

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational: 9:1-11:36** (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

The key verses Romans are found in Romans 1:16-17.

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Romans 1:16–17 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who **believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from **faith to faith**; as it is written, “The just shall live by **faith**.”

We are saved by faith and we live by faith. A true saving faith is the first thing that one ever does to please the Lord (Heb. 11:6). The theme of Romans is often said to be the gospel and it does have a prevailing related gospel theme. However, the most dominant theme is “The Righteousness of God” and I would add, “The righteousness of God acquired by faith”. Romans largely makes the issue one of FAITH!

For example after the prologue the first major theme Paul deals with is SIN – showing that all are under the condemnation of sin. The pagan, the moralist, and the religionist are all alike in that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

However, having established the universal problem of sin Paul then hammers home that the solution to the problem is FAITH.

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- Rom. 3:22 “through **faith** in Jesus Christ”
- Rom. 3:22 “on all who **believe**.”
- Rom. 3:25 “by His blood, through **faith**”
- Rom. 3:26 “justifier of the one who has **faith** in Jesus.”
- Rom. 3:27 “by the law of **faith**.”
- Rom. 3:28 “a man is justified by **faith**”
- Rom. 3:30 “justify the circumcised by **faith**”
- Rom. 3:30 “uncircumcised through **faith**.”

Paul then follows this up in Romans 4 with the greatest example of saving faith found in the Bible – namely that of Abraham. And then follows that up with the conclusion statement of Romans 5:1.

Slide # 4

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul then builds on this by dealing with the doctrine of sanctification in Romans 6-8. Then in Romans 9-11 Paul focuses on the problem of Israel – what has happened to Israel? Where does Israel now fit in the sovereign plan of God?

He begins in Romans 9 by emphasizing the sovereignty of God emphasizing “the purpose of God according to election”. But then at the end of that section he again hammers home the importance of FAITH.

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- Rom. 9:30 “the righteousness of faith”
- Rom. 9:32 “not seek it by faith”
- Rom. 9:33 “whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame”

Paul then follows up this emphasis on faith in Romans 10 with the word faith or believe being found **13 times** from Romans 9:30 through 10:17. (see Rom. 9:30, 32, 33; 10:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17).

At every step in Romans Paul constantly intersects with and emphasizes the importance of human responsibility as found in FAITH. He emphasizes the necessity of faith, the nature of faith, and now as we see in Romans 10:14-15 – the process of people coming to faith.

What Paul is really communicating all the way through Romans 10 is that Israel's problem is a lack of faith. They have a zeal for God but they have not come to God on His terms and His terms of faith in His Son. God's way is all about FAITH, but the Jews made it about works – the works of the law.

Slide # 6

Romans 10

Diagnosis of Israel's Problem

Rom. 10:1-5 "An Ignorant Zeal for God"

Rom. 10:6-13 "The Righteousness of Faith"

Rom. 10:14-21 "Israel's Inexcusable Unbelief"

In Romans 10:5-6 Paul makes the contrast between "righteousness which is of the law" and "the righteousness of faith". The Jews trying to attain righteousness by the law did not understand that this is unattainable and that God's way to be righteous before Him is by FAITH!

Paul then goes on in Roman 10 to develop the nature of saving faith. He says it is as near as your heart and mouth saying with the heart we believe and then with the mouth confession is made (Rom. 10:9-10). The mouth expresses the faith that is in the heart. The ultimate issue is always FAITH in the heart, but if it is real it finds expression through the mouth.

Slide # 7

Belief expressed in **confession** (vv. 9-10)

Belief expressed in **calling** on the Lord (vv. 11-13)

Paul now in Romans 10:14-15 unpacks the process of people coming to a saving faith showing what is involved. And what Paul is doing is showing that everything is in place for Israel to be saved, but the ONE thing they are lacking is FAITH!

Romans 10:14–21 (NKJV)

14 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?

Paul now builds on the idea of “calling on the name of the LORD” in verse 13. If people are saved by a faith that calls on the name of the Lord” – well then how do they get to that point. Paul unpacks it here in verse 14 – but he does so in reverse order.

Slide # 8***Romans 10:14***

Call
Believe
Heard
Preacher

Actual order

Preacher
Hear
Believe
Call

Calling implies believing. As we saw last week, calling is the expression of belief. So calling implies believing and believing implies hearing, and hearing implies preaching. It all starts with somebody communicating the gospel truth to people. It all starts there. People need to hear the gospel or they will not get saved. And then they need to believe what they hear and if they do they will confess it. The first-fruits of true belief is confession.

“Hearing” is a reflection of first-century life. Paul does not raise the possibility of the message being read. While there were people who could read, the ordinary first-century citizen depended rather on being able to hear something. – **Leon Morris**

Hearing is the idea of the gospel truth being communicated to people. Parallel to “hearing” is coming “to the knowledge of the truth”. God desires all men “to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4).

So, hearing the truth and coming to the knowledge of the truth – whatever the medium, actually presents the same basic idea which is that the truth needs to be communicated to people and in the first century the most common medium was by preaching and hearing. Realize that at this time the NT Scriptures were just being formulated and so the rapid spread of the message was largely by word of mouth.

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

“And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” The idea of “sent” assumes two things: 1) the one preaching has been commissioned by a higher authority Who has sent him to preach. He is not there on his own initiative. Rather he has been sent. 2) Being sent indicates that the preacher’s message did not originate with him, but rather has been given to him by his sending authority.

The word “preach” (Gk. kerusso) means to herald or to announce. It is a pronouncement. It is an official declaration. A herald was one who communicated what the KING wanted the people to know. It was not up for discussion. It was a de facto pronouncement of what the KING had ordained. Inherent in the idea is that a higher authority is behind the message. A self-appointed herald is a contradiction. Rather it assumes the person making the authoritative announcement has been commissioned to do so by a higher authority.

One day a lady called and was very irate that we had come to her door and we’re sharing the gospel. She was especially offended by us saying that she was a sinner. And she asked me: ***WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO DO THIS?***

Slide # 9

Matthew 28:18–19 (NKJV)

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “**All authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

We have been sent by the One Who has all authority in heaven and on earth. We have been commissioned by Him to herald His truth.

The word herald is used here in a general sense of sharing the gospel in an evangelistic context outside the church. The context here is not necessarily a church oriented, pulpit oriented emphasis. As God's people we have all been commissioned to share the gospel. We are all sent – although some have a special giftedness or a special calling within that framework.

Slide # 10

Acts 8:4 (NKJV)

4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

This is what Christians are SENT to do – to spread the Word.

Slide # 11

2 Corinthians 5:18–20 (NKJV)

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us **the ministry of reconciliation**,

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has **committed to us the word of reconciliation**.

20 Now then, we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were **pleading through us**: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

We as Christians are all on one level or another – in one capacity or another – to constantly be seeking to share the gospel. Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell all of us to this very end.

Slide # 12

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

8 But you shall receive power when the **Holy Spirit** has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Even though there are many ways in sharing the gospel, by far and away the most effective way is PERSONALLY sharing the Word with people. Open the Bible and have them directly interact with the Scripture itself. It is powerful! There is an emphasis here in the text on being personally sent and personally interacting with those being shared with. That is powerful!

Many times I have given someone a tract and they told me they would read it. Later when I ask them if they did many times they say “yes” but then when I personally go through it with them – it is clear they never got it. I can’t stress enough how important is the interpersonal interaction of the preacher with the hearer. This is the pattern we see constantly in the NT Scriptures.

And then Paul did not give a personal testimony as to the effectiveness and importance of sharing the gospel, but rather quoted and made application of Scripture. Paul constantly goes back to Scripture to ground what he is saying. He says, “As it is written” and then made an inspired application from Isa. 52:7 (cf. Nah. 1:15).

Slide # 13

Isaiah 52:7 (NKJV)

7 How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

What a beautiful verse! In the most immediate context of Isaiah’s day it looked forward to the release of God’s people from the Babylonian captivity. The messengers would run with poetically beautiful feet announcing to Zion (Jerusalem) the good news that the Jews were freed and they now would enjoy peace.

Beautiful feet poetically emphasizes how wonderful, how beautiful, to deliver such a glad and wonderful message. It is a privilege to be able to do so.

They might be dirty and smelly after a long, hot journey, but to those who eagerly awaited the good news they were beautiful.

– **Leon Morris**

A missionary was preaching in the village market, and some of the people were laughing at him because he was not a very handsome man. He took it for a time, and then he said to the crowd, "It is true that I do not have beautiful hair, for I am almost bald. Nor do I have beautiful teeth, for they are really not mine; they were made by the dentist. I do not have a beautiful face, nor can I afford to wear beautiful clothes. But this I know: **I HAVE BEAUTIFUL FEET! GOD TELLS ME SO!**" He then quoted the verses found in Isaiah 52:7 and Romans 10:15. – **George Zeller**

Let me ask you: Do you have beautiful feet? If they are carrying the gospel to people, I can promise you they are beautiful no matter their physical appearance.

But if you are not taking the gospel to people may I suggest you have UGLY feet. They are not doing what they were intended to do. They are disfigured and not beautiful at all.

There is an African proverb which says: *“There is only one crime worse than murder on the desert, and that is to know where the water is and not tell.”* We know where the water is. We know that Jesus is the living water as He says in John 4. We have the greatest news in all the world and we are commissioned to tell the whole world.

In 1974 the report came that a Russian deserter who left the German front in 1944 had spent 30 years hiding in a pigpen in the Ukraine. The thirty years were one monotonous cycle of sit, lie, eat, and look through a crack. The irony is that amnesty for Soviet deserters had been granted 25 years before in 1949. The opportunity for forgiveness was there, this person just had not gotten the message.

This is our job as the sent ones – the ones sent to preach. By way of application we proclaim the “the gospel of peace”. We announce that now people can be reconciled to God on the basis of FAITH because of what Jesus has done for us. This indeed is glad tidings of good things – all the spiritual blessings that are found in Christ.

Paul’s point in asking the rhetorical questions of Romans 10:14-15 is that a clear presentation of the gospel must be communicated to people before they can believe and be saved. True faith is always based on content – the content of the Word of God – the gospel of God. In order to be saved people must come to the knowledge of the truth and then believe it.

It is not our job to save people but it is our job to communicate to people that they can be saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 14

“Successful witnessing is taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”

But not all will be receptive. And this is the problem with most Jews.

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?”

A few Jews believed, but most did not. Paul describes their rejection in terms of “they have not all obeyed the gospel.” Saving faith involves a response of obedience. It is NOT the obedience of works – but the obedience of faith. This emphasizes the NATURE of a true saving faith. Obedience is a matter of the will. It relates to personal volition and personal choice. This is all about personal responsibility!

“True faith must touch the will and result in a changed life.”
– **Warren Wiersbe**

In Romans 10:3 Paul says the Jews “have not submitted to the righteousness of God” and here in verse 16 he says they have not “obeyed the gospel”. In saving faith there is an element of submission to the truth – an obedience to gospel truth. In obedience we from the heart accept the truth of Who Jesus is as Lord and Savior! That is humbling. That involves submission, that involves obedience. God now commands (not suggests) that all people repent and believe on His Son (Acts 17:30; 1 Jn. 3:23).

This issue of obeying the gospel is seen throughout Romans and it speaks to the very nature of what constitutes a true saving faith.

Slide # 15

Romans 1:5 (NKJV)

5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship **for obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,

Romans 6:17 (NKJV)

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you **obeyed from the heart** that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Romans 10:16 (NKJV)

16 But they have **not all obeyed the gospel**. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?”

Slide # 16

Romans 15:18 (NKJV)

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, **to make the Gentiles obedient—**

Romans 16:25–26 (NKJV)

25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **for obedience to the faith**—

The gospel truly believed is the gospel obeyed! We obediently receive Christ as personal Lord and Savior! It is the obedience of faith that saves which is not to be confused with the obedience of works.

This failure of the Jews to obediently respond to the gospel in faith was seen by Isaiah and thus is a fulfillment of prophecy. God saw it coming as nothing takes Him by surprise.

The quote here is from Isaiah 53:1.

Slide # 17**Isaiah 53:1 (NKJV)**

1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

Isaiah 53 is one of the most poignant and clear Messianic texts in all the OT. ***“Who has believed our report?”*** The sense here is rhetorical and is more that of self-accusation than asking. The question does not really demand a response but rather simply calls attention to their would-be historical lack of faith.

Horror of horrors hardly anyone believed the message of the prophets. Horror of horrors they had completely missed the Messianic truth of the prophet’s message (cf. Jn. 12:37-41).

The word ***“report”*** is more literally, ***“the thing heard”*** referring to the Messianic message of the prophets.

As Paul will go on to share, the prophetic report was clear. It was clear in Isaiah 53 that the Messiah would suffer horribly for the sins of His people. The prophets were clear that God would set aside His people Israel and there would be a place for the Gentiles. It was all spelled out in the OT Scriptures.

Slide # 18**Amos 3:7 (NKJV)**

7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

This is God's pattern and if you follow it you find it completely true in regard to Israel and her Messiah. Each step of the way God prophesies what is coming and then brings it to pass.

Exactly as prophesied, (with few exceptions) nobody obeyed the gospel message – the gospel of peace – the glad tidings of good things. They completely missed the prophetic truth of Messiah as fulfilled in Jesus! The Jews completely missed God's way of righteousness which is by FAITH. They completely missed the truth of Jesus. They missed the idea that we are made righteous through faith in Jesus!

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As do many other passages of Scripture, this verse makes clear that, even in His omniscient sovereignty, God chooses not to exercise absolute control over human affairs. Contrary to the idea of a divine determinism, such as that of ultra-Calvinism, God's glad tidings must be received in faith by those who hear it. Only lopsided and unbiblical theologies put everything on God's side or everything on man's side.

– John MacArthur

Paul then states the premise on which FAITH is born. How does faith come about? It doesn't happen in a vacuum. You can't conjure it up. This involves the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit that intersects with human responsibility. The Spirit convicts people of sin and their need of Christ. The Spirit works through the Word, but then people are responsible to believe.

The great issue of condemnation versus justification from the human side of the equation is FAITH versus UNBELIEF. So how does one come to have faith? Paul answers this succinctly in verse 17.

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Notice FAITH does not come through all sorts of intellectual arguments. It does not come through the sharing of philosophy. It does not come through the wisdom of man. It does not come through some mystical experience.

Rather faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. That's it! This is so simple that most people, dare I say even most believers don't really believe this. They want to save something for powerful human arguments and human logic. But Paul very simply and succinctly dashes everything else to pieces in simply saying, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Faith in the Bible is always connected to the Word of God. It is not "blind". Faith is not what you determine to believe – but rather taking God at His Word! God said it – FAITH believes it!

Slide # 20

I prayed for faith and thought it would strike me like lightning. But faith did not come. One day I read, "Now faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." I had closed my Bible and prayed for faith. I now began to study my Bible and faith has been growing ever since. - **Dwight L. Moody**

I believe there is application for believers as Moody was making but really this is an evangelistic context here in Romans. The context here is saving faith – and how does one come to have saving faith in conversion.

It should be noted that the older manuscripts read:

Slide # 21

Romans 10:17 (LSB)

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing **by the word of Christ.**

Faith in Christ comes from hearing the message of the gospel – the message about Christ. This is God's method....

Slide # 22

1 Corinthians 1:21 (NKJV)

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, **it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 (NKJV)

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in **demonstration of the Spirit** and of power, **5** that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the **power of God.**

The Bible presents this powerful combination of the preacher communicating the Word of God and the Spirit working through that to bring people to faith. That is how it happens. It is a Spirit thing – a God thing – a supernatural thing – a powerful thing.

Slide # 23

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV)

11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

God's way to bring about FAITH is through the Word of Christ – which is the Word of God about Christ. There is no better plan – really there is no other plan that really works.

Man's sin problem, his depravity problem is so deep that only the living God working through His living Word by His Spirit can solve it! We are just the feeble messengers that He is pleased to use.

Slide # 24

1 Corinthians 3:6–7 (NKJV)

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

I was at the IFCA conference in Springdale Arkansas this last week and one guy on a panel that was about podcasts said we have far too many of these today. Everybody wants their 10 minutes of fame and many of them are not very solid. He said, we think John MacArthur is famous, but go out and ask people of the world if they know who he is. In their eyes he is a “nobody”. They don't know him. He then said, “We are all just a bunch of nobodies and we will always be a nobody.” How true! We are all just a bunch of nobodies trying to exalt the somebody of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But God can use us powerfully, because His Word is powerful! Want to see people come to faith? Share the Word of Christ with them! There is no other means! The Bible is ALL SUFFICIENT (cf. 2 Tim. 3:15).

The word “hearing” found 2 times in verse 17 is the same basic Greek word translated as “report” in verse 16. For a person to be saved they must hear the report (the message) of Christ that we commonly call the gospel. Paul in Romans 1:16 says this gospel “is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.” (cf. 1 Pet. 1:23)

Over and over in His ministry Christ said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Mt. 11:15; 13:9, 43). If people are not willing to listen, if they are not truly receptive then they will never truly hear and they will never be saved!

And here is the deal – this is the thought that Paul is developing. The Word of faith had been preached, it was near to the Jews, they had heard, they had understood (intellectually) – so what was the problem? THE PROBLEM WAS THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE! This is the whole issue and this is what Paul in effect now goes on to say!

18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.”

The question is this: What if the Jews haven’t really heard the message? Paul emphatically answers that indeed they have heard. And then making application from Psalm 19:4 he indicates the message has gone out to all the earth – to the ends of the world. Psalm 19:4 is really talking about natural revelation, but Paul here makes application to the spread of the gospel.

What Paul seems to mean here is that the message has now gone out extensively - even to the Gentiles in far away places.

Slide # 25

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, **and to the end of the earth.**”

The end of the earth is a way of saying to the Gentiles in all parts of the world. And here is the point: The gospel first goes to the Jews. First in Jerusalem, then in all Judea, then Samaria, and then to the end of the earth. In Romans 1:16 Paul spoke of the gospel in reference “for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” (cf. Col. 1:5-6, 23; Rom. 16:26).

This was consistently Paul's pattern in seeking to take the gospel to the whole world. Wherever he went – the gospel was first to the Jew and then to the Gentiles.

This excuse doesn't hold water with Paul. The Jews as a people have heard! They have had opportunity!

Slide # 26

Acts 7:51 (NKJV)

51 “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! **You always resist the Holy Spirit**; as your fathers did, so do you.

Acts 13:46 (NKJV)

46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was **necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first**; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.

Slide # 27

Acts 17:5–6 (NKJV)

5 But **the Jews** who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “**These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.**”

Slide # 28

Acts 21:27–28 (NKJV)

27 Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

28 crying out, “Men of Israel, help! **This is the man who teaches all men everywhere** against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”

Slide #29

Acts 28:28–29 (NKJV)

28 “Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!”

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.

It is not enough just to HEAR the message – it must be received by FAITH!

Slide # 30**Hebrews 4:2 (NKJV)**

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

They had heard it! They knew about this message, but they did not submit to the truth of it, they did not obey the gospel! The fault was not in the messenger. The fault was not in the message. The problem was Israel’s UNBELIEF! It was inexcusable!

19 But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: “I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.”

Okay, even if they heard maybe the problem is that they have not properly understood. Only, if they understood what God was doing, well then perhaps they would respond properly!

Paul again goes back to their own Scriptures to show that this EXCUSE also holds no water. He goes way back to Moses in Deut. 32:21 to show that God had plainly told them (the people of the Book) that because of their sin He would provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation (the Gentiles who have now become part of the Church – cf. Rom. 11:11).

Further, He would move them to anger by a foolish nation – that is the Gentiles who prior to their conversion lived with a total lack of understanding regarding the One true God (cf. Hos. 2:23).

Truly this was and is being fulfilled! In Acts 13 when Paul preached the gospel to the Jews the Gentiles then begged that they also might hear these words. When the Jews saw the multitudes coming to hear they were filled with envy and vehemently opposed the things spoken by Paul.

The idea of the Gentiles who had no background, no understanding in the things of God, being accepted by God angered the Jewish pride! And yet there it was plainly spelled out in their own Scriptures that this would happen. They just didn't believe it!

Because they had provoked God to jealousy by their worship of a "no-god" (Heb. lo'-'el), He would provoke them to jealousy by means of a "no-people" (Heb. lo'- 'am). – **F.F. Bruce**

Surely if the unenlightened Gentiles have come to understand, the Jews who had the BOOK and all the background should have understood. Their unbelief was inexcusable!

20 But Isaiah is very bold and says: "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me."

Isaiah was very bold in that he daringly (humanly speaking) went even further than Moses in prophetically declaring that a great reversal would take place.

If Moses predicted, somewhat obscurely, the calling of the Gentiles, Isaiah had foretold it very plainly, and placed it in a light most offensive to the Jews. - **Robert Haldane**

This quote comes from Isaiah 65:1. The Gentiles were not looking for God, but when the gospel came to them, they responded positively – not all of them – but many of them.

What a strange turn of events. Those supposedly seeking for God – having a great zeal of for God did not find Him, but those (the Gentiles) who did not seek God nor ask for Him have found Him (cf. Rom. 11:25).

God is the Seeker, and He has sought and is now seeking those that asked not of Him, and has been found of those who sought Him not! – but simply heard the good news and believed! – **William Newell**

The Gentiles did not consciously look for God as the Jews did. But in the end they found Him, because He revealed Himself to people of faith. – **Leon Morris**

Again, all this has happened in perfect accord with Moses and the prophets. Israel heard and should have understood, but their UNBELIEF blinded them to the righteousness which is by FAITH to whosoever will call on the name of the LORD!

21 But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people.”

In contrast to the Gentiles who were a foolish nation, who did not seek after God, and who did not ask for God, and yet came to know Him – in contrast is Israel of whom God says: “**All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.**”

WHY didn't the Jews obey the gospel (v. 16)? Why didn't they come to faith (v. 17)? Was it because no one preached to them? No! Was it because they did not hear? No! Was it because it not been properly explained to them? No!

They got the message! They had heard! The problem was they refused to respond to the message in FAITH! This in sum was their total problem. But it goes deeper in that their UNBELIEF was grounded in rebellion! They had a HEART problem.

“All day long” God has stretched out His hands to them. This is an anthropomorphism meaning God describes His response in human terms. It expresses graciously inviting, beckoning, and pleading with them.

All day long is from morning until evening. It hasn't been just a fleeting thing but an enduring thing – all day long. Down through the centuries God has patiently been waiting. Even after the crucifixion in 33 AD it was not until 70 AD that judgment fell on Israel scattering them to the four winds.

God has continually and consistently reached out to them. They have NOT sought after God but He has constantly through the years invited and appealed to them to get right with Him. This is not on God! This is totally on them!

Slide # 31

Matthew 23:37 (NKJV)

37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted** to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing!**

God was willing, but they were not! This is human responsibility! The onus is totally on them. No one can ever blame God for their UNBELIEF. Notice Paul does not say the problem is that God did not elect more of them (Rom. 9:11). No, the responsibility is placed squarely on the shoulders of human responsibility.

In chapter 9 the strong emphasis is divine election, but here the emphasis is singularly on human responsibility.

Their fall was their fault. The antinomy between divine sovereignty and human responsibility remains. – **John Stott**

The Bible is clear that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked and therefore implores them to turn from their evil ways (Ezek. 33:11). God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). And again, in 2 Pet. 3:9 God is not “wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

Paul says their response has been one of disobedience and being contrary. Disobedient is the idea of refusing to listen or obey. They have consistently been rebellious! Contrary is the idea of being opposed, being stubborn or obstinate! God has described them as a “stiff-necked people” for a reason (Ex. 32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9).

This is why people don't BELIEVE. It comes down to stubborn rebellion that refuses to obey the gospel! The explanation is depraved rebellion. We constantly think if we just packaged the gospel right they would believe. If we just share it in the right way with the right word. But Paul here shows the problem of Jewish unbelief was a HEART problem – not a HEAD problem. That is consistently the case! As Paul says earlier in the chapter “**with the heart one believes unto righteousness**” (Rom. 10:10). This is a HEART ISSUE!

Paul in effect underlines here that God is not to blame for Israel's lost condition. Those who are lost have no one to blame but themselves – those who are saved have no one to credit except for God.

Galileo was an Italian astronomer. He lived from 1546-1642. In the course of his life he was summoned before the authorities of the Roman Catholic church in an inquisition to give account for his teaching that the earth revolved around the sun rather than the sun revolving around the earth as the church officially taught.

He was consequently charged with heresy! Galileo offered to demonstrate the TRUTH of his position by inviting the church authorities to look through his telescope. But they REFUSED. Their minds were already made up and they refused to even consider any evidence to the contrary.

Indeed, “***There is none so blind as he who will not see!***”

Appropriately when Jesus died on the cross His hands were outstretched in love as He died for our sins. That gesture to a depraved and rebellious world is still in place today. We are still living in the day of grace and the invitation is still “Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17). God in effect still has His arms outstretched in invitation to come to Him – not only to Israel – but for whosoever will come to Him.

Have you obeyed the gospel?

Have you believed in your heart and called on the name of the Lord to save you?

Romans 10:10 (NKJV)

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13 (NKJV)

13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

In FAITH call on Jesus to save you today and you have His promise that He will do so!