had to send preachers. There's no other way to believe than to hear the truth. Listen carefully, clear message precedes saving faith. It doesn't happen by intuition. It doesn't happen by mysticism. A clear message precedes saving faith. And this is the crown of his argument. The gospel if it came to anybody, the saving message if it came to anybody was sent by God, right? Was sent by God. And have you forgotten that God sent preachers beyond Israel? Have you forgotten that? Have you forgotten that not only Jonah but other of the prophets preached the message of repentance and faith to other nations? And have you forgotten that Jesus came to go beyond Israel? That the Apostles, including Paul, extended the gospel beyond the Jew?

Listen, the point is this, God has sent preachers beyond the Jew and that expresses the heart of God in His intention for salvation. The gospel is for whosoever. And God proved it by sending preachers to Jew and Gentile.

Did they miss this? Did they forget about Jonah? Go unto a bunch of wicked pagans? Did they forget that God cared about a whole world of people? Did they think God only cared about them and their ingrown exclusivity? And so he reminds them in verse 15, "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good news of good things." How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good news of good things.

Now to be honest with you, frankly, I haven't ever really seen any feet that I would consider to be particular beautiful. But I have seen many feet that are in no way to be considered beautiful. But this is not talking about some physical thing. There's no real beauty in the feet. The beauty is in the message the feet are bringing, you understand that? And this, by the way, is a quote from Isaiah 52:7, oh what an important text...what an important text. As it is written...where?...Isaiah 52:7..."How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings or good news of good things."

Now in that text of Isaiah, Isaiah 52:7, the verse is a very joyous verse because good news is come to Jerusalem from Babylon and the news coming to Jerusalem from Babylon is that the captivity is over. The bondage is over. Deliverance is come. And here comes the messenger and he's running with the fact that Israel is going to be free, that deliverance is come, good news. And everybody is so

excited and so blessed and so happy. These are beautiful feet because they bring a beautiful message of liberation, a beautiful message of freedom. Not necessarily because they're physically beautiful, they're beautiful because of the message they bear. And as these messengers come to Israel with the message of deliverance and the message of freedom, the message of salvation from captivity, they are received with joy.

You say, "But yeah, that talks about Israel. Why would he pick that Scripture?" Well, it doesn't just talk about Israel. In Isaiah chapter 52, and I just want to share this with you very briefly so listen. Sure the message came first to Israel. But listen to what comes right after that in verse 9, "Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem."

Now the picture here is a historical event, the coming of a messenger announcing the freedom of a people in bondage but it is a symbol of a glorious future day when true redemption and true salvation comes to Israel, but not just Israel. The Lord, verse 10, has made His holy arm...has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations...and listen to this...and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Isn't that great? How far is it going to go the salvation of our God? To the ends of the earth, isn't it? To the ends of the earth. That's why you find in Revelation the indication that are people from every tongue and tribe and nation and people gathered together and crying, "Worthy is the Lamb." Oh he picked a fitting Scripture.

How beautiful the feet of those who come bringing the good news of good things. And they were beautiful not just to the Jew who was hearing about the coming redemption in the future age but to the whole world as the salvation message extended to the ends of the earth. And when they heard him quote Isaiah 52:7 they should have remembered that this salvation message was to extend to the end of the earth. How sad...how very very sad that they missed the proportions of salvation and they thought they had to reject it because it was a Gentile message and all along in their own Old Testament Isaiah and Joel and again Isaiah indicated that salvation would extend far beyond the nation Israel...far beyond. It is a gospel to include all.

But there's a problem. Verse 16, this is the problem. They have not all...what?...obeyed the gospel. That's the problem. They haven't obeyed it. That's the issue. Preaching was to all men...Jew, Gentile, that was God's purpose. But all didn't obey it. So sad.

Still true, you know. The gospel still to all men, still to the ends of the earth, still to whosoever believes, still to whosoever calls on the name of the Lord. But men just won't obey it. That's the tragedy.

Well, we're going to stop there. Let's bow in prayer.

We know, Lord, that the gospel is a gospel for the world, You've said that. God so loved the world that whosoever believeth in Him should not...that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Whosoever believeth...whosoever believeth. Isaiah said whosoever will let him take of the water of life. The book of the Revelation says, "The Spirit and the bride say come, whosoever will let him come." Father, help us to understand the proportions of salvation. We grieve in our hearts when we look back at Israel and we see that they rejected a message because they thought it was a message that was defiled by touching Gentiles and so they couldn't accept it. And so they were ignorant again, they were ignorant of...of the person of God, the provision of Christ, the place of faith and the proportion of salvation and so they rejected...loving rather their sin. And I imagine, Lord, there are today people who reject for the same reason because they don't like some of the people who call themselves Christians because they don't like some people who are identified as Your people because they don't want to be associated with those people. Lord, we pray that no one would reject the gospel, no one would reject salvation because they don't understand that it reaches to the extremes. And like the Jews who condemned Jesus for hanging around prostitutes and dirty politicians and drunkards, they wouldn't touch anything that was offered to those people. So there must be people today who think Christianity because it's offered to the poor and the downcast and the downtrodden and the underprivileged and the hurting and the nobodies of the world and even the criminals and the harmful people and all who come may be rejecting a message because they reject some of the people who believe it. May it not be so, Father. May no one in this place be saying, "Well, I don't want to be a Christian because I know this person or that person or these people and I know what these Christians have done and these others have done and..." help them, Lord, to understand that it is the pervasive gospel that reaches all who believe and takes all kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds with all kinds of problems and struggles and makes them new in Jesus Christ. May we not be guilty of misunderstanding the proportion of the gospel. And may our arms be as open wide as Yours are to all who come to You in faith. In Christ's name. Amen.

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