

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – August 22, 2010

Did You Hear Me?

“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. Romans 10:16-17

Most of us are familiar with that old query: “If a tree falls in the middle of the forest and no one is there to hear it, does it still make a sound?” The riddle of course defines hearing as the auditory recognition of sound. It does not go any further in helping to develop our understanding that hearing can mean more than sound recognition alone. There is a difference between hearing a sound and comprehending the meaning of that sound. Classroom teachers and parents deal with this problem every day. Children hear the sound of their voices, but the actions of the child demonstrates that they haven’t understood the direction or teaching that was given.

The Apostle Paul is quoting the prophet Isaiah and is making the point with his audience in the church at Rome that faith is a product of hearing and understanding the word of God. It is not just a matter of recognizing sound; it is also a matter of comprehending the sound that is made. If it were simply a matter of recognizing sound then surely there would be no point in translating the Bible into languages which people understand. God intends for us to hear, comprehend, and believe His Word.

Words have meanings that are generally accepted and understood. God used this tool to communicate His grace and mercy in the Bible to all mankind. God chose every word He gave to the prophets and apostles in order that His holy and immutable will might be revealed to us. The message of God’s Word is simple and plain. All people are sinners and are lost eternally because of sin. He loves us and wants to grant us eternal life through Jesus Christ our Savior, who died and rose for us. He desires us to live as His children in obedience to His holy will. The devil may try to twist the meaning of God’s Word as he did in the garden with Eve, but the Word is clear. God says what He means and He means what He says.

There are many people in this world, even inside the visible church, when we share the truth of God's Word with them who will respond to us by vocalizing the opinion, "That is just your interpretation." They reject the fact that God has revealed absolute truth in His Word. They do not hear and understand what God is communicating to mankind. It is as Isaiah and Paul have said, "They do not believe our report."

What then are we to do? It is discouraging when people reject and will not believe God's Word. We continue to tell people the truth of what God's Word says. God has commanded us to be faithful and promised to attend the sharing of His Word. He will do what we cannot. He will turn the hearts of men to faith just as He did with us.

- Remember: There is no possibility for saving faith apart from God's Word. Keep sharing the good news of Jesus and let God do His work through that message.
- Remember: Persecution will come for those who are faithful to the Word. They persecuted the apostles and prophets who came before us. Do not be discouraged. God is with us and will bless our faithfulness.

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. He has equipped us for service to Him. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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