

ROMANS: CHARTER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
"Part XIV: Confident Witnessing In View Of The Causes Of Its Results"
(Romans 10:1-21)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

If God tells us Christians to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel" as Matthew 28:19-20 teaches, and we have **tried to be** such a witness, then are **we** at **fault** if the parties to which we give the gospel **fail** to **RECEIVE** Christ?

This question is not all that easy to answer. Let me illustrate by way of a common witnessing experience:

(1) Often, a concerned believer struggles with guilt over a certain past "witnessing" effort. He might have seen an unsaved party open up to him about serious problems he was facing in life. Upon sensing a witnessing opportunity, he had gone to the Lord in prayer and waited for an "opening" to share about his faith in Christ.

However, either upon feeling **inhibited** from talking about the Lord, or feeling he might appear to be insensitive to the needy person talking to him by addressing the Gospel issue in the sensitive conversation, the believer had spent his time mainly *listening*.

In such a case, has the believer involved failed the Lord for not getting around to the Gospel in this endeavor? Now, IF the unsaved associate involved were to pass into eternity before a SECOND "witnessing" opportunity with this believer were to arise, would that believer be "guilty" of FAILING to witness to the eternal harm of the deceased?! This question has plagued believers.

(2) The number of people in the world who are dying every second without Christ is staggering. Someone has said that if all the people in India alone who were dying without Christ every second were lined up six abreast, and you were to drive past that line in a car at 25 miles per hour, you would never be able to stop driving the car. In such a case, if a believer in American FAILS to become a missionary to INDIA, is HE at FAULT for all of those people who are entering a Christless eternity from India alone for not having TRIED to bring them the Gospel as a missionary to that land?

How do we KNOW if we have succeeded or not in witnessing if we haven't seen any RESULTS, or "pushed" for them?

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "I need some encouragement or insight on witnessing my faith to others as I haven't seen all that many RESULTS yet! I THINK I am right with God and all, but am I missing something?!"

- I. **Paul was equipped and led of God to witness to Jews for Christ.**
 - A. Paul had been converted and commissioned by Christ to witness for Him by way of supernatural visions around Damascus, Acts 9:1-15.
 - B. God gave Paul the gifting of an apostle, the loftiest of the gifts of the Church era to achieve this mission, Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 12:28.
 - C. The elders of the Antioch church were then led by God to send him out as a witness to Jews throughout the Mediterranean, Acts 13-28.
- II. **Yet, REGARDLESS of this equipping and leading, Paul lamented his people were *STILL LARGELY NOT SAVED*, Rom. 10:1; 9:1-3.**
- III. **The Apostle Paul then revealed some facts about the witnessing process in Romans 10:2-21 to explain this lostness in his people:**
 - A. According to Paul, the people of Israel who were still lost had a zeal for God, but one out of step with true spiritual insight, Rom. 10:2.
 - B. Instead of looking to the righteousness of God offered to them in Christ, Israel was trying to set up her own righteousness, Rom. 10:3.
 - C. Well, contrary to Israel's view, Paul noted how Christ was certified by her **Old Testament writings** to provide God's righteousness:
 1. He noted that Christ is the intended "Goal" of the Law's revelation as to the means for attaining God's righteousness, Romans 10:4.
 - a. The word translated "end" in Romans 10:4, or *telos*, is placed in the emphatic position of the sentence to mean "Purpose-Goal", Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 480.
 - b. Thus, Christ was the Entity to which the Law **pointed!**
 2. This fact is verified **throughout** the **Old Testament** as Paul reveals, and clarified by Christ's coming and Gospel in the Church:
 - a. Paul cited Leviticus 18:5 to show that one had to **obey** the Mosaic Law perfectly if he was to **live** by it.

- b. However, since that was impossible for any sinner to do, Christ came and lived a sinless life under the Law so that men could have God's righteousness *given* them by **faith**, and Paul repeats the emphasis on God's **gift** by citing Deuteronomy 30:12, 14 that focuses on God's grace to Israel (Romans 10:6-8).
 - c. Hence, in the Church era, faith in Christ as proclaimed by His preached Gospel brings eternal salvation, Romans 10:9-12.
 - d. Indeed, Paul cited **Isaiah 28:16** and **49:23** to show people would be saved by God through calling on Him in faith, 10:11.
 - e. Then, he showed **logically** how this **prediction** of *calling* on the Lord is fulfilled in the spread of Christ's Gospel: (a) As people call on God providing they believe in Him, (b) and believe in Him if they have heard of Him and (c) hear of Him when someone verbally preaches God's message, (d) and someone preaches only if God sends them, and (e) **Isaiah 52:7** predicted the beauty of the feet of those who would go about preaching the saving Gospel, **Isaiah predicted the spread of the Gospel as fulfilled in Jesus Christ**, Romans 10:14-15, 17.
- D. Yet, Paul noted the Old Testament told of Israel's REJECTION of CHRIST'S Gospel due to her OWN spiritual HARDNESS:
- 1. Citing Isaiah 53:1 in Romans 10:16, Paul reported that Isaiah foretold Israel would **not** believe in the coming Gospel of Christ!
 - 2. Paul knew that a Jew might object to this statement, saying that not every Jew had been evangelized, and hence was not **able** and **responsible** to believe in Christ, Ibid., p. 481. Paul then explained how every Jew was guilty of rebellion against Christ (as follows):
 - a. Paul cited Psalm 19:4 from the Old Testament to show Israel had God's natural revelation of Himself, Romans 10:18.
 - b. However, Psalm 19:7-11 shows God's special revelation in the Old Testament, something Paul had cited throughout Romans 10, a work that Paul has shown anticipated Christ's Gospel!
 - c. Hence, Israel was guilty of not heeding God's revelation given to her, something both Moses and Isaiah both noted in their predictions that Gentiles would be saved ahead of Israel due to her own stubborn rebellion against God, Romans 10:19-21.

Application: (1) *If we have not done so, we must believe on Christ to have eternal life, John 3:16.* (2) *Once we are believers, we FULFILL our "witnessing" missions by (a) depending on the Spirit of God (Gal. 5:16) to (b) use the spiritual gifting given us by God (2 Tim. 1:6-7), and (c) obey God's LEADING of us IN the USE of that gifting, Mtt. 28:19-20; Acts 16:6-10.* (3) *Beyond THIS, the RESULTS of our efforts are NOT our concern, for the HEART of the HEARER affects whether or not he will believe!*

Lesson: *Since Paul's ministry to his people was led of God, Israel's continued unsaved status arose ONLY from her rebellious HEART!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

A number of years ago, Mike Terwilliger shared with me the great news that his niece, Susan was planning to come to a certain Prayer Meeting. He exclaimed how much she needed to know Christ as her Savior, and that he was looking forward to her arrival at the meeting as a start of her possibly coming to believe in Christ.

However, Susan failed to show up at that first Prayer Meeting. **I recall talking later with Mike about it, and dealing with the discouragement of what *seemed* to be a "failed" witnessing effort.**

What we **didn't** know *then* was that Susan had been in a car accident, and that she was in the hospital. According to the doctor, had she not been involved in that accident **that day**, she would have died of another condition, and so she never **could** have **heard** the Gospel!

Later, Susan did show up for a Prayer Meeting. I remember it vividly as a summer storm had knocked out our Church lights, and I were conducting the meeting by candlelight. I recall seeing Susan sitting attentively in the room, and of my wondering if she thought we were a strange church in meeting with candles that night! Yet, it was the start of something great, for Susan soon trusted Christ as Savior!

Then, because she had received Christ, at her memorial service a week ago with the funeral home overflowing with people, Mike and I were granted from the Lord a tailor-made witnessing opportunity. Susan's mother, Janice, has since told me that she has had many more witnessing opportunities growing out of that memorial service.

But, what if Mike and I had seen things go OUR way, and Susan had made it to the FIRST Prayer Meeting in her condition? She could have died without Christ, something unimaginable NOW! Thank God she DID NOT make that meeting! We can NOW see that GOD'S way was PERFECT considering all that has since transpired!