

31. Learning How God Has a Concern for the Whole World

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others how they can receive salvation and forgiveness of sin. We also saw that we want to help them understand how to explain the meaning of repentance and faith clearly. To help them to explain faith clearly, we saw that we need to help them be able to explain the importance of the death and resurrection of Christ. In our topic today, we are going to see that God has a concern for the whole world to hear this message so that all will have the opportunity to receive salvation.

We concluded our last topic by seeing that Romans 10:13 says, “For ‘whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.’” That statement is followed by a series of questions in the verses that we will be studying today. Romans 10:14-15 says, “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? 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!’ Here, we see several very important questions that help us realize the importance of helping our children learn to explain the Gospel clearly.

The first question is, “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” The word translated “believed” means *to think that something is true, to be persuaded of or to place confidence in something*. This requires that a person must first receive a certain amount of knowledge of the Gospel in order to be persuaded. In order for a person to believe that Christ died for their sins and that the Father showed that He was satisfied with that payment by raising Christ from the dead, a person has to be shown from the Word of God that they are separated from God by sin, that Christ is without sin, that Christ died for their sin and that the Father was satisfied with the payment and showed it by raising Christ from the dead. It is impossible for people to call on Christ if they have not yet come to the point where they believe that these things are true.

The second question is, “And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” It is impossible for a person to believe in someone of whom they have never heard. This can be true even if a person is reading a part of the Bible if they do not understand what they are reading. This is illustrated by the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:34-35 where we read, “So the eunuch answered Philip and said, ‘I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?’ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.” The eunuch was reading from the book of Isaiah. However, he had no understanding of the fact that Isaiah was talking about Jesus. As a result, he needed to have Philip explain to him what Isaiah was teaching about Jesus.

The third question is, “And how shall they hear without a preacher?” The word that is translated “preacher” means *to speak openly about something that has been done*. One of the last things Christ said to the disciples, and was spoken for every Christian to obey, is given in Mark 16:15, where we are commanded, “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’” Since this command is to share the message with every person in the world, this command is to every Christian including each of us and each of our physical and spiritual children.

Growing Godly Family Series – Helping Our Children Learn to Share the Gospel of God 31. “Learning How God Has a Concern for the Whole World”

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The particular message that we are to share is the Gospel of Christ.

The fourth question is, “And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” The word that is translated “sent” means *to send a person forth*. Here, in this verse, it means to be sent forth to deliver the message of the Gospel of Christ. Christ used this same word when He said to His disciples and through them to each Christian in John 20:21, “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’” Just as the Father sent Christ to this world to bring the message of the Gospel, Christ has now sent us to take that same message to the world. Paul then quoted Isaiah 52:7 which says, “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!’” Here, we see that the message that we have been commissioned to share with the world is a message of good news for the world.

Paul understood that many of the Jews had rejected the Gospel of Christ. As a result, he gave several quotations from the Old Testament to show that God wants all people, both Jews and Gentiles, to hear that message. Romans 10:16-18 says, “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 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.’” One of the greatest passages in the Old Testament on the sufferings and death of Christ is recorded in Isaiah 53. Isaiah 53:1 says, “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?” We see that Paul quoted part of that verse to show that many of the Jews had not believed what the Old Testament teaches about Christ.

Paul goes on to tell us what is required for people to have the faith to believe what the Word of God says about Christ. We see that, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” In order for people to come to a true faith in Christ, we see that they have to have the Word of God explained to them. As a result, we want to help our children understand the importance of sharing the Word of God with others and not their own ideas or experiences. It is the Word of God that is living and powerful and not our words.

All people do know about God through His creation. Romans 1:19-20 says, “Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” In fact, we see that Paul quotes from Psalm 19:4 to show that all people have knowledge of God from His creation.

However, that knowledge of God from His creation is not the thing that brings people to faith in Christ. The Jews had both the creation and had heard the Word of God but most of them still did not believe. In these verses, we see that it is the Word of God and particularly the message about the life, death and resurrection of Christ that bring people to the point where they come to a true faith in Christ. That is why it is so important for us to help our children learn to understand and explain what the Word of God teaches about Christ so that they can share that message from the Word of God with others.

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Because most of the Jews did not believe God and most failed to place their faith in Christ when He came to this earth, God had warned long before that He would use someone other than the Jews to take the message of the Gospel of Christ to the world. Romans 10:19-21 says, “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.’ 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.’ But to Israel he says: ‘All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.’” Here, we see that Israel did know the Word of God. However, they chose to try and earn eternal life through their own efforts instead of coming to God through Christ by faith.

God had told Israel more than 1400 years before Christ came to this earth that He would use someone other than the Jews to bring the message of Christ to the world. Moses told Israel in Deuteronomy 32:21, “They have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.” Here, in Romans, we see that Paul quoted this verse from Moses to show that God had said He was going to use someone other than the Jews to take the Gospel of Christ to the world. Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, “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.” The body of Christ, the church, is the group of people that God is using to take the Gospel of Christ to the world today.

Paul then quoted from Isaiah 65:1-2 which says, “I was sought by *those who* did not ask *for Me*; I was found by *those who* did not seek Me. I said, “Here I am, here I am,” to a nation *that* was not called by My name. I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way *that is* not good, According to their own thoughts.” The first verse speaks of the church. The second verse speaks of the Jews. Here, we see that God said through Isaiah that as Gentiles we were not seeking God. Instead, God had to come to us and say, “Here I am. Here I am!” Even though we as Gentiles were not a part of the nation that God chose to be His special nation, He has given us the privilege of sharing the message of the Gospel of Christ with the world.

In contrast, God said that the people He has chosen to be His special nation has been a rebellious nation and has been set aside for the present, although we will learn about their future in the next topics. We want to help our children understand the greatness of the privilege that we have been given to share the Gospel of Christ with the world. This great privilege gives each of us as Christians a real purpose for life. As we help our physical and spiritual children understand how to carry out this purpose that God has given them, it will give great meaning to their lives. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand that God wants to bless and use their lives because of His concern for the whole world to hear the Gospel of Christ.