

Are We Listening

10.26.25

Message 40

Romans 10:14–21 (CSB)

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? 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.** ¹⁶ But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, **Lord, who has believed our message?** ¹⁷ So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ. ¹⁸ But I ask, “Did they not hear?” Yes, they did: **Their voice has gone out to the whole earth, and their words to the ends of the world.** ¹⁹ But I ask, “Did Israel not understand?” First, Moses said, **I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that lacks understanding.** ²⁰ And Isaiah says boldly, **I was found by those who were not looking for me; I revealed myself to those who were not asking for me.** ²¹ But to Israel he says, **All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and defiant people.**

How!

A. Two of the repeated words in this passage are “Hear” and “How”.

1. “How” is a question of possibility and ability.
2. When I ask “how”, I am showing my limits.
3. When I ask “how”, I’m needing direction, instruction, or a solution.

B. The Apostle Paul had just proclaimed, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!” Vs 13.

1. But HOW!!!!
2. How can they call on the Lord if they don’t know Him?
3. How are they expected to know the name of Jesus unless someone tells them?
4. How are people introduced to the only source of salvation?

C. The answer is simple:

1. Someone has to tell them.
2. Someone must be commissioned with the message and the authority to proclaim that message.
3. For Paul and the rest of Scripture, the answer is that we are all commissioned to preach the Gospel.
 - a. We are all to have the message of Christ on our lips.
 - b. None of us are exempt, none of us are excluded.
 - c. We all bear the Image and the message of God.

D. Paul isn't picturing a preacher in the pulpit.

1. Paul pictures a herald or a messenger who is sent under the power and authority of another.
2. They are not the message, nor are they the authority of the message.
3. The messenger is the bearer of the message.
4. They carry the message of faith, that Jesus is the Son of God, who was slain for the sins of the world, that saves us.
5. And that kind of faith can only come from hearing the message of Christ.

E. One of the reasons we give money to missionaries is because everyone needs the opportunity to hear about Jesus.

1. How can they believe in someone they've never heard about?
2. I know at times we might grumble when I have another missionary.
 - a. But doesn't everyone deserve to hear about Jesus?
 - b. How can they meet Jesus if they have never heard of Jesus?
 - c. How can they be saved from the poison of sin if they are never given the antidote?
 - d. All over the World and here in the US and Across the street are people living in the prison of sin and death.
 1. But they don't realize that the doors to the prison can be unlocked because Jesus holds the key!

2. The lost people of the world don't have to stay enslaved to sin, because Jesus has made a way for them to be free.

3. Imagine a scenario where a person serving a life sentence at SCCC was granted a pardon, but no one told them.

a. They never walked out of the prison doors because they hadn't heard what had been done for them.

b. If something like this happened, we would hold judges, lawyers, wardens, and all sorts of people responsible.

c. And if we don't tell the world about Jesus, we are held responsible too.

4. "No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once."— **Oswald J. Smith**

3. That's why many of us give to missions every month.

a. That's why next week we are holding an informational meeting about a possible trip to Honduras in May of 2026.

b. And in November, I'm going to be sharing about a project that I'm passionate about.

1. The FireBible is one of the greatest discipleship tools today.

2. The Sunday before Thanksgiving we are going to launch into a 5-month project:

3. How many study Bibles can we put in the hands of pastors and believers around the world?

4. Not only are we going to receive an offering on November 23, as a church we are going to endeavor to buy a multitude of Bibles between Thanksgiving and Easter weekend.

3. All because of this simple conviction:

a. How can people believe in what they have never heard?

b. Jesus made the proclamation of the Gospel a primary function of the Church before He returns.

c. Matthew 24:14 (CSB)

¹⁴ This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed (shall be preached) in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Israel did hear about Jesus.

A. The Apostle Paul says that the Jews, who are the focus of these passages, DID hear the Gospel.

1. They hosted Jesus in their midst.
2. They were given the covenants, the promises, the miracles, the prophets.
3. The people of Israel had been given everything necessary to embrace Jesus as Messiah and King.
4. Some accepted.
 - a. Paul was a Jew who eventually accepted the Gospel.
 - b. The Apostles were all Jewish and accepted the Gospel.
 - c. The first church was predominantly Jewish in its earliest days.

B. But not all obeyed the gospel.

1. Not all said, “Yes!”
2. When we hear something, we have two responses:
 - a. We can lean in.
 - b. We can pull away.
 - c. The Jewish people didn’t lean in; they pulled away.

C. What Paul says might be some of the saddest words ever written:

1. Not all obeyed the Gospel. Vs 16.
2. They heard, but refused to believe.
3. They rejected God’s truth for their own truth.
4. They chose a false standard instead of the righteous standard.
5. We have an old phrase, “seeing is believing.”
 - a. But we know that isn’t always true.

b. The Jews saw the miracles, they heard the words of Jesus, and still didn't believe.

D. In Verse 17: Some of the Greek texts and older English translations say "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."

1. This is accurate, to a point, but not what Paul says here.
2. The Greek says faith comes by the word (Gk is Rhema) of Christ.
3. In other words, it isn't reading or hearing the Bible that saves us but believing in the message of Jesus.
 - a. If simply reading the bible saved us, then everyone who has ever read or heard the Bible would be ultimately saved.
 - b. If simply hearing Scripture saved us, then every person who ever sat under Biblical preaching would have faith and be saved.
 - c. And in the Jews' case, they would all be saved because the Torah was read to them over and over.
4. The Jewish people at this time knew the Scriptures.
 - a. Many had memorized it.
 - b. The Torah was read in the villages, in the towns, and the cities.
 - c. YET, they rejected the message that is written and woven on every page.
 - d. It isn't enough to hear the Word of God. We must believe. Vs. 16

Romans 10:18 (CSB)

¹⁸ But I ask, "Did they not hear?" Yes, they did:

**Their voice has gone out to the whole earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.**

The hearing must lead to believing.

A. The Jews heard but rejected the message.

1. For those of us in the room, we have had the opportunity to hear about Jesus.

2. Yet, how many people have listened to the Gospel for years and yet have never been changed by it!

a. Bible knowledge is not the same as believing.

b. Faith requires the application of what knowledge.

3. Even Isaiah, the greatest prophet, knew the pain of rejection.

a. Verse 16 is a quotation from Isaiah.

b. “Lord, who has believed our message?”

c. Paul is quoting one of the greatest Scriptures that prophesies of Jesus. Isaiah 53.

d. Which begins: Lord, who has believed our message?

B. Isaiah 53 tells us about Jesus being abused, beaten, and shamed so we might be saved, healed, and redeemed.

1. But the Jews, and maybe some of us, have heard the message and refused to listen.

2. We’ve heard the Gospel and we have chosen another way.

3. Isaiah took the rejection personally.

a. How can you not!

b. When our lives are intertwined with Jesus, rejection is personal.

c. The Apostle Paul felt his people’s rejection PERSONALLY.

d. When someone’s child or spouse rejects Jesus, we feel that personally.

e. Why? Because you love them and because you carry the message of the Gospel within you.

4. Often people will tell us, “don’t take it personally.”

a. But it is personal.

b. When someone rejects the Gospel that saved me and could save them, it doesn’t get any more personal than that.

c. When we come to the prison doors of their heart and tell them they are free, and they refuse to leave their cell, we are heartbroken.

The Gentiles wanted what the Jews rejected.

Romans 10:19–21 (CSB)

¹⁹ But I ask, “Did Israel not understand?” First, Moses said,

I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that lacks understanding.

²⁰ And Isaiah says boldly,

I was found by those who were not looking for me; I revealed myself to those who were not asking for me. ²¹ But to Israel he says, **All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and defiant people.**

A. The Jewish people were given every chance to accept the Gospel.

1. But they rejected it.
2. But the Gentiles, the non-Jewish people, accepted Him.
3. **Did anyone hear this growing up: There are starving kids in Africa who would love to eat that.**
4. The food the family rejected was embraced by the non-family.

B. I can't help but wonder if this applies to the United States.

1. We have been given great opportunities and access to the Gospel.
2. But have we taken advantage?
3. **Are we leaning into the Gospel or are we pulling away?**
 - a. I've seen the effects of hardening our hearts to the Gospel.
 - b. Nationally, the UK is a great example.
 - c. One of the great Protestant reformers was named John Knox.
 - d. This 16th Century Scottish man was a terror to Satan and to man-made religion.
 - e. Julie and I got to be in his house, which is shared by a community agency.
 - f. Notice this advertisement: **PICTURE**
4. **When we hear the Gospel and reject it, our condition is made worse.**

C. Verse 19 hits home with me.

¹⁹ But I ask, “Did Israel not understand?” First, Moses said,

**I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; I will make you angry
by a nation that lacks understanding.**

1. I hear of the great moves of God all over the world, and I am jealous.
2. I hear of what God is doing in my friend’s churches in Southern MO, and I want it to happen here.
3. I wonder if God has been holding out His hands to us, and we’ve rejected Him?
4. Have we stopped listening?
5. Have we become numb to the Gospel?
 - a. Have we had just enough Gospel to inoculate us, but not change us?
 - b. Are we on the verge of becoming like Israel and like Europe, guilty of squandering our birthright for a comfortable and expedient meal?

D. Verse 21 contains words I hope never become true of us.

1. All day long, I have held out my hands to a disobedient and defiant people. Verse 21.
2. When we are defiant, we “oppose or refuse”¹.
3. May God not have any cause to look upon us and say as He did to Israel: I gave you my hand, but you refused!

How?

A. We began this sermon with the word “how.”

1. Let’s revisit this question one more time.
2. How can they call on someone they do not believe?
3. How can they believe without hearing?
4. How can they hear unless someone is sent?

¹ ἀντιλέγω BDAG

B. Earlier, we mentioned Isaiah 53.

1. Paul can reference a line from Isaiah 53 and his audience knew the passage.
 - a. The writers of Scripture did this a lot, referencing a small piece and the audience would know the context
 - b. We do it too: I could say:
 1. This is like A spoonful of sugar... and many will know I'm talking about Mary Poppins and that there's some medicine or hard truth coming.
 2. Or, if I refer to "I have a dream..." You know I'm alluding to Martin Luther King Jr. and the struggle for human rights.
2. Earlier, the Apostle Paul used Isaiah 53 to prove that God had done everything for His people, but they did not believe Him.
3. But the solution was mentioned earlier in verse 14-15.

¹⁴How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: **How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.**

C. The HOW is answered in Isaiah 52.

Isaiah 52 (CSB)

52 "Wake up, wake up;
put on your strength, Zion!
Put on your beautiful garments,
Jerusalem, the holy city!
For the uncircumcised and the unclean
will no longer enter you.
²Stand up, shake the dust off yourself!
Take your seat, Jerusalem.
Remove the bonds from your neck,
captive Daughter Zion."

³ For this is what the LORD says:

“You were sold for nothing,
and you will be redeemed without silver.”

⁴ For this is what the Lord GOD says:

“At first my people went down to Egypt to reside there,
then Assyria oppressed them without cause.

⁵ So now what have I here”—

this is the LORD’s declaration—

“that my people are taken away for nothing?

Its rulers wail”—

this is the LORD’s declaration—

“and my name is continually blasphemed all day long.

⁶ Therefore my people will know my name;

therefore they will know on that day

that I am he who says,

‘Here I am.’ ”

⁷ How beautiful on the mountains

are the feet of the herald,

who proclaims peace,

who brings news of good things,

who proclaims salvation,

who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

⁸ The voices of your watchmen—

they lift up their voices,

shouting for joy together;

for every eye will see
when the LORD returns to Zion.

⁹ Be joyful, rejoice together,
you ruins of Jerusalem!
For the LORD has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The LORD has displayed his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations;
all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

¹¹ Leave, leave, go out from there!
Do not touch anything unclean;
go out from her, purify yourselves,
you who carry the vessels of the LORD.

¹² For you will not leave in a hurry,
and you will not have to take flight;
because the LORD is going before you,
and the God of Israel is your rear guard.

¹³ See, my servant will be successful;
he will be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted.

¹⁴ Just as many were appalled at you—
his appearance was so disfigured
that he did not look like a man,
and his form did not resemble a human being—

¹⁵ so he will sprinkle many nations.

Kings will shut their mouths because of him,
for they will see what had not been told them,
and they will understand what they had not heard.

The HOW is from Isaiah 52: How beautiful!!!! Are the feet of those who bring good news.

A. Jesus is the focus of Isaiah 52.

1. He was the One who was raised and lifted up and exalted.
 - a. When the Jews cried crucify, they were fulfilling prophecy.
 - b. When the Romans lifted Him so all could see, and labeled Him “King of the Jews”, they were exalting him above all others.
2. When they beat Him to a blood pulp, they fulfilled verse 14

¹⁴ Just as many were appalled at you—
his appearance was so disfigured
that he did not look like a man,
and his form did not resemble a human being—
3. When they shed His blood and pierced His side, they were making it possible for Jesus to “sprinkle the nations”. ¹⁵ so he will sprinkle many nations.
 - a. It was the responsibility of the priest to take the blood of a sacrifice and then sprinkle it upon the people to make them holy.
 - b. While the priests and the nations had gathered in Jerusalem on that Passover weekend, waiting for the shedding of the blood of lambs, the SINLESS, PERFECT LAMB of GOD was sprinkling them while they walked by with the perfect blood.

B. The most beautiful feet to ever bring Good News were the feet of Jesus.

1. The feet that were washed by a woman’s tears.
2. The feet that received the nail and held the weight of the Savior’s body on the cross.

3. The feet that stepped out of the tomb and walked with the disciples during those days of questioning.
4. The feet that will soon return and step on Earth as the victor over every kingdom, power, and dominion.
5. Jesus made it all possible!!!

C. God has invited us to be heralds who bring the Good News.

1. In Isaiah 52, the original image was of the messengers who brought news of Babylon's fall to the Jewish people.
2. The oppressor has been vanquished, and God has kept His promise was the message.
3. For us, the Gospel is this:
 - a. The oppressor has been vanquished, and God has kept His promise.
 - b. The prison doors of sin and death have been opened, and Jesus sets the captives free.
 - c. All are invited to a new life that will believe.
 1. We must believe we had been enslaved by sin.
 2. We must believe we could not break free on our own.
 3. We must believe that Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection prove that the doors are open and the prison yards are unguarded.
 4. That every person can echo the words of Martin Luther King: "Free at last free at last, thank God almighty we are free at last."

D. When you and I go out in the power of the Holy Spirit, with the Gospel on our lips, God makes our feet something beautiful.

1. When we summon up the courage to walk across the street to share Jesus, it's beautiful.
2. When we summon the courage to text a friend or hold a Gospel conversation, it's beautiful.
3. When we proclaim the Good News of Jesus in word and deed, even our feet become beautiful and blessed.
4. Ultimately, those who bring Good News are always welcome

Prayer and Application

A. This morning, if you have not believed in Jesus, please do not wait.

B. Today, if you need prayer for any reason, in a moment I'm going to invite you to come forward so we can pray with you.

C. If you are wanting holy boldness to tell people about what Jesus has done, I also want to invite you to come forward for prayer.