

# DEVOTIONAL

WHEN IN ROME X  
RHYTHM OF THE GOSPEL  
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GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** What does it mean to believe in Jesus for salvation?

**Key Text:** *“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup> And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ <sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’” (Romans 10:14-16)*

A Christian man who had worked for years as an electrician sensed God's call in his life to become a missionary to a foreign land. After serving for several years, he came home on furlough to rest and raise funds to return to his mission. Speaking at a church, he used his expertise as an electrician to compare how electricity reaches our homes to the steps of a person receiving Christ. He said, “It seems like one simple step—you flip a switch on the wall and the light comes on. But there are many steps that must first occur behind the flipping of the switch in order for the light to come on. There are transmission towers, substations, poles upon which the wires are strung that lead to your house, and even a hydroelectric dam that harnesses the water's power to control the amount of electricity produced. It's the process that occurs behind the flipping of the switch that results in the lights coming on. Without the process, there would be no light.” Then he said, “Similarly, the act of receiving Christ is simple—yet behind that simple act is an essential process. Before you can call on the Lord you must believe, before you can believe you must hear, and before you can hear someone must be sent to tell you the Good News.” As a result of the missionary's illustration, the church became more aware and passionate about sending and going as missionaries to the world and what it means to hear, believe, and call on Christ for salvation.

In today's text, Romans 10:14-16, Paul expresses his grief over Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah. Paul says their rejection is not because no one was sent to preach to them, nor because they hadn't heard; rather, they tried to establish their own righteousness before God instead of coming to God through faith in Christ. Paul explains an essential process that must occur for someone to be saved. Paul shows the process in reverse order in v.14-16, beginning with the receiver of the message and ending with the messenger.

## The Receiver of the Gospel Message

- **Call** – A person cannot be saved unless they call on the Lord.

*“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?” (v.14)*

The word “*call*” (v.14) indicates desperation and urgency—like a drowning person calling out to the lifeguard to come rescue them. Christianity asserts that we can't do anything to save ourselves, and we need someone to save us. The name “Jesus” means “Savior”—He came to rescue us from our sins (Mt.1:21).

**Discuss:** How can we help others see the urgency of calling on God for salvation?

- **Believe** – A person cannot call on the Lord unless they believe in Him.

*“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?” (v.14)*

Paul uses the word “believe” (v.14) interchangeably with “obey” in verse 16: “But they have not all obeyed the gospel.” Belief that leads to salvation is not merely acknowledging facts about God; it includes complying with God’s method of trusting in Christ for salvation (Jn.1:12).

**Discuss:** How would you describe what it means to trust in Christ for salvation?

- **Hear** – A person cannot believe in the Lord unless they have heard of Him.

*“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?” (v.14)*

The word “heard” (v.14a) means more than merely perceiving sound. It means understanding the importance of a message and recognizing that a response is required. Salvation comes from hearing the Gospel—recognizing its importance, and responding to it through belief and calling on the Lord in faith.

**Discuss:** What are some evidences that someone has truly “heard” the gospel?

## The Communicator of the Gospel Message

- **Preach** – A person cannot hear of the Lord unless the message is preached.

*“And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” (v.15)*

The word “preach” (v.15) extends beyond Sunday’s morning sermon. It includes all types of communication of the Gospel: teaching, personal conversations, etc.

**Discuss:** What is your most effective method for communicating the Gospel?

**Discuss:** Share about a time when you communicated the Gospel to someone.

- **Sent** – The message cannot be preached unless a messenger is sent.

*“And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” (v.15)*

God is a “sending” God: He sent His Son for us (Jn.3:16), the Son sent the Spirit (Jn.15:26), and the Son sent us (Mk.16:15). Paul quotes Isaiah 52:17 to emphasize how welcome the messenger and message of the Gospel are: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” (v.15)

To summarize: A messenger is sent (v.15b) to preach (v.15a) so a person can hear (v.14c) in order to believe (v.14b) and call on the Lord for salvation (v.14a).

## For Further Study:

Free online commentary of the Book of Romans at [www.enduringword.com](http://www.enduringword.com)

“A Mindset on Missions” article at [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com)

“What Does it Mean to Believe in Jesus?” article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)