

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 10:14-15

Throughout this chapter of Romans Paul has shown how two groups had dramatically different experiences with God's righteousness:

- Paul's fellow Jews tried to attain it by works – by carrying out God's Law. They failed; they did not attain righteousness.
- The Gentiles – those who were not part of Abraham's covenant – did not seek God's righteousness, but they obtained it by embracing the Gospel.

- **Verses 9-11: "How are people saved?"**

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. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

- **Verses 12-13: "Who can be saved?"**

"For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Paul's next point: If people are going to obtain righteousness, if they are going to be saved, what must happen? The answer, in a word, is "evangelism".

- **Verses 14-15:** Four consecutive questions.

- **1. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?"**

They must “call on the name of the Lord”. That phrase is found throughout the Old and New Testaments. As we will see, it means much more than simply praying or making a request. (See: 2 Kings 5:11; 1 Chronicles 16:8; 1 Corinthians 1:2)

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? Here, calling and believing are inseparable. Calling is linked to believing.

What do we have to believe? Romans 10:9: “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.”

An interchange of expressions: Verse 9: “confess with your mouth”. Verse 3: “call on his name”. People are believing that God raised Jesus from the dead and are confessing, “Jesus is Lord”. They are believing with their hearts and “calling on his name”.

- **2. “How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?”**

To be saved, people must believe the gospel, call on Christ, and confess “Jesus is Lord”. *“How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?”*

John Stott: “Just as believing is logically prior to calling, so hearing is logically prior to believing.”

The Greek wording: “How can they believe in the one whom the speaker speaks of, unless He speaks through them?” In other words, people will not believe in Jesus unless he speaks through his messengers. See: 2 Corinthians 5:20

As we will see, the messengers become vital to the process.

- **3. “How can they hear without someone Preaching to them?”**

Paul uses an interesting verb here for “preaching”. It's the verb “keoeryssoe”: “to herald”. *“How can they hear without someone*

heralding to them?"

In ancient times, the role of the herald was vital. His public proclamations were the primary means of letting the public know what was happening. Standing in either the city square or the marketplace, Heralds announced the king's proclamations and kept the public informed of events.

Paul: "How can there be hearers of the gospel if there aren't any heralds of the Gospel?"

The Isaiah 6 vision: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

- **4. "How can they preach unless they are sent?"**

The Greek word "sent" is "apostelloe". It can be understood in a couple of ways.

A. Paul can be speaking of apostles like himself – and the rest of the college of apostles.

"What's the difference between disciples and apostles in the gospels and the book of Acts?" The clearest answer is, "Both".

- When Jesus called the original twelve, they were called as followers or disciples. They were to be discipled – that is, taught and trained – by Jesus. That's what a disciple is.
- When Jesus finished his work of salvation and sent these men out to preach the gospel, they were called apostles. Simply put, an apostle is a "sent one"; someone who has been sent.

An apostle is a sent one, but the original group of apostles would one day die off. In the Book of Acts, the original term, "apostelloe" became more flexible over time. Eventually there were more than the original 12 apostles.

Paul's second definition of a "sent one". The word apostle eventually was applied to others who were "sent out" as missionaries. See: Acts 13:1-3

Sent ones, then, can refer to the original twelve, or to anyone who is sent share the gospel with others.

As we come to the last part of verse 15, Paul stresses the need for heralds, for those who will share the gospel. He quotes a passage from Isaiah when he says, "*As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'*"

The fuller text from Isaiah says: "*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'*"

As we close out this section, we can look at Paul's argument about sharing the gospel by putting his six verbs in reverse order:

- Christ sends heralds
- Heralds preach
- People hear
- Hearers believe
- Believers call
- Those who call are saved.