

They Have Not All Obeyed

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[0 : 00] I'd like you to open up your Bibles to Romans chapter 10.

If you're using one of the pew Bibles that are scattered around in the chairs, just simply turn to page 946. You'll find Romans 10 on 946. And we're going to be reading the last several verses of this chapter this morning.

We're going to start in verse 16 and read down to verse 21. So as you find your place there in the Scriptures, I'd like you all to stand in honor of God's Word so that we can read together.

The Apostle Paul writes, beginning in verse 16, But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ. But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have. For their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

[1 : 10] But I ask, did Israel not understand? First, Moses says, I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation. With a foolish nation, I will make you angry. Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, I have been found by those who did not seek me.

I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me. But of Israel, he says, all day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.

We give you thanks for this Word. And we pray that Christ would be honored and exalted as we meditate on it this morning. In his name we pray.

Amen. I'm excited to be here at the end of chapter 10 of Romans. One of the great all-time chapters. Of course, we uphold Romans chapter 8 is perhaps the greatest chapter in what may be the greatest book of the Bible.

If you can rank God's Word in those sorts of ways. I don't know that you can do that. But if you were, you would probably want to put Romans way up there and Romans 8 way up there. But Romans 10 has got to be following pretty closely behind Romans chapter 8 because we have seen these wonderful things, these Scripture verses that many of us have memorized in Sunday school or at other points in our lives.

[2 : 31] We've memorized these, committed them to heart, and we know them. Words such as, but you must confess Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved.

Great, wonderful words of life that are all throughout Romans chapter 10. Of course, as we were last in Romans chapter 10, we saw Paul showing, revealing to us that the Gospel must be preached and heard by people if they are to be saved.

So he says, How will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? How are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?

What wonderful words to remind us of not only our responsibility when we hear the Gospel to respond in faith, but also for those of us who have responded in faith to respond by going out and spreading that Word to others and proclaiming and preaching the Gospel to other people.

So Romans chapter 10 is loaded with life-giving truths, precious truths that we cling to. But as I read and hear about the Apostle Paul's passion for the preaching of the Word, I think about Paul himself.

[3 : 41] I think about his great missionary enterprise to take the Gospel to the nations. In fact, he says all the way back in chapter 1 of Romans, he says that it was through Jesus Christ that he received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of Christ's name among all the nations.

That's his great passion. Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles. Immediately after Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus, we see, for instance, Christ coming and revealing to Ananias, who was to help Paul and lead Paul in the early days of his faith.

Christ comes and reveals to Ananias that he has chosen Paul to be an instrument to send to the Gentile nations. And so Paul, from the very beginning, not just of his ministry, but of his life as a follower of Christ, Paul has this great calling upon his life to take this Word of Christ, to take the Gospel to all the nations.

And his great hope is that the nations, the peoples, might respond in obedience to the Gospel call to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of Christ's name among all the nations.

And that was Paul's missionary enterprise. And that phrase alone gives us some insight into the first verse that we read this morning, verse 16, where Paul says, they have not all obeyed the Gospel.

[5 : 09] Paul's passion is that people would obey the Gospel. He recognizes now that not all who hear the Gospel have obeyed the Gospel, so that that phrase indicates to us that obedience to the Gospel is nothing more than faith in its message.

After all, there is a command that comes with the Gospel. There's a command, repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. It's a straightforward command. And Paul says that he's preached the Gospel to a great many people, and yet not all have believed, not all have responded by obeying the command to repent and believe in the Gospel message itself.

But I also think about Paul's ministry from another angle. I try to think of Paul's ministry in terms of what was it like for someone of his background, of his upbringing, to be called to spend his life, indeed ultimately to give his life, in order to take the Gospel to these Gentile nations.

You recall who the Apostle Paul was prior to his conversion? Not just an average Jewish person, not just an average adherent to Judaism, but a Pharisee, a religious leader among the Jews, and a Pharisee to such a degree that he was charged with wiping out this new sect, these followers of this man named Jesus.

Paul had it as his charge to wipe them out. Now, he's the Apostle who goes about proclaiming that Christ, but not proclaiming the Messiah to his own people primarily.

[6 : 40] Proclaiming the Messiah to those whom he formerly would have considered to be beneath him. Whom he formerly would have never sat down to have a meal with, never entered into one of their homes, never really interacted with, except in ways in which it was absolutely necessary for commerce and other matters of business and life.

He would not have interacted with them at all. It's a little bit difficult sometimes for us to imagine those deep, deep cultural divides because we live in a day and age where we have been for a long time trying to erase many of the cultural divides, but I think over the last few years, perhaps the last decade or so, we have been reminded through the news and other ways that the cultural divides in our own nation have not been erased.

They are still there. There are still injustices that take place. There are still misunderstandings that take place on the various sides of these different racial divides. But for Paul, it would have been even more stringent than that.

It would have been more deeply interwoven into his psyche, this division between Jew and Gentile. How could this Pharisee, how could this Jew of Jews now be charged with taking the gospel to these people who were in his own eyes previously simply beneath him?

And the only way that we can explain that is that his heart was radically changed when he heard the gospel call and responded with the obedience of faith.

[8 : 12] He himself had experienced the great change that comes along with obeying the gospel command. He himself was aware that it changes not merely your orientation for eternity, but it changes your perspective in this life.

It changes everything. And so now this Pharisee, this hater of Gentiles is willing to give his life for the sake of the Gentiles so that they might hear the gospel and themselves be saved.

That doesn't mean, of course, that Paul ever lost sight of or lost his love for the people of Israel. There's no indication in the book of Acts or any of the writings of Paul that he ever ceased to care for his, what he calls, his kinsmen according to the flesh.

And this section of Romans that we're in, Romans 9 through 11, probably more than any other portion of Paul's writings, this section reveals to us, it proves to us that Paul did retain a deep abiding love for his fellow Jews.

He never lost that. As frustrating as it must have been for him to over and over see them reject Christ, as frustrating as it was for him to even be persecuted by them, he never fully gave up on them.

[9 : 27] We've talked about Paul's pattern of ministry before. He had this sort of typical pattern as he would enter into a new city. He wouldn't immediately go to the market to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

You would think the apostle to the Gentiles would first go to the place where all the Gentiles were, where the most of them could be found gathered together, which would have been the market, the square. And yet that's not where he goes when he enters town.

He typically goes to the synagogue. The first Sabbath that he's there, he always enters into the synagogue. Why? So that he can preach the gospel to his fellow Jews.

It was only after being rejected by them that he would then turn to the Gentiles. It didn't typically work out well for the apostle Paul as he preached the gospel in the synagogues.

Even very early, very soon after his conversion, when he's first preaching the gospel in the city of Antioch, he's driven out of Antioch. He has to run away. He has to sneak out of town.

[10 : 25] Later on we find him preaching the gospel and not only did they reject his message in the synagogue, but they stirred up a riot against him and chased him out of town to stone him to death.

These were things that Paul's kinsmen did to him. These were things that those whom Paul had committed his life to previously did to him when he came to bring them the message of salvation.

And yet, despite the fact that he's called to be the apostle to the Gentiles, despite the fact that he finds himself persecuted at the hands of his own people over and over and over throughout his ministry, he never stops loving them.

He never stops caring deeply for them and desperately wanting them to embrace the gospel. He never stops. And so he writes these three chapters really as an expression of this great love that he has for the Jewish people.

Of course, more is happening than that in these chapters. Paul is answering a key question that I think must be answered if we're going to preach the gospel.

[11 : 28] And particularly, if we're going to uphold the entire Bible as God's word, Old and New Testament, and then we're going to go out and preach the gospel, we need to hear Paul's concerns in these three chapters.

Because after all, Paul is well aware of the fact that God had given promises to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants. Paul is among them. He cherishes these promises.

He's been taught his entire life to cling to these promises and to hope in these promises. Promises not only of a future deliverer who would come through them, but also promises that that deliverer would deliver them.

That they would be rescued and saved and delivered out of all of their troubles. That they would be blessed by him. And yet now, as Paul looks upon the Jewish people, because they have rejected the Messiah, he sees them not receiving the blessing of God, but by and large, under a curse.

He sees them not being the recipients of salvation and deliverance through the hands of the great deliverer. He sees them lost. He sees them cut off from the Messiah.

[12 : 35] And he sees them under the wrath of God. And so Paul, fully aware of the present state of the vast majority of his Jewish kinsmen, lost and without hope apart from Christ, and fully aware of the great promises of God found throughout the Old Testament, he writes Romans 9-11 to answer an essential question.

Is the Word of God trustworthy? Can we believe this book? Because if the promises of God made to Israel cannot be trusted, if they have in fact failed or fallen, then we have no reason to believe all the great promises of Romans 8 that we like to quote all the time.

We have no reason to hope in all the promises of the Gospel. If God's Word to Israel can't be trusted, how can His Word to the Gentiles, you and I, how can it be trusted as well?

How can any of God's Word be trusted if it's found to falter at this point? His promise is made to the descendants of Abraham. And so these chapters are written not just to enter into an intellectual discussion of the state of the Jewish people in the New Covenant age.

Some of you who are theologically minded love to get wrapped up in those things and those are important discussions to be had. But these chapters are written to give us hope in the Word of God, to undergird, to strengthen our belief that the Word of God is in fact true, trustworthy, and reliable.

[14:01] That's why these chapters are written. And so Paul begins to answer that question about the trustworthiness of God's Word in chapter 9. We spent a great deal of time looking at his initial answer to the question, if the vast majority of the Jewish people have not believed and are therefore cut off from Christ, under a curse, without salvation, how can we trust God's promises?

And his first answer to that question, found in Romans 9, is probably the most difficult answer that he gives to all of these things. But his first answer is, God's promises were never intended for every single individual Israelite.

They were intended for those within Israel whom God had chosen for Himself, who He calls the remnant. That's answer number one. The doctrine of election.

But chapter 10 brings in answer number two, which we generally find to be a little bit more palatable for us. Answer number two is, because they have rejected the gospel.

They have not believed the gospel. Why are the vast majority of the Jews lost? Because they've not believed the gospel. And yet, even in the midst of that, Paul broadens his attention in the middle of chapter 10, as we've seen, to include not just the Jews in this, but to include all of humanity.

[15:21] That the truth of the matter is salvation is held out for all who trust in Christ. For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The everyone in that verse includes literally everyone. Every single person who calls upon the name of Christ, be they Jew or Gentile, all of them will indeed be saved.

And so the reason, reason number two why the promises have not been fulfilled for Israel is because they've not actually believed those promises to receive them. They've not trusted in the one in whom all of God's promises are indeed yes.

And so here we find ourselves at the end of chapter 10, having just heard Paul say, not only will everyone who calls upon the Lord be saved, but in order for them to call, someone has, they have to hear the gospel.

In order for them to hear the gospel, someone must preach the gospel to them and then they believe and are saved. So verses 14 and 15, what we call the great golden chain of salvation or of conversion.

[16:34] And now here we are at verse 16, which may seem like an odd place for us to jump in because verse 17 summarizes verses 14 and 15. But verse 16 almost takes us out of that.

for a moment to remind us of a great reality that we might be prone to forget. And that is that though there is this link between preaching the gospel, hearing the gospel, believing the gospel, and calling upon Christ for salvation, though there is this great chain, oftentimes we are prone to forget that hearing does not always automatically result in believing and therefore being saved.

That many, many, many of those to whom Paul preached the gospel, they never actually responded in faith. That's exactly what he's telling us in verse 16.

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. Clear statement. They've not all believed. And then he quotes Isaiah. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?

Now that quotation is not just, it's not just a throwaway, it's not just an aside, because it helps us to see exactly what Paul was thinking of in verse 16 when he suddenly bursts out with, but they've not all obeyed the gospel.

[17:57] Because Paul, I believe now, turns his attention back from everybody, now back to the Jews in particular. Now why would I say that?

Why would I say that the they of verse 16 is a reference to Israel, to the Jewish people? Why would I say that? Primarily because of the quotation of Isaiah 53 verse 1.

Because in its original context in Isaiah, this was a reference to the Jewish people. But not only that, we see John in his gospel quoting this same verse to explain why it is that the Jewish people, even then, even during the ministry of Jesus, why are they rejecting the message of Jesus and even Jesus himself?

In fact, I want you to turn back to John chapter 12 and hold your spot there in Romans chapter 10 because we'll be right back. But I want you to see this. John chapter 12, Jesus has performed many miracles.

He has preached to many people, to great crowds. And now we begin to read in the middle of verse 36 that when Jesus had said these things, he departed and he hid himself from them.

[19:11] That is from the crowds, from the people. And then John comments, though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him so that the words spoken by the prophet

Isaiah might be fulfilled.

Lord, who has believed what he heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? It's the same verse that Paul quotes in Romans chapter 10 verse 16.

In Isaiah 53, and now here in John chapter 12, these words are explaining the reality of Jewish unbelief in the face of the fulfillment of all the promises made to the Jews through their own King and Messiah, Jesus.

And so when Paul cries out in the midst of this discussion of the necessity of gospel preaching, that not all have obeyed the gospel, I think once again, in this section that is so concerned with the unbelief of the Jewish people, I think he's turning his mind and his heart back to their unbelief, back to their rejection of the gospel.

They have not all obeyed because Isaiah said they wouldn't all obey. That's why. And in the summary in verse 17, once again, faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. [20 : 33] And then we pick up in verse 18 with his great concern for Israel again. He's going to ask two questions concerning the unbelief of Israel. You can see the first one in verse 18.

But I ask, have they not heard? And then verse 19 where he specifically names Israel. But I ask, did Israel not understand?

In answer to both of those questions, he's going to quote the Old Testament. In fact, in the passage that we're looking at this morning, in the course of six verses, Paul quotes from the Old Testament five times.

So he wants to establish everything that he's saying on the basis of scriptural warning. He wants to give some foundation to what he's saying here. He wants to make sure that he's proving his case about their unbelief and its causes from the Old Testament itself.

He's not just going to go out on a limb and say, here's what I think. He's going to prove it with the Old Testament. So five times he quotes the Old Testament. And it's all of these quotations that I find to be both the most interesting in this passage and to me, the most perplexing.

[21 : 45] I'll show you why. He says in verse 18, and I ask, have they not heard? We know hearing is necessary, so that's a good question. They haven't believed. Maybe they didn't hear. Maybe they just haven't heard the gospel.

And here's response is, yeah, they've heard the gospel. Indeed they have. And now a strange Old Testament quotation to prove that point. It doesn't sound strange if you just read it in Romans chapter 10.

Their voice has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world. It doesn't sound strange. Oh yeah, they've heard the voice that went out. Yeah, they must have heard that. But when you look at it in its original context, it becomes a real sort of head scratcher.

Why quote this particular verse? Because this particular verse is found in Psalm 19. I'm going to have you turn there again. I probably won't have you turn anywhere else this morning. But I do want you to turn to Psalm 19 because some of you might be familiar with the words of this psalm.

Verse 1. The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims His handiwork. Anybody familiar with that? Particular verse? Maybe familiar to you.

[22 : 49] The psalmist here, David, is specifically speaking of the revelation of God in nature. That even the heavens proclaim the reality of who God is and His great glory.

Verse 2. Day to day pours out speech. Night to night reveals knowledge. Verse 3. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Here we are. Verse 4. Their voice goes out through all the earth, their words to the end of the world.

Whose voice goes out to the ends of the earth? The heavens declaring the glory of God, the skies proclaiming His handiwork, the speech that is poured out by the natural world all around us every day and every night.

So that what the first part of Psalm 19 is talking about is what we call general revelation. Now we distinguish between general revelation and special revelation quite often.

General revelation is that knowledge of God that He makes known to every single person who's ever lived on the face of the earth. General revelation is called general because it is, in fact, general.

[23 : 54] It's known to everyone and it's seen in the natural world. It's the law of God written on the human heart. It's those sorts of things that are present for every single individual so that Paul says in Romans 1 that no one has an excuse for their idolatry or for their rejection of the true God

because God has not only written it on our hearts but He has spelled it out in the creation that God exists, that this is the kind of God He is.

His invisible attributes His eternal power and divine nature, Paul says, has been revealed through the things that have been made. And that's what the psalmist is speaking of here. General revelation as opposed to special revelation like the Bible.

Special. Not given to everybody on the face of the earth. Oh, today it's available to almost everybody on the face of the earth. There are a few language groups and ethnic groups that don't yet have the Bible translated into their native tongue.

But by and large, today the Bible is available to almost everyone in the world. But in Paul's day it certainly was not. Oh no. The Old Testament, the writings of the prophets and of Moses were given to the people of Israel.

There were only some Gentiles that had any knowledge that God had given a word to anyone much less to the Jewish people. So by and large, in Paul's day, the special revelation of Scripture was circumscribed to the people of Israel and those few Gentiles who were privileged enough to come into contact, enough contact with the Jewish people to be exposed to this special revelation.

[25 : 34] And then in addition to that, there's of course the preaching of the gospel that would qualify as special revelation. Something that's more than what's revealed generally to all people through nature, but special revelation in the written word of God, in the spoken word of God through the preaching of the gospel by the prophets.

It would make sense if Paul were to quote an Old Testament passage about special revelation and say, have they heard? Of course they've heard because they've been exposed to special revelation.

And yet he says, have they heard? Of course they've heard because they've seen in the world at large God's general revelation.

It certainly is confusing in its context. Because if you ask the question, what does Paul have in mind that they've heard? What is the question about when he says, have they not heard?

What is he speaking of? He's speaking of the thing at the end of verse 17. The word of Christ. Hearing through the word of Christ. Have they heard that word? Well, yeah.

[26 : 45] And then he quotes something about general revelation and that's confusing. That's perplexing. Why would he move to that particular Old Testament passage?

Especially in light of the fact that in the middle of Psalm 19, right in the middle of it, David switches from talking about general revelation in the created world.

He switches and begins suddenly in the second half of the psalm to talk about the written word of God. He begins to talk about how he loves God's law, how God's law is perfect.

Why not quote from the second half of Psalm 19 because the word of God was given to Israel.

Have they not heard? Of course they have. God's law is perfect. It's complete. Contains the gospel message in seed form.

Why not quote from the second half of Psalm 19 to prove that they've heard the word of Christ rather than the first half of Psalm 19 which is about general revelation. Why is he doing that?

[27 : 43] That's the first thing that confused me in this particular paragraph. And the answer to why he would do that honestly did not occur to me until I set that problem aside because sometimes in your study you just get so frustrated you set it aside.

Peter was right. Some of the things that Paul wrote are hard to understand. So I set it aside and moved on to the next verse and I found that there I was a bit confused.

Another perplexing problem presented itself to me. Look there again in Romans 10 verse 19 second question. But I ask did Israel not understand?

And then he quotes from Deuteronomy chapter 32 which is Moses telling the people of Israel as they've been disobedient throughout their entire trek across the wilderness out of Egypt to the promised land as he begins to censure them and say God brought you out he gave you great promises but you've rejected him you keep embracing idols over and over and so God says you made me jealous with idols I'm going to make you jealous with those who are not a nation and with a foolish nation I'm going to make you angry.

Moses is saying here there's going to come a day when I grow so frustrated with your idolatries that I'm going to turn to the Gentiles I'm going to turn to other nations and you will grow jealous of those other nations and that will happen because of my great frustration with you.

[29 : 17] That makes sense. What doesn't make sense to me is the question. I ask did Israel not understand? The reason that that question doesn't make sense to me is that it assumes the answer yes they've understood.

Just as the previous question in verse 18 assumes the answer yes they've heard so this question assumes the answer yes they've understood and yet Paul has already said in Romans chapter 10 that they lack understanding.

They don't know. They don't understand. Look up in chapter 10 verse 2. Speaking of the Jewish people Paul says I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. You can underline that word knowledge and then for being ignorant of the righteousness of God. You can underline being ignorant because those two words are drawn from the same root word as the word do they not understand.

Perhaps more literally it should be translated but I ask did Israel not know and the answer to that you would think would be found at the beginning of chapter 10. No. They didn't know. They were ignorant.

[30 : 21] They lacked knowledge. They didn't know. And yet Paul assumes the answer of yes they did know here. So now I run into two problems. I'm not very far in my studies this week and I'm confused over why he would quote this verse in verse 18 and why he would ask this question this way in verse 19 but it was only when I began to see those problems next to one another that I really felt like I understood what the Apostle Paul was saying.

because the truth of the matter is that there is a there is a kind of hearing that's not really hearing. There is a kind of knowing that's not really truly knowing.

So let's turn our attention real quickly to another place in Romans where there is knowing without knowing. Where there is hearing without hearing.

Turn all the way back in Romans to chapter 1 again to Paul's discussion of this concept of general revelation. What God has made known to all people everywhere.

He says in Romans 1.18 that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

[31 : 42] He says what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes namely his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived that's understood known.

They've been known. They've been seen ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him.

But they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Move down to verse 28. Since they did not see fit to acknowledge, recognize. They did not see fit to acknowledge God. God gave them up to a debased mind.

This is a kind of knowing that is not knowing and a seeing that is not seeing. Through the created order all people know that God exists.

[32 : 44] They even have some knowledge of what kind of God he is. His eternal power and divine nature are revealed. And yet, Paul says, universally they have all rejected that knowledge in favor of idols that they create either in their own image or in the image of things that they see in the created world around them.

And so therefore they don't acknowledge the true God who they know in reality. They don't acknowledge him and God gives them over to a debased mind. Go ahead. Do what you do.

So that general revelation is universally rejected by those who know and yet curiously do not know.

They hear the voice of the heavens and yet they do not hear with the ears of faith. So that I come back to Romans chapter 10 and I see that what Paul is doing is drawing a parallel between the rejection of general revelation by all the world to the rejection of special revelation.

Namely, the gospel message preached through Moses and all the prophets. Their rejection of that message. Just as all nations everywhere have rejected the true God revealed in nature so also has Israel now rejected the true God who has made himself known as clearly even more clearly to Israel has made the gospel known as clearly to them as he has made his existence known to the rest of the world and yet they have rejected that gospel message.

[34 : 24] He revealed to them what his Messiah would be like. He showed them the servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53 that he's already quoted from. He showed them the suffering servant.

They knew and yet when they heard of a suffering Messiah they scoffed and they laughed and they ran Paul out of town so that you could ask have they heard?

Yeah, they've heard. As clearly as the nations have heard the revelation of God through the created order so the people of Israel have heard the gospel message through the prophets.

They have heard. But have they understood? It's one thing to hear have they understood the message? And the answer is well, yes they've understood the message and they should have been awaiting the Messiah and yet they curiously surprisingly rejected the message rejected the Messiah and rejected the true knowledge of him and his work.

And so now we arrive at a place in Romans chapter 10 where those who had heard the most have not really heard and those who know the most do not really know because they didn't respond to the command to repent and believe in Jesus Christ.

[35 : 52] They did not believe all that had been shown to them by the prophets and when those things happened before them in their presence and in their midst and when the apostles came to tell them and explain those things to them by and large they rejected it.

And Paul goes on to say in the rest of this passage that because of their rejection of the gospel message the warnings that God had given to Israel throughout our history are now coming to pass. He is now in the process of calling another people to Himself the Gentiles in order to make the people of Israel jealous. Verse 20 He says that Isaiah is so bold that he's willing to say God's speaking through him I have been found by those who did not seek me I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.

Boldness he says from the mouth of Isaiah and yet words that were originally spoken not about the Gentiles but about the people of Israel. Originally God says through Isaiah when I chose the descendants of Abraham they were not even a people they were not even a nation yet they weren't seeking me nobody seeks after God Paul tells us in Romans 3 they weren't seeking him God created a nation he called a nation to himself he made them his own he brought them out of Egypt he placed them in the land he did that they weren't seeking after him they weren't trying to know the true God no he came and he showed himself to those who were not asking for him and weren't looking for him and now Paul says that which Isaiah said about Israel is now true of the Gentiles not looking for a savior not looking for the true God and yet God comes to them and he sends the apostles primarily Paul to the Gentile nations he tells his disciples to make disciples of all the nations all the people groups so God is now engaged in this great missionary endeavor to take the gospel to those who aren't looking for him who aren't searching for him and he shows himself to people that aren't interested in him as of yet just as he once did for Israel who has now rejected the gospel message it's the same thing that we saw the apostle

Paul doing towards the end of chapter 9 where he quotes Hosea where Hosea speaks of God calling a people my people who are not my people a passage originally about Israel but now Paul says true about the Gentile nations once not God's people now made his people and so that Paul is saying in the face of Jewish unbelief they have heard but they've not heard they've understood but they have not understood they have been called to the obedience of faith and they have not obeyed that call and because of that God has now turned to the Gentile nations to preach the gospel to them and as we go through chapter 11 we're going to consider all of that and what all of that means and what it means for God to make Israel jealous and what God's really doing through the new covenant age as he calls people from every nation to himself we're going to see that described in detail in chapter 11 but this morning

[39 : 35] I just want to point out to you some parallels between our own experience and I think the experience of Israel because so often I feel like church people hear but do not hear know but do not know or that those within the church charged with preaching the message to the next generation they make assumptions about the next generation as if the next generation has really heard and really understood and really responded when many many times they have not and we need to recognize that what happened to Israel happens over and over and over within the church just read throughout the history of the church for the last 2,000 years and we see these cycles of belief and unbelief from one generation to the next the reformation occurred it was centered in the nation of Germany Luther was there proclaiming the gospel and yet

Germany is also the place where liberal biblical criticism was born those who want to spend their times critiquing the Bible and claiming that it's not true and tearing it apart and spend their energies literally their entire vocation spending their lives trying to prove that the Bible is not true those are German theological Bible scholars I've been amazed as I've read trying to understand some of the history behind some of the early scholars in Germany who gave birth to that whole critical Bible movement I have been amazed at how many of those haters of the Bible were the sons of pastors in Germany it's startling so that many many times throughout the history of the church we see a generation that assumes too much about the next generation assumes that because they've heard they've really heard assumes that because they've learned their catechism or whatever other method of instruction they use assumes that because they know the answers that they've understood all the answers and yet when we begin to make assumptions we put not only ourselves but we put our children and our grandchildren at great peril people because they may not have really heard and they may not have really truly understood the great gospel message because the gospel does not call for us to stop at making sure that people understand the message that's necessary we need to do that no one can believe in something if they think that it's something else or they misunderstand it we have to be committed to teaching and instructing and making sure that people understand what we're saying when we talk about Jesus and yet the gospel message does not end with ensuring the understanding of our hearers no it ends by calling people to the obedience of faith and we are never finished and we are never done sharing the gospel with anyone we must constantly be calling all those around us our children our grandchildren other young ones in the church others who are our age and yet who do not have a lot of exposure to the church or to the gospel we must continually call them not just to know and understand but to actually respond in faith and repentance to this great message which is one more reminder that if the Jewish people could not rest safely and securely in knowing that they were the recipients of special revelation then neither can we rest safely and securely simply because we're church people because we go regularly because we've memorized a lot of verses or because we go to a bible study and worship or because we've done a lot of good things in the church over the course of our lives we can never on the basis of those things rest safely and securely but only by real genuine faith in the gospel of Jesus can we rest securely not by merely knowing that he died for our sins but believing in him and cherishing and treasuring him as the savior of our souls can we have security and safety and rest rest paul's words about israel are not are not just words about a people that we are not a part of they are words that call us with a frightful reminder that even those who have heard the most and understood the most may not yet have responded with the obedience of faith let's pray