



God's Providence

R O M A N S 9 - 11

This morning we are continuing our study of the Book of Romans. And today we are in chapter 10 where Paul continues to build his case, premise by premise, as to why the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the hope of the world.

And what we are going to talk about this morning is how **the church** becomes critically involved in sharing GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION... HOW GOD HAS PROVIDENTIALLY PURPOSED FOR BELIEVERS TO PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN EVANGELISM... **friends this should excite us!**

We are tasked with sharing the greatest message EVER!



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R O M A N S 9 - 11

OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SPEAK

Now when the word EVANGELISM comes up some of us do get excited because we love to share our faith with others... while others among us recoil a bit because we struggle with talking about our faith with the people in our lives.

And while it is true that some of us due to personality or gifting find evangelism easier than others... what we are going to see this morning is that regardless of our gifting or personality every single one of us needs to be actively involved in SHARING WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN OUR LIVES... and there are many ways to do this.

Because here is what's at stake.

- About 2.6 billion people have heard the gospel but have not accepted Christ yet.
- Just over 50 percent of the world's population have not heard the gospel.
- Of the 11,646 distinct people groups on the planet, 6,734 people groups have no churches, no Bibles, no Christian literature, and no mission agencies who are seeking to share the gospel with them.

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- About 2.6 billion people (or 38 percent of the world's population) have heard the gospel but have not accepted Christ yet.
- At present, just over 50 percent of the world's population (or 3.5 billion people) have not heard the gospel and most of them do not have a realistic opportunity to hear the gospel.
- Here's another way to look at the challenge of world evangelism: Of the 11,646 distinct people groups on the planet, 6,734 people groups (roughly 60 percent) contain between zero and two percent evangelical Christians. Many of these 6,734 people groups have no churches, no Bibles, no Christian literature, and no mission agencies who are seeking to share the gospel with them.

Romans 10:13 (ESV)
**EVERYONE WHO CALLS
ON THE NAME OF THE
LORD WILL BE SAVED**

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But the good news of the gospel is proclaimed in **Roman 10:13 EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**

This statement is emphatic EVERYONE WHO CALLS... God, through his Son has done everything already... He has done the work, so that our hearts might respond and call out to Him in our need.

And this call is to EVERYONE... EVERYWHERE

We know this because in I John 2:2 we are told that, *He [Christ] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*



LOTTERY
UNCLAIMED
MILLIONS

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What this means is that EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE has the opportunity to be saved ETERNALLY. But this opportunity goes unclaimed by those who are unaware of what they are missing.

Illus: I don't know if you knew this or not but every year billions of dollars in lottery winnings go unclaimed. From June 2016 to June 2017 it was calculated that 2.89 billion dollars went unclaimed from state lotteries across the country.

When officials were asked why all this prize money goes unclaimed year after year, the #1 reason was ***due to the loss of the ticket.*** Meaning that people once had possession of something very valuable [*by the world's standards*] and then they simply lost track of it. [*imagine that dinner table conversation*]

Romans 10:13 (ESV)

**EVERYONE WHO CALLS
ON THE NAME OF THE
LORD WILL BE SAVED**

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Now friends our salvation is far more valuable than any winning lottery ticket, but I tell that story to illustrate the fact that... we [the church] have a responsibility to ensure that the NAME BY WHICH EVERYONE CAN CALL OUT TO FOR SALVATION... **DOESN'T GET LOST**... that the billions of people who have not seen the value in knowing Christ might see the riches of His grace *in us*...

Paul is going to continue to make this point as we move into the heart of our text this morning verses 14-17 of chapter 10.

Here, Paul is going to ask a series of rhetorical questions that will challenge us to look at our priorities, and evaluate our devotion with regards to evangelism.

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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Read: 

Here we see Paul working backward through the process of one coming to know the Lord.

From the *call to belief*, from *belief to hearing*, from *hearing to someone preaching*, and from *preaching to the one who is first sent out*.

Paul sees each of these steps working together to produce one who might CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD for salvation.

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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Let's more closely examine Paul's first question, ***“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?”***

The billions of people who have either rejected Jesus or simply never heard of him cannot call on him because they don't believe in Him... even if they believe Jesus to be a historical figure, they do not find Him to be capable of fixing them or their problems.

Paul is making the point that central to our call for salvation is the notion that the one whom we call upon ***can actually do some saving.***



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Illus:

To illustrate this point...

If you are being mugged on the street, you are not going to call out for Batman to save you by calling for someone to initiate the Bat Signal. Why?

Because you know that Batman isn't real, and that by doing so you will only prolong your agony.

No you will yell, **“Call 9-1-1!”** Because we believe that emergency response comes from dialing 9-1-1 and not from the Bat Signal... we know this.

You see church much of our evangelism comes from us helping people see that the things they call out to for saving are often fraudulent.

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?**15** And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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And as we [**Christians**] respond, not as the world does, but with tremendous faith in the one we have believed in... this will set us apart and demonstrate the true power of belief in Christ.

Friends I ask, are you living in such a way that it might cause an unbeliever to question their unbelief?

Because too often what happens is that our lives do not look very different from the lives of our unbelieving friends, neighbors and coworkers. And because of this many feel as though believing in Jesus and calling on His name is of little or no value to them.

“We email, Facebook, tweet and text with people who are going to spend eternity in either heaven or hell. Our lives are too short to waste on mere temporal conversations when massive eternal realities hang in the balance. Just as you and I have no guarantee that we will live through the day, the people around us are not guaranteed tomorrow either.

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Church, personal evangelism in large part is our effort in sharing the VALUE OF CHRIST in our lives, to those who have not yet received him.

Because again here is what's at stake. This is a quote from David Platt concerning the urgency of our witness/evangelism.

Read: 

So let's be intentional about sewing the threads of the gospel into the fabric of our conversations every day, knowing that it will not always be easy, yet believing that eternity will always be worth it.”

— David Platt, *Follow Me: A Call to Die. A Call to Live.*

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Continue Reading:

I love that word picture of sewing the threads of the gospel into the fabric of our conversations.

Here's what that might look like conversationally...

“God has really been teaching me a lot lately about humility.”

or

“I used to be overly anxious about everything, but Christ has set me free.”

or

“You know, jealousy was a huge struggle but God has truly given me contentment through Jesus.”

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? **And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?** And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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Alright... In the second half of verse 14 Paul asks his second rhetorical question, **How can they believe in the one whom they have not heard?**

At the beginning of our time I stated that roughly 3.5 billion people have never heard the Gospel.

And when we think about a statistic like that we generally think about the 10-40 window, or unreached people groups around the world.

But I want to tell you a story about a man who never heard the gospel while living his entire life in the USA.



Illus:

This is Josh Stanton. When I was Pastoring in Colorado, Josh came to my church looking to rent some room for a Fitness Bootcamp class he was looking to run.

At the time we were looking to rent the building out so Josh and I met. And immediately I felt the sense that I needed to share Christ with him before he left the church building that day.

I began to ask about his wife and kids and I asked him if he'd ever been to church before. Apparently he'd been to Catholic church as a child but didn't know ANYTHING about Jesus. He said he just didn't think about his faith very much.

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? **And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?** And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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I had the responsibility that day to do my part in sharing the message of Jesus with Josh. God laid it on my heart, I responded, and the Holy Spirit did the rest.

Friends who needs to hear the gospel message from YOU?

Sometimes we feel as though only pastors and those experienced in apologetics should regularly engage in sharing Christ...but deep down we know that isn't true.

Because it is God who does the work... we are just the willing vessels who carry the message.

Romans 10:14, 15 (ESV)

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? **And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?**¹⁵ **And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?** As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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Moving On:

The next two rhetorical questions I've combined because they both encompass the work of the local church.

Read: And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?

First, the word preaching in this context is the Greek word [*kerysso*] which means to be a herald or to make announcements.

Romans 10:16, 17 (ESV)

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

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In verses 16 and 17 Paul references the fact that NOT EVERYONE HAS ACCEPTED THE GOOD NEWS.

Read: 

And he specifically mentions the Israelites here, because at the beginning of this chapter he stated, *“my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.”*

And so Paul's evangelistic message comes from the heart. He loves the lost... his evangelism is driven by it.

And church we too must love the lost.



God's Providence

R O M A N S 9 - 11

OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SPEAK

You know friends the awesome thing about evangelism is that it spreads.

Everyone of us who knows God, knows God because someone told us the good news, we heard it, believed it, and FAITH erupted within us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps it was a parent who shared, or a family member, perhaps it was a Sunday school teacher, or a neighbor..... no matter the case this model of sharing Christ is 2 millennia old and now we get to be apart of ***carrying the message*** of Christ's redemption.

Alfred Mendes - Circa 1916



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As we begin to close I want to share a story with you to contextualize this message..... a story of someone driven with an important message he knew he had to carry.

Illus:

This a WWI era photo of a man named Alfred Mendes. He enlisted in the British Army in January 1916 at the tender age of 19.

He was soon sent off to France to train to be a signaler. Signalers were responsible for signaling communications from the front lines back to the command position and vice-versa. Often, it involved laying landlines down in dangerous enemy territory.



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His actions became the inspiration for the film 1917.

In an interview, writer and director of the film Sam Mendes [who is Alfred's Grandson] explains the source of the film: [quote] "I had a story that was a fragment told to me by my grandfather, who fought in the First World War. ***It's the story of a messenger who has a message to carry.***"



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R O M A N S 9 - 11

OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SPEAK

Church we too have a message to carry, but the message we possess will save far more than flesh and blood...it will save souls eternally.

You may feel inadequate to put into practice what we've discussed this morning...and let's be honest we all do to some degree.

But friend all you need is to be willing, and God will bring the supply.

Tomorrow at 10 am

Romans 10:14-17
Practical Evangelism Tips

facebook

LIVE

I want to invite you *to join us tomorrow morning on FB live at 10 am* where we are going to go a bit deeper into this topic and offer some *Practical Evangelism Tips...* so we can maximize our effectiveness with the message we have to carry.

Pray: