



The Book of
ROMANS

Small Group Study 3: Romans 9-11

Week Four: Romans 10:14–11:10

Key Verses

- “In the same way, then, there is also at the present time a remnant chosen by grace. Now if by grace, then it is not by works; otherwise grace ceases to be grace.” - Romans 11:5–6 (CSB)

Key Principles

- People come to faith in Jesus Christ through hearing the gospel proclaimed by other people.
- God has not rejected his chosen people, whom he “foreknew” (Romans 11:2).
- God saved a remnant of Jews in Paul’s day, just as God preserved a remnant throughout the history of Israel.
- The entire Old Testament points to salvation in and through Christ.

Read

In Romans 10:14–11:10, Paul addresses the Jews’ lack of faith through a series of questions concerning God’s justice and his faithfulness, some of which we will study this week. Concerning the absence of salvation among the Jews, Paul asks:

- Is it because the Jews have not heard the gospel? (10:18)
- Did Israel just not understand? (10:19)
- Has God rejected his own people? (11:1)
- Did Israel fail to obtain what they were seeking? (11:7)

The answers that Paul gives to the questions in this passage are centered around this fact—**people come to faith in Jesus Christ through hearing and receiving the gospel proclaimed by other people** (10:17). The reality is that the Jews *had* heard. They just did not obey it or receive it. So, God’s plan is to put his power and blessings on full display by saving the Gentiles. Through the work of God in the lives of the Gentiles, the Jews would witness God’s goodness and the joys of uniting with him in Christ. Somehow, God intends even this period of Jewish unbelief to provide a blessing (11:11–12). God had always

preserved a faithful remnant throughout Israel's history. Paul reminds us that this was true as he wrote these very words. (After all, Paul himself was an ethnic Jew who believed the gospel, one of many such examples throughout the New Testament.) And it is true for us, even today. This "remnant" is an indication that God has not given up on his plan to save ethnic Israelites.

Paul's answers to these tough theological questions hold extra significance because he grounds them in the Hebrew Scriptures. By using the Old Testament, and the book of Isaiah in particular, Paul is reminding his audience that God's plan of salvation has always been the same. Here are the references to Isaiah that Paul makes in Romans 10:14–11:10:

- Romans 10:15 (citing Isaiah 52:7): "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news."
- Romans 10:16 (citing Isaiah 53:1): "Lord, who has believed our message?"
- Romans 10:20 (citing Isaiah 65:1): "I was found by those who were not looking for me; I revealed myself to those who were not asking for me."
- Romans 10:21 (citing Isaiah 65:2): "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and defiant people."
- Romans 11:8a (citing Isaiah 29:10, which itself cites Deuteronomy 28–33): "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that cannot see."

Understanding the background of Isaiah helps us understand Paul's message in Romans 10:14–11:10. Isaiah was a book that addressed the nation of Israel at a time when they struggled to believe that God would save them. Isaiah implored his kinsmen to have faith, especially in God's future salvation. But many of Isaiah's contemporaries did not believe, and it was disastrous for them. So, Isaiah responded by predicting how God would save in the future, through a suffering Messiah (Isaiah 7, 9, 11, and 53), then restore his people, and finally create a new heaven and new earth (Isaiah 65–66) where his people would flourish. Paul took comfort in Isaiah because of this great vision of salvation, and Paul would even see the suffering Messiah—Jesus—with his own eyes (Acts 9). Paul also took comfort in the fact that Isaiah's message was rejected at first, just like what was happening to him. Both Isaiah and Paul had a vision of God's glorious salvation, and they knew it would overcome unrighteousness and unbelief.

In addition to Isaiah, Paul also cites other passages from the major sections of the Old Testament in Romans 10:14–11:10. This arrangement of references is not a coincidence. Paul does all of this in such a short section of Romans to make an important point: **The entire Old Testament points to salvation in and through Christ.**

Notice that these Old Testament references convey a key point from Romans 10:14–17: God has good news for the world, and he uses his people to spread this message of salvation. He allows *us* to participate in his plan of salvation. God's Word even calls the feet of those who bring good news "beautiful" (Romans 10:15)! The message of God's righteousness in the gospel spreads through people! Yes, the local church remains God's "Plan A" to carry the gospel to those who have yet to believe.

There is so much beauty and honor in taking the gospel to the world. But Paul knows that taking the gospel to the world also entails rejection (Romans 10:18–21). Paul's message was rejected by his kinsmen. Faithful prophets like Isaiah and Elijah were also rejected. Even Jesus was rejected. This rejection will also happen to you and me.

Paul's struggles surrounding Israel's acceptance of the gospel show us that we are not alone when we experience friends and family who reject the good news of the gospel. Even so, we press on and preach the good news even when we know rejection might come. We know from Romans 9:30–11:10 that throughout history, God chose to save his people by sending his messengers to proclaim the good news. Because of this, we can trust God with our lives and our ministry, as we take the gospel to our neighborhoods, cities, and the ends of the earth.

And when rejection comes, don't shrink back in fear; ask God for more faith, courage, and boldness (Acts 4:29; Ephesians 6:19–20). Brothers and sisters, continue to share Jesus boldly, even in the face of rejection, just like Paul did among his own people many centuries ago. We are Christians today in part because Paul pressed on to make sure he fulfilled his calling in God's mission to bring salvation to a lost world. Likewise, may we be faithful to make the most of our God-given opportunities to bring the good news of eternal life in Christ to every last person in our communities.

Study Guide

The following study questions are meant to help us wrestle with the text of Romans and see how the gospel displays God's righteousness. Set aside some time this week to meet with God and answer these questions for yourself. Complete each question *before* your weekly small group meeting. Then, when you gather with your small group, be prepared to discuss your answers together.



Read Romans 1:16–17 to remain focused on Paul's major points. Then, read Romans 10:14–11:10 in preparation for this week's study.

Highlight

Paul raises many questions in Romans 10:14–11:10. Write down—or underline—each of these questions and highlight the answers that Paul provides.

What Old Testament passages does Paul quote in Romans 10:14–11:10? Write out the main point of each Old Testament reference in your own words.

What do we learn about God's character in Romans 10:14–11:10? Which verses support these truths?

What do we learn about God's plan of salvation in Romans 10:14–11:10? Which verses support these truths?

Explain

Why does Paul have confidence that God will not give up on unbelieving Jews according to Romans 10:14–11:10?

What is the stumbling block (or pitfall, in some translations) that prevents some from believing (Romans 11:5–6, 9)? Why is it important?

Why is preaching the gospel an important part of God's plan for saving people according to Romans 10:14–11:10?

When Paul explains God's plan of salvation in Romans 1–11, grace is an important component. Why? How does Romans 10:14–11:10 reinforce these thoughts?

Apply

How does Romans 10:14–11:10 motivate you in your efforts to help others believe in Christ?

In your everyday life, what stumbling blocks prevent you from believing and living what God says in this passage?

Are there people you think are beyond God's reach—that you think he has given up on? How does Romans 10:14– 11:10 encourage you and help you fight against such hopelessness?

How do we help people whose "eyes have been darkened" and "hearts have been hardened" (11:7–10)?

Respond in Prayer

Each week of this study guide will include a recommended Scripture passage that helps us focus on the faithfulness of our great God. Set aside some time this week to read through the selected passage and use the prayer prompts below as your guide. We recommend praying through this passage on your own at home *and* together with your small group.

This Week's Prayer Passage: Romans 10:14–11:10

Read Romans 10:14–11:10.

Pray through the following prompts, according to the A.C.T.S. method.

- **Adoration:** Praise God that he is sovereign, always working a plan of salvation that is larger than what we can see and understand (11:1–5). Adore God because he is the God of grace (11:5–6). Praise God as the one who has control over our lives and our fates (11:7–10).
- **Confession:** Confess that we are too weak and self-centered to comprehend God's work in the world (10:19–21; 11:8–10). Confess and repent to God for how you have become frustrated or angry with him for how he has managed his plan of salvation. Ask God's forgiveness for how we have blinded ourselves and turned our backs on him (11:9–10).
- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God that he is patient with us (10:21). Thank God for making himself and his glorious salvation known to us (10:15–18). Thank God for bringing people into your life who have helped you understand God's grace (10:14–18). And thank God for extending his grace to you and changing your life (11:5–6).
- **Supplication:** Ask for the strength, courage, and obedience to preach the good news to your friends and neighbors (10:14–18). Pray that your One would not reject the gospel, but that they would find God and obey his Word (10:20).