NOT LISTENING!

(Romans 10:16 / Isaiah 53:1)

Have you ever thought of the Jewishness of Christianity? Jesus was Jewish. The apostles were Jewish. The Scriptures used in those early apostolic days of the church before the New Testament was written were Jewish. Yet, Christianity flourished among those of a non-Jewish ethnicity. Most Jews in those early days of the Christian church did not want anything to do with Christ or Christianity. The apostle Paul, who was a devout Jew by birth and religious faith, who at one time persecuted the Christians, but also became one of Christianity's greatest advocates and spokesman, talked about the Jewish lack of interest in Christ in Romans chapters 9–11. If you are joining us today for the first time, we are in the middle of his explanation as to why this is so. Our text today is Romans 10:14–18.

The argumentation we will look at today, that Paul gives, is only five verses: however, in those verses, Paul quotes from four Old Testament verses (the Jewish Scriptures). Obviously, he is hoping that his fellow kinsmen are listening to what he is sharing. In our passage today, we will discover that not listening is the problem he is having with his Jewish friends whom he loves. It is not that they do not hear it. It just goes in one ear and out the other. They know the gist of what he is saying, so they are without excuse, but they really have not understood it. They have their own ideas. They have made up their minds. So, they are not hearing what Paul is trying to get across to them.

Has anyone here experienced what Paul is up against? Have you ever felt that what you said was getting nowhere; it is if you were talking to a brick wall? Wait until you hear what Paul said! We will look at it and see how important it is to know.

What will we discover? For starters, 1) what is good news for some will end up being bad news for others, 2) where faith comes from, 3) when we finally stand before God, no one will have any excuses, and 4) just what is the good news Paul wants his fellow Jews to hear?

Context

Romans 10:1–13

[1] Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. [2] For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. [3] Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. [4] Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

[5] Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them." [6] But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) [7] "or 'Who will descend into the deep?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). [8] But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: [9] That 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." [12] For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, [13] for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Table 1. Romans 10:14–18

[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 they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"	**Calling < believing < hearing < preaching < being sen**t In the last verses, Paul wrote, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom 10:13 / quote from Joel 2:32) To call upon the Lord, someone needs to be sent preaching the good news, and the message needs to be heard and believed before one will call upon the Lord **Isaiah 52:7** 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!" **Nahum 1:15** Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.
[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 of Christ. [18] But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did:	**Isaiah 53:1** Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? **Where in the link was the good news not called upon?** The preacher was sent, they heard it (but did not take it to heart) They failed to believe it, therefore they did not call upon him.
"Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."	**Psalm 19:4** Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

What is good news for some will end up being bad news for others

This is seen in the quote about the beautiful feet of those who bring good news, when you look at what is said in Isaiah and Nahum, the books the quote comes from.

First the bad news – in Nahum [906 in pew Bible]. To whom was Nahum written to? The same people Jonah went to in the book of Jonah. The way to remember the connection: The spelling, the “nah” in both. Jo**nah** . . . **Nah**um.

Both books are about judgment. The LORD was about to judge Nineveh, the capital of Assyrian in Jonah, but they repented. In Nahum, the LORD finally judges them. Assyria is one of the evil empires of the OT. Like V-E Day in WWII, when the Nazis were defeated, it caused a lot of joy around the world. But not for the Nazis.!

Ever perplexed about the problem of evil in the world? Don't be. The last chapter has not been written. The bad guys get it in the end. Crime does not pay.

We do not hear much about the bad news of the judgment of God today.

We like to hear that "God is . . . most loving, gracious, merciful, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith)

We do not like to hear that "God is . . . most just and terrible in judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty" (1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith).

The good news – in Isaiah [716 in pew Bible], the LORD is coming to Zion with salvation. This is good news, Isa 52:7, But who will believe it Isa 53:1? And how does the LORD come? Isa 53 – Christ is portrayed here.

Where faith comes from

Romans 10:17 - Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

When we finally stand before God no one will have any excuses

Psalm 19:1–4 [1] For the director of music. A psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
[2] Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they display knowledge.
[3] There is no speech or language
where their voice is not heard.
[4] Their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

Romans 1:18-20 [18] The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, [19] since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. [20] For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Just what is the good news Paul wants his fellow Jews to hear?

Romans 10:9–13 [9] That 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." [12] For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, [13] for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."