

“Hear Ye! Hear Ye!” (Romans 10:14–21)

Have you ever had your “Check Engine” light go on? Are you driving right now with your “Check Engine” light? A 2008 survey found that 10% of the adults polled were driving with a “Check Engine” light on. An alarming 50% of those whose cars were showing signs of an impending breakdown indicated the light had been on for over three months. Another 10% said the light had been on between one and two months. What’s especially bad is a few years ago the U.S. government put the on-board diagnostic system in place to alert drivers when their vehicle had a problem. This light can signify something potentially costly and possibly dangerous to the passengers or others on the road. The survey found drivers had a whole litany of excuses for ignoring the light. Some turned a blind eye toward the indicator because the car seemed to be “running fine.” Others pointed to a lack of sufficient funds. Still others simply noted that they just didn’t have time to worry about diagnostics and subsequent repairs.¹

It’s easy to ignore the “Check Engine” light. People do it everyday. Sometimes there are consequences; sometimes there aren’t. Similarly, God issues a “Check Soul” light. Yet, people ignore God everyday. Often there may not seem to be consequences in this life, but there *will* be in eternity. How you and I respond to Jesus Christ determines our destiny. We must sense the urgency. Now, I would be the last person to ever set a date for Christ’s return.² I won’t even predict the decade that Christ will return! But I know this: we are closer today than we’ve ever been. Hence, we must plead with people to believe in Jesus Christ and urge believers to share the good news. Although many Christians interpret Romans 10 as a missionary text, it is important to note that Paul’s primary point is that God is already on mission. He has sent people to preach the good news, but the hearers have failed to believe.³ Consequently, the issue here is: *There’s no excuse for making excuses.* In 10:14–21 Paul makes two urgent assertions.⁴

1. Christ must be preached (10:14–17). The process of faith and Christian faithfulness is dependent upon believing in Christ and sharing Him with others. In 10:14–15a Paul asks four questions that receive a negative answer.⁵ Paul raises two more questions in 10:18–19. The answers are strong affirmations from the Old Testament. The implication is that the Bible has the answers to our questions.⁶ This should give us great confidence in God’s Word. Paul writes in 10:14–15, “**How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?**⁷ **How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?** [The NASB renders the Greek verb *kerusso* as the noun “preacher.” Unfortunately, this implies an ordained minister, but Paul meant “someone preaching” (NIV)]. **How will they preach unless they are sent?**⁸ **Just as it is written, ‘HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS’ OF GOOD THINGS!’**”¹⁰ Paul lays down a simple five-point process. However, he presents these five steps in reverse order. For our purposes, we will walk through this text in a chronological fashion from start (sending) to finish (calling).¹¹

First, a messenger is sent. The word “sent” (*apostolosin*) is a passive verb that means “to be sent.”¹² It speaks of representing the sender. The noun cognate of “sent” is “apostle,” which literally means “sent one.”¹³ Paul quotes Isa 52:7, which implies that God is the One who sends the messengers. So consider yourself sent by God! *Every* believer is commissioned as a messenger.¹⁴ The Bible is clear: we must go to sinners if we expect them to come to the Savior. God’s goal is for you is to have “beautiful”¹⁵ feet by sharing His good news. Isn’t it ironic that many Christians, who go to great lengths to dress their feet in the world’s latest fashion, do not have the beauty of an African saint whose feet will not rest until all within his reach hears the gospel? How beautiful are your feet? How beautiful are the feet of the church of Jesus Christ at large? May we be people of passion more than fashion as we take the good news of the gospel to a waiting world.¹⁶ Does this sound daunting? Perhaps your vision is too small? A podiatrist in Washington D.C. claims that the average person’s feet travel more than four times the earth’s circumference in a lifetime.¹⁷ Let’s put shoe leather to the gospel! Take a picture of your feet and place it in a prominent place to remind you that beautiful feet share Christ with others.

Second, the messenger proclaims the truth.¹⁸ In ancient times good news traveled by means of messengers who ran from one place to another. No one had a cell phone. You couldn't turn on the TV and watch the battle in real time as we can today. They didn't have the Internet that flashes news around the world instantly. Everything depended on the messenger delivering the message. Today, we are called to be messengers who proclaim Jesus. The trouble is that a great many Christian preachers (professional pulpiteers and believers alike) are guilty of preaching about politics, social issues, ethics, entertainment, and anything else except Christ. Nonetheless, we must all proclaim the good news. We must always remember that when Christ sends us, He always goes with us. He will give us the words, and He will open hearts. We must simply tell others that *there's no excuse for making excuses*.

Third, individuals hear the message.¹⁹ We must endeavor to preach so that lost people can hear of Christ. But we must recognize that God has not called upon us to win the lost—only to tell them the good news. It is not sufficient, however, to proclaim the truth only within the four walls of our church buildings, for most of the lost will never venture inside. We must take the message of Christ to where the people are—at work, at school, in the neighborhood, over the radio, on TV, and even overseas. They must hear.

Fourth, individuals believe what they hear.²⁰ Many people claim to believe in Jesus; however, they believe in Jesus plus something else (e.g., baptism, church membership, good works). Yet, this cancels out one's belief, for justification is faith alone in Christ alone. Other people claim to believe that Christ lived a perfect life, died, and rose again, yet they fail to trust Him for salvation. It's critical to recognize that one must *personally* appropriate faith and be persuaded that Christ guarantees eternal life.

Fifth, individuals call on Him, upon whom they believe. Please notice that belief precedes calling. The public confession of calling on the name of the Lord is something that only believers can do. This final step transitions from eternal life (belief) to the abundant life (confess/call). This salvation is broader than mere justification,²¹ and is the only appropriate response to initial belief in Jesus.²² We must boldly and courageously call on the Lord. Although it may be intimidating and frightening, God provides courage. Emerson said it well, "Do the thing you fear—and the death of fear is certain."

In spite of the opportunities God has given to people, they often choose to reject Christ. Paul writes in 10:16–17: **"However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, 'LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?' So faith comes from hearing,²³ and hearing by the word of Christ."**²⁴ The key phrase in this passage is 10:16, where Paul states that the majority of people who hear about Christ will not believe in Him. In fact, only a remnant will be saved (cf. 9:6b, 27).²⁵ This sad reality remains true today as well. Regardless of how many people you share Christ with, only a small percentage will believe. Nonetheless, we must remain faithful to preach Christ. It's worth noting that there is a play on words in 10:14–16. To "hear" and "heed" are closely connected ideas. The word for "heed" (*hupakouo*) is a compound form coming from the word to "hear" (*akouo*).²⁶ To fail to "heed" or "obey" is to disbelieve in Christ.²⁷ This is why Paul emphasizes the necessity of hearing "the word of Christ" (i.e., the gospel) and exercising faith. We must remind others that *there's no excuse for making excuses*.

Brother John was a timid man who dreaded speaking in public. He was terrified on the day it was his turn to give a devotional message. With his knees knocking, he faced his listeners and said, "Do you know what I'm going to say this morning?" "No," answered the audience. He then said, "Neither do I," and he ran from the room. The next day he was told to try again. So he again asked, "Do you know what I'm going to say?" This time they replied, "Yes." So he said, "Then you don't need me to tell you." Again he fled. He tried a third morning, saying, "Do you know what I'm going to say?" Half his hearers shouted, "Yes!" and half shouted, "No!" "Ah," said Brother John, "Then let those who know tell those who don't know," and again he fled. At first, his hearers sat in silence. Then the words hit home: "Let those who know tell those who don't know."²⁸

Since you and I know we are obligated to share Christ, how can we be faithful to this task? (1) *Pray for unbelievers and believers alike*. (Explain the “Seven for Heaven/Seven for Earth” card: pray for seven unbelievers to trust in Christ and seven believers to share Christ.) Prayer is the most vital human element in seeing unbelievers respond to the gospel. Are you praying and dreaming about the salvation of a spouse, a loved one, a neighbor, a coworker, an unreached people group or country?²⁹ (2) *Find common ground with unbelievers*. What movie or TV show can you draw upon as a transition into spiritual things? Can you bring up a secular music band that an unbeliever might be interested in? Do you know any Christian athletes who are believers that you can discuss? Are you reading a book that you could talk about? What about world events? Do you have a thought provoking question? You must prepare content and questions for discussions, expecting that God will speak through you. As you pray and prepare, God will use you at work, school, as you run errands, and everywhere you go. But remember: you won’t find opportunities to witness if you’re not looking for them. Pray for open doors and then walk through them. Remember that God does not want your ability as much as He wants your availability. Preach the good news! Don’t be ashamed (cf. 1:16). Tell others that *there’s no excuse for making excuses*.

[The first assertion is that Christ must be preached. The second assertion is . . .]

2. People must believe (10:18–21). Our responsibility is to get “the gospel” to people; it is the responsibility of each listener to act on it. Here Paul deals with the two primary objections that lost people tend to have: (1) They haven’t heard and (2) they haven’t understood. In 10:18a Paul raises a first objection to belief: **“But I say, surely they have never heard, have they?”**³⁰ Some Israelites may have been tempted to say that they had never been given an opportunity to believe in Christ. Many people use the same argument today about themselves or the heathen. However, Paul insists in 10:18b that this is an illegitimate excuse. He declares, **“Indeed they have; THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH,³¹ AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.”**³² It is likely that Paul is using hyperbole here (cf. Col 1:23) to say that the gospel is going forth throughout the world.³³ He isn’t saying that the Great Commission has been accomplished, but that it is in the process of being fulfilled.³⁴ He quotes Psalm 19:4, which opens with that well-known statement of natural revelation. Nature, the psalmist says, has a voice and while that voice is non-verbal, it reaches every human being. Since every human being has enjoyed natural revelation (i.e., creation), obviously every Jew has also received it. And Psalm 19:6–10 deals with the special revelation (i.e., Scripture), and every Jew also received that. The Old Testament included scores of prophecies of the coming Messiah.³⁵ So the Jews cannot use the excuse that they never heard the gospel. Besides, Jesus and the apostles shared the gospel with the Jews before they ever took it to the Gentiles.

Paul addresses a second objection to belief in 10:19–20: **“But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, ‘I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU.’ And Isaiah is very bold and says, ‘I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME.’”** Paul uses Deut 32:21 and Isa 65:1 to demonstrate that Israel did indeed understand the good news of Christ. God granted His people both general revelation and special revelation, and if that wasn’t enough, He even offered salvation to the Gentiles for the purpose of making Israel jealous so that they might turn to their Messiah. But the vast majority refused God’s gracious revelation. Nevertheless, they are without excuse.

Paul’s use of Isa 65:1 reflects the predestination/election theme of Rom 9–11. The apostle makes the special point that Gentiles believed in Christ as their Messiah even though they were not seeking or asking for Him. In fact, they were running as fast and as far away from Christ as possible. Yet, God in His sovereignty chose to reveal Himself to Gentile runners like you and me. God’s grace is truly amazing! He alone can and should receive all the glory in salvation.

Our passage closes in 10:21 with a very powerful verse: **“But as for Israel He says, ‘ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.’”**³⁶ I love the phrase “All the day long . . .” In spite of Israel’s hardhearted, stiff-necked rebellion, God expresses love for His people. What a potent example that God’s nature and character never change. His love is unconditional. God had shown much love to the people of Israel. He says to Israel: “I stretched out my hands all day long . . .” The idea of “stretching out the hands” is normally a reference to prayer.³⁷ It refers to urgent pleading. It is the kind of posture we adopt when we are pleading for God to do something for us. But what we have here is not some people spreading out their hands in plea to God, but God stretching out His hands pleading with the nation of Israel! The relation is the reverse of what we should expect. Israel ought to be pleading with God, but God is actually pleading with Israel.³⁸ Israel seems to have fallen out of God’s favor, but the word of God to Israel has not failed, and God has not been unfaithful. On God’s side, He has shown them nothing but love.³⁹

What does it mean to stretch out your hands to someone? This gesture can refer to helping someone up, giving a gift, giving a warm hug, or offering an invitation. The picture of stretching out your hands to someone depicts nothing but love. If you have never trusted in Jesus Christ, He is stretching out His hands to you right now. All that you have to do is believe in Him. Will you do so today? If you have already believed in Christ, God’s heart is that you would stretch out your hands to someone else as an extension of His love. Perhaps you’ve been deeply wounded by your spouse. Maybe he or she has committed adultery or has neglected your marriage. God may be calling you to stretch out your hands with His love and grace. If you have children, it’s quite possible that they have sinned against you in horrible ways. Will you forgive them as Christ has forgiven you and stretch out your hands to them? Perhaps your coworkers or classmates have ruined your reputation at work or school. Your character has been illegitimately maligned. Will you stretch out your hands to such individuals? Maybe there are people in your church who have wounded you deeply. It seems like those who hurt us the most are brothers and sisters in Christ. Nonetheless, will you take the initiative to stretch out your hands in reconciliation? God stretches out His hands to you and to me and to the entire world. In light of all that He has done for us, can we not show others God’s great love?

Satan and his demons were devising plans to cause people to reject the gospel. “Let’s go to them and say there is no God,” proposed one. Silence prevailed. Every demon knew that most people believe in a supreme being. “Let’s tell them there is no hell, no future punishment for the wicked,” offered another. That was turned down because people obviously have consciences which tell them that sin must be punished. The planning was going to end in failure when there came a voice from the rear: “Tell them there is a God and there is a hell, but tell them there is no hurry. Let them neglect the gospel until it is too late.” All hell erupted with ghoulish glee, for they knew that if a person procrastinated on a decision for Christ, they usually would never trust in Him.

The sobering truth is there is a sense of urgency—dare I say a state of emergency. The time for belief will soon be over. It could be any moment—maybe even today. Are you ready? Have you placed your faith in Christ alone? If you are a believer, are seeking to call upon Him? Let’s share the gospel as if everything depends upon us, yet rest assured that since God is sovereign, everything ultimately depends upon Him.⁴⁰ *There’s no excuse for making excuses.*

Scripture References

Romans 10:14–21

Isaiah 52:6–8; 52:13–53:12

Psalms 19:4, 11

Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 65:1–2

Luke 12:47–48

Acts 28:17–22

2 Corinthians 5:14–21

Study Questions

1. What is so significant about calling on the Lord (Romans 10:14–15)? In the course of my Christian life when have I been most prone to call upon the Lord? When did I call upon the Lord this past week? Why is it so difficult to believe in Christ for justification *and* sanctification? How can I become more dependent upon Christ?
2. What has the vast majority of Israel refused to do (Romans 10:14, 16)? Why do so many Americans reject Christ? What are their primary objections? Do I have answers to these objections? If not, will I compile a list of reasons that people I know refuse Christ? Will I then make a commitment to seek proper responses to these concerns?
3. What is the difference between “hearing” and *true* hearing (Romans 10:14–21)? How can I make sure that I am truly hearing/responding to the Word? How can I ensure that people understand the importance of not merely hearing with their ears but responding with their heart? How can I help others grow in their Christian obedience?
4. Why can’t Israel blame their unbelief on the fact that they can’t understand “the word of Christ” (Romans 10:19–21)? Why are people so prone to make excuses for their lack of faith (e.g., if God would just appear to me personally then I would believe)? How can I be faithful in presenting the word of Christ to those in need? How can I effectively and graciously communicate the message of John 3:16–18, 36?
5. In what ways has God extended unconditional love and patience to Israel (Romans 10:21)? How have I experienced God’s unconditional love and patience in my own life? Have I been showing unconditional love and patience to those in my life (e.g., spouse, children, coworkers, neighbors, classmates, church members)? If so, how?

Notes

¹ Preaching Today citation: Associated Press, “Ten Percent of U.S. Drivers Have Their ‘Check Engine’ Light On,” [www.yahoo.com/news](http://www.yahoo.com/news/6-10-08) (6-10-08), and “Snapshots: How long the light’s been on,” *USA Today* (6-22-08); submitted by Brian Lowery, managing editor, PreachingToday.com.

² Two weeks ago Harold Camping predicted that Christ would return on May 12, 2011. See www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Camping; accessed 4 June 2011.

³ Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*. New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 662; Moo, *Romans*. NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 351.

⁴ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 663 comments on the rhetorical structure of this section: “Paul writes generally in vv. 14-18 about the relationship of all people to the message of the gospel while at the same time thinking especially of the application of these points to Israel. His point, then, is that Israel cannot plead ignorance: God has made his purposes clear in both the OT (note the six OT quotations in vv. 14-21) and the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. So the fault rests with Israel: she has been “disobedient and obstinate” (v. 21; cf. v. 16).”

⁵ Cf. Rom 3:1, 9, 27; 4:1, 9; 6:1, 15; 7:1, 7, 13, 24; 8:24, 31, 35; 9:14, 22, 30.

⁶ Bob Deffinbaugh, “Without Excuse” (Rom 10:14-21): www.bible.org.

⁷ The necessary basis for a call to God, of course, is belief, as has been said so often previously (seventeen times in 3:21-4:25 alone as well as 10:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 in the immediately preceding context). Grant R. Osborne, *Romans*. The IVP NT Commentary series (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 274.

⁸ The phrases “the word of faith which we preach” and “How will they preach unless they are sent?” repeats the words “preach” and “sent” the prophet Isaiah used of himself (Isa 61:1: “the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted”). Barnett asks, “Perhaps Paul knew that Jesus applied Isaiah 61:1 to himself in the sermon in Nazareth (Luke 4:18). If so, did this influence Paul in applying Isaiah 61:1 to apostolic ministry? Paul Barnett, *Romans: The Revelation of God’s Righteousness* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2003), 236. Harrison and Hagner ask, “Is this last question a veiled indication that Paul needs the support of the Romans for his planned evangelistic work in Spain?” Everett F. Harrison and Donald A. Hagner, “Romans” in the *Revised Expositors Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 163.

⁹ “Good news” in its earliest contexts was that of victory in battle. In Isaiah it is deliverance from captivity in Assyria (cf. Isa 52:4, 11-12), a type of the coming deliverance from sin. The salvation included within the term “gospel” (*euangelion*) refers to physical and spiritual deliverance (see also René A. Lopez, *Romans Unlocked: Power to Deliver* (Springfield: 21st Century Press, 2005), 216.

¹⁰ Paul calls the gospel “good news.” We must never forget this element. Yes, we must discuss sin and hell, but focus is upon the good news that Jesus forgives sins and gives eternal life as a free gift.

¹¹ See also R. Larry Moyer, *Free and Clear* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997), 123. See the following five steps:

Backward	Forward
step 5: call	step 1: send
step 4: believe	step 2: preach
step 3: hear	step 3: hear
step 2: preach	step 4: believe
step 1: send	step 5: call

¹² Paul only uses this verb in three other places: 1 Cor 1:17; 2 Cor 12:17; and 2 Tim 4:12.

¹³ This emphasis can be especially seen in John’s gospel where Jesus is depicted as the Sent One (5:23-24, 36; 8: 16, 18, 29, 42 et al) and also declares, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 17:18; 20:21). Combining this with 2 Tim 2:2, there is a powerful passing of the baton from Jesus to the preacher to “reliable [people] who will also be qualified to teach others.” But the basis of it all is the authority of being sent as Christ’s herald (see Osborne, *Romans*, 275).

¹⁴ See Keith R. Krell, “How to Teach Laypeople to Effectively Preach Paul’s Letters” (D.Min. diss., Talbot School of Theology, 2008).

¹⁵ The adjective *horaios* can be translated either “beautiful” or “timely.” The term may mean “beautiful” in its original OT context, and since Paul seems to be relying upon the Hebrew text (MT) in his quotation, this could be the case in Rom 10:14 as well. Moreover, the term means “beautiful” in its other NT uses (Matt 23:7; Acts 3:2, 10). See Thomas Schreiner, *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 567; Osborne, *Romans*, 274-75. However, all of the other uses of *horaios* outside the NT mean “timely,” and it is possible that this is the meaning in Isa 52:7 as well. Hoehner wisely suggests that the context can support either translation. Harold W. Hoehner, “Romans” in *The Bible Knowledge Word Study* (Colorado Springs: Victor, 2006), 182.

¹⁶ Boa and Kruidenier, *Romans*, 321.

¹⁷ Joanie E. Yoder, "World Travelers," *Our Daily Bread* (Grand Rapids: Radio Bible Class): www.odb.org/1996/02/12/world-travelers. Accessed 4 June 2011.

¹⁸ Boa and Kruidenier write: "Since no other media except the human voice was of practical value in spreading the gospel in the first century, preaching is Paul's method of choice. And yet, in the media-rich day in which we minister, has anything replaced preaching as the most effective way to communicate the gospel? We thank God for the printed page, and even for cutting-edge presentations of the gospel circling the globe on the internet. But it is still the human voice that cracks with passion, the human eye that wells with tears of gratitude, and the human frame that shuffles to the podium, bent from a lifetime of service to the gospel, that reaches the needy human heart most readily. Hearing may not *require preaching* in person today, but it always benefits from it." Kenneth Boa and William Kruidenier, *Romans*. Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2000), 314.

¹⁹ Morris writes, "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, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 391; Hoehner, "Romans," 392.

²⁰ Ryrie rightly reminds us that: "Though God's election of His people is of His own free choice and not based on human merit (Ro. 9:11, 23), the elect are not saved without believing the message that is preached by those who are sent (Isa. 52:7)." Charles Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible: NAS Translation* (Chicago: Moody, 1995).

²¹ Lopez, *Romans Unlocked*, 215.

²² Here is the message of Romans: We are all sinners, and sin has far reaching consequences. In order to be justified, to be given eternal life, to be freed from the penalty of sin, all we have to do is place faith in Jesus Christ. But being freed from the penalty of sin is not the same thing as being freed from the power of sin in your life. Justification is not the same thing as sanctification. So if you really want to live the *victorious* Christian life, if you really want to *gain victory* over the power of sin in your life, you need, first of all, to be a believer, and then secondly, to submit yourself to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Confess publicly that you are a Christian and that you are going to serve Christ with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.

²³ Hoehner, "Romans," 182 observes: "There is a repeat of *ako* ['hearing'] discussed above. Most translations render it as the act of hearing (KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV, NLT), but a few translations (RSV, NEB, NRSV, NET) render it as 'that which is heard, a report or message.' The latter option is preferred because that is how it is rendered in the previous verse. Hence the *ako pisteos* (Rom. 10:17; Gal. 3:2, 5) is the apostolic message which has faith as its content and is spoken and received as God's word (1 Thess. 2:13)."

²⁴ The word of Christ here is perhaps best taken as "the spoken words about Christ," referring to the preaching of the gospel (see Boa and Kruidenier, *Romans*, 316).

²⁵ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 662. Moo (664) rightly suggests that the phrase "they did not all heed" is a litotes (i.e., a deliberate understatement to prove the opposite point).

²⁶ Michael Eaton, *Romans*. Preaching Through the Bible (Kent, UK: Sovereign World Trust, 2010), 198.

²⁷ Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 392 states, "But we must not overlook the fact that the gospel contains an implicit demand for obedience (cf. 1:5). To decline the gospel invitation is to disobey God." See also Barnett, *Romans*, 237.

²⁸ Dennis J. De Haan, "Brother John," *Our Daily Bread* (Grand Rapids: Radio Bible Class): www.odb.org/2001/09/11/brother-john/. Accessed 4 June 2011.

²⁹ Boa and Kruidenier, *Romans*, 319.

³⁰ The Greek phrase *me ouk ekousan* is difficult to translate. It is literally "have they not 'not heard'?" The particle *me* expects a negative answer, one which Paul corrects. This is an appropriate question to ask, as hearing is a prerequisite to belief.

³¹ The Greek word behind "world" (*oikoumene*) may refer to the Roman Empire rather than to the entire inhabited world.

³² Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 667 counters: "His application probably rests on a general analogy: as God's word of general revelation has been proclaimed all over the earth, so God's word of special revelation, in the gospel, has been spread all over the earth. His intention is not to interpret the verse of the Psalm, but to use its language, with the 'echoes' of God's revelation that it awakes, to assert the universal preaching of the gospel."

³³ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 667.

³⁴ Osborne, *Romans*, 278.

³⁵ Isaiah 53 is as clear an exposition of the gospel of salvation by the sacrifice of Christ as you can find anywhere in the NT.

³⁶ Cf. Prov 1:24–26; Jer 25:4; 35:15; Matt 23:37.

³⁷ E.g., 1 Kgs 8:22. “Solomon . . . spread out his hands towards heaven.”

³⁸ The whole life of Jesus was given over to ministering and serving God in Israel. He would tell his disciples, “Go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

³⁹ Eaton, *Romans*, 204.

⁴⁰ Wallace writes, “The means of election is always through human agency. That is, God uses other believers to communicate the gospel to the lost. Cf. Romans 10:14-17. Therefore, we cannot excuse ourselves from sharing the gospel by saying, “If he’s elect, God’s going to save him anyway. He doesn’t need me to do the job.” It’s true that God doesn’t *need* any of us to do his will, but it is equally true that God *uses* those who are willing to obey him. Consequently, the doctrine of election should motivate us to share the gospel—not out of fear but because we want to be used by God to do his will.” Daniel B. Wallace, “My Understanding of The Biblical Doctrine of Election”: www.bible.org. Schreiner, *Romans*, 575 writes: “Upholding divine sovereignty, however, does not lead Paul to minimize human responsibility and the seriousness of human choices. All of Rom. 9:30–10:21 emphasizes that Israel *should* believe and is held responsible for not doing so. Human responsibility and divine sovereignty in Rom. 9 and 10 should not be played off against one another so that the former nullifies the latter. Instead, the former is subsidiary to the latter without thereby emptying human choices of their validity or responsibility. Finally, God’s election of some for salvation does not exclude the notion that he genuinely invites all to be saved. The outstretched arms of God in Rom. 10:21 reveal a genuine longing on his part that all will respond in faith (cf. 1 Tim. 2:4). Some respond that such an idea is nonsense if he has determined that only some will be saved. Paul himself, however, was certainly well aware that his view of divine sovereignty seemed to cancel genuine human freedom and responsibility (see Rom. 9:6–23). Nonetheless, he continued to advance both divine sovereignty and human responsibility as true, without reconciling the tension between the two philosophically. I suggest that all attempts to solve the problem philosophically are either unconvincing or inevitably suppress one side of the biblical witness. The resolution of the tension between divine sovereignty and human freedom lies beyond our present rational capacities. This does not mean that Paul is irrational. It simply means that some truths are suprarational.”