

SERMON: WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD THE WORD OF GOD?

[2] The title of the sermon: "WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD THE WORD OF GOD?"

- This question comes from Chacha Dean in Kenya. This is a very good question.
- Many people wonder about this throughout their life.
- We're going to search the Scriptures and get this right according to God.

There may be some communities of people that never hear the words of the Bible.

- Maybe they never hear the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Some younger children that grow up, for example, Muslim and end up dying.
- What happens to them? Their parents or no one else taught them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Do they go to hell because they didn't have the opportunity to believe on Jesus Christ?
- Let's answer these questions today.

Not all people know that they need to believe on Jesus Christ to be saved from death and hell.

- Many people aren't even aware of a heaven or a hell. Children, especially, won't be aware.
- How will they hear without a preacher? Right? There are many examples of this.

[3] 1 Timothy 2:1-4 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

- God wants ALL MEN to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.
- This doesn't automatically happen, right? Kids, from a young age, haven't come to this knowledge.
- Some children growing up, my wife is an example, didn't know about Jesus Christ.
- She learned about Jesus Christ when she first met me. She believed in Jesus Christ at that time.

She had an open heart. She didn't have a stiff neck. Why would anyone want to reject God who made them?

- Many people in these far away places are very open to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Most people here in this country are not. We are a very religious country.
- People won't turn from their man made religion and believe the words of Jesus Christ.
- To be saved, we must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, there are different categories of people.

- Some people have died and went to heaven without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- What??? Is that a true statement? How is this possible?

[4] Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- God says that He wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- And when we say “men,” we know that God created he him, male and female created he them.
- When we say men, we mean male and female.
- God wants all to be saved, but we must be saved by Jesus Christ.
- So how would some people get to heaven without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ?

There are children who go to heaven without believing in Jesus Christ.

- Aborted babies never had the chance to believe in Jesus Christ. Did they go to heaven or hell?
- They never did anything wrong. They are innocent. They go to heaven. Does the Bible say this, though?
- Or, I am just making this all up to make myself feel better?
- To go to heaven, your name must be written in the Book of Life.

[5] Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

- So, here’s the issue. When is a name written into the Book of Life?
- Your name must be written in the Book of Life in order to be saved and go to heaven.
- Does your name get written in the Book of Life once you believe in Jesus Christ?
- No, it does not. The names of every person who has lived or will ever live is already written in the book.
- Let me say this again. Every person’s name is written in that book before they are born.

[6] Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

- The names of every single person who has ever lived or will live is in the book of life from the foundation of the world.
- Some people might say that this verse is saying the Lamb of God is slain from the foundation of the world.
- Some people will argue that all names aren’t written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

For example, Calvinists will say that all names aren’t written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

- So, does this verse mean what I am preaching or not? Am I telling you a lie?
- We would look to other Scriptures to help us understand what this one means.

[7] Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- The Book of Life is from the foundation of the world.
- From the foundation of the world, all names are written in the Book of Life.
- And you might say, “Well, I don’t see it here.”

This verse says, “Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.”

- God loved Jacob and hated Esau. Was Esau’s name ever written in the Book of Life?
- Yes, his name was written in that book from the foundation of the world. He received life. Did he not?
- Anyone who is given life is written in the Book of Life. God gives them life.
- He knew you from the foundation of the world. He knew Esau from the foundation of the world.
- Esau’s name was written there. Then, after he lived his life, God found him to be a profane person.

Esau never believed in God. The Bible never once says that he did. God tells us that He hated Esau.

- If Esau would have died in his mother's womb, he would have went to heaven. But he didn't.
- He lived his life that God gave him. Esau had a choice. God wanted Esau to be saved.
- But Esau rejected God one too many times, and Esau became rejected by God.
- This didn't happen to Esau as a baby or as a small child. I don't know the exact moment he was rejected.
- But I know he was rejected by God because the Bible says that God hated Esau very clearly.
- In other words, his name was in the Book of Life, but it is no longer there.

When Revelation Chapter 17 actually happens, Esau's name will not be found written in the Book of Life.

- And that Book of Life has been there from the foundation of the world.
- Esau's name was there, and now it isn't there. His part was removed from the Book of Life.
- When did that happen? That happened when God rejected Esau.
- When God rejected Esau, He then hated Esau. Once God rejected Esau, his destination was hell.
- He took His part out of the Book of Life and Esau had no chance from that point forward.

[8] Revelation 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

- Esau was never a saved man. He never put his faith in God. Not even for a moment.
- So his part was removed out of the Book of Life. He didn't lose salvation. He never had it.
- If a person rejects God too many times, they will be rejected by God.
- If a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, their part is never removed.

A saved person will not take away from the words of this prophecy in Revelation.

- People who are unsaved, who take away from the words of Revelation, will then become rejected.
- These are just examples I am giving you from God's words.
- This way we can understand what happens to people who have never heard the word of God.

[9] Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

- Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, says that He will not blot an overcomer out of the book of life.
- Who is he that overcometh? Are you one that overcometh? Let's see.

[10] 1 John 5:4-5 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

- You must be born of God in order to NOT have your name blotted out of the Book of Life.
- This means you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order to overcome this world.
- We can only do this through faith in the Lamb of God who is Jesus Christ.
- He died for all our sins. He is THE SACRIFICE for sins. We are not. We simply believe on Him.

We take everything else that we've trusted in for salvation and forsake those things.

- We then take everything we have within us and place all our trust in Jesus Christ ALONE for salvation.

- Then our name will NEVER be blotted out of the book of life. So, our names were always there.
- Once we believe in Him, our names are signed, sealed, and delivered.
- God has reserved our place in heaven. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. We are born again.
- We become the sons of God. He is now our Father. Our names are there forevermore.
- He has given to us everlasting life. We cannot be removed from the book of life.

There are several other Scriptures in the Bible that talk about people being removed from the Book of Life.

- We have an entire sermon titled, "The Book of Life." Please see that sermon for more Scriptures.
- I am not focusing on the Book of Life for this sermon.
- But I want you to see that there are different categories of people.

Children who die before they reach an age where they are accountable for their sin will go to heaven.

- Even if they haven't heard the Gospel, they will go to heaven. Why?
- Because their names are written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

God doesn't reject a child who never had the chance to hear the Gospel.

- For example, Pam and I lost a child that was alive. We will see that child in heaven.
- That child never had the chance to hear the Gospel from a preacher in this world.
- I know 100% for sure that I will see that child in heaven.
- Now, if that child was born into this world, reached a point in time that only God knows, and continued to reject God, that child would go to hell.
- But, if that child believed on the Lord Jesus Christ just once, that child would go to heaven.

Here are the different categories of people listed out:

- 1) Babies that die go to heaven because they are written in the Book of Life.
- 2) Children who haven't reached a specific point of accountability will go to heaven.
- 3) The final group are the people like us. We must make a choice.

We are the ones who must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.

- There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.
- So, from this point on, I don't want to talk about babies and children who will go to heaven.
- Some children go to hell. What age is this? I have no idea. But the Bible talks about cursed children.

For example, Jeffrey Dahmer might have been a cursed child, a reprobate. In my opinion, he was.

- When did he get rejected by God? I have no clue.
- Could someone have cared and reached him with the Gospel at an early age? Yes, I think so.
- But no one did. So he continued on this path and ends up being rejected by God.
- He was a psychopath. A reprobate and a psychopath are the same thing.
- Elisha looked upon the children and cursed them in the name of the Lord. There are children reprobates.
- The age is probably different for every child. God knows best.

Now, there are saved and unsaved people throughout this world.

- The largest category of people is most likely the unsaved. This is why we are to preach the Gospel.
- We typically think that there are people out there in far out locations that have never heard the Gospel.
- Well, there are people everywhere who have never heard the Gospel.
- There are people in churches around here who have never heard the true Gospel.

- What happens to people who never hear the correct preaching of the Gospel?

Are the people who have never heard the Gospel innocent as a baby would be?

- No, they are not innocent. They have sinned. They have come short of the glory of God.
- This means they are guilty according to God's words. Without a Savior, the destination will be hell.
- But you might argue that it's just not fair for someone who never hears the Gospel to go to hell.
- We must trust in the words of the Bible. We go to Romans Chapter 1.

[11] Romans 1:16-18 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

- It's very simple to be saved. You simply believe on the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- People who go to hell hold the truth in unrighteousness. They realize there must be a God.
- They look around. They look at His creation. And they conclude there must be a Creator.

Now, will they seek this Creator? Or will they hold this truth in unrighteousness?

- They realize FINALLY that there is a God of all creation. This leads to their condemnation.
- Why? Because they didn't even attempt to seek Him at all. They are unsaved and will become rejected.
- Their end is hell. Why? Because they knew God and glorified Him not as God. Let's keep reading.

[12] Romans 1:19 *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*

- Now, do you trust what God says or not? He does His best to lead all people to salvation.
- For God so loved the world. He has loved all people. He is their Creator. He wants people to be saved.
- That which may be known of God is manifest in them. "For God hath shewed it unto them."

[13] Psalm 19:1-3 *To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

- People reach a point in their life where they finally realize there must be a Creator.
- Many people will reject that Creator. Look around. Look to the heavens. They declare the glory of God.
- Look at the pictures you'll see around the earth and from space. Look at the amazing earth.
- It hangs on nothing. Do you know heavy the earth must be? Yet it hangs on nothing.

You can look far. You can look wide. You can look closely at the smallest of things. You can look narrow.

- You'll find proof of the Creator everywhere you look. Your own hand is proof of the Creator of all things.
- These natives or tribesmen spend a lot of time in nature. They know there must be a Creator of all things.
- Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. This speaks of His creation.

- You can't get away from it. It's everywhere. Day after day and night after night. Can you not see?
- All people are shown that there is a God. Now, will they seek after this God or not? Who is He?

- Or, do they just not care? That will be the difference in the saved and the unsaved.

[14] Romans 1:20-21 *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

- All of His creation is clearly seen. He gives them proof every second of their life.
- If they would just pay attention, they would see. They know that they do wrong.
- Every day proves that we are not good and perfect. He shows us amazing things every day.

For example, we saw a double rainbow this week. We saw the ends of the rainbows on both sides.

- When we were driving, we saw the entire rainbow from start to finish for the first time in my life.
- It was amazing. The entire rainbow was visible in the sky. Everywhere we drove, it was there.
- At one point it felt like we were driving under the entire rainbow.
- People drive to Saint Louis to see the arch. This arch was so much more amazing and much bigger too.
- That rainbow shows up when it's been raining. It's God's promise to never flood the entire earth again.
- How can you see these rainbows and not think that there must be a God up there in the heavens?

Do you not think an indigenous person has ever seen a rainbow? What would you think when you saw it?

- Hey, you're looking for a sign? There's your sign. That's a promise from God right there.
- We all clearly see all of God's creation BIG or SMALL.
- From the sun, moon, and stars to the ants, bees, and birds. They are all amazing.
- Open your eyes. You will see that the creation has a Creator. Will you seek that Creator?

The Bible tells us that no one will have a valid excuse such as, "I never heard the Gospel."

- They are without excuse. They knew God. His Creation shows us who He is. He is a great God.
- He is a kind God. He gives us rain for water. He gives us sun to grow food. He makes the dirt produce.
- He gives us rock so we can have driveways and roads to travel. He gives us oxygen so we can breathe.

Who is doing all of these things for us? Who holds the earth in the perfect position?

- Who rotates the earth and makes the earth move so we have seasons?
- Who makes the sun to rise and to set? Are you thankful for God and everything He does for us?
- The people who will go to hell knew God but glorified Him not as God. They were not thankful for life.
- They became vain in their imaginations. Their foolish heart was darkened. They had a choice.
- His eternal power and Godhead is seen. They have no excuse.

But let's say some of these people who live out on an island all alone realize there must be a God.

- They then seek God. Do you think they will find Him? What will this lead to? Salvation.
- Who will they find when they seek God? They will find Jesus Christ. No doubt at all.

[15] Psalm 69:32 *The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.*

[16] Psalm 70:4 *Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.*

[17] Psalm 105:3 *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.*

[18] Amos 5:4 *For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:*

[19] Hebrews 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

- When people seek God, they will find Him. He does not hide Himself from these people.
- Have you not looked around? Does it look like He's hiding? Look at the earth. Look at the sky.
- Look to the heavens. He's not hiding. If you can't find Him, you aren't seeking Him.
- When I changed my mind and decided to seek the Lord, I found Him. I put effort forth.
- I searched. And I found Him. Even with all the false religions around, I found Him.

Seek and ye shall find. If someone never hears the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it's because they didn't seek Him.

- They are without excuse. There are many examples in the Bible.
- God put them there so we know what He does and how He works.

[20] Acts 17:22-23 *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.*

- God sent Paul there. These people knew that there is a God. "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."
- They didn't know His name, but Paul is there to preach Jesus Christ to them.
- They ignorantly worshipped Him, but now Paul is there to declare Him to them.
- Please pay attention to exactly what Paul says here as we continue.

[21] Acts 17:24-25 *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;*

- Paul is teaching them that there is ONE GOD. This one God made everything you see.

[22] Acts 17:26-28 *And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*

- That they should seek the Lord and find Him. "Though he be not far from every one of us."
- He is not far away from anyone no matter where they live on this earth.

[23] Acts 17:29-30 *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*

- All men everywhere need to repent for salvation or change their mind and believe on Jesus Christ.

- Stop believing in other things and start believing on Jesus Christ the Savior of the world.

[24] Acts 17:31-32 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.*

- So Paul is preaching Jesus Christ to these men. Some were listening and some were not.
- But, since some would be saved, God sent Paul to preach the Gospel to these people.

[25] Acts 17:33-34 *So Paul departed from among them. 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.*

- Certain men believed. There was a man named Dionysius (DIE-UH-NIGH-SEE-US).
- And there was a woman named Damaris. There were others with them that believed.
- They were saved. But others mocked. When someone seeks the Lord, they will find Jesus Christ.
- He is near. He is not far away. You don't have to stand on the top of a mountain for Him to see you.
- You don't have to get a mega phone for Him to hear you. He is very close.

God will send people to preach the Gospel to you if you seek Him.

- In some areas, people have smart phones that you would never think would have smart phones.
- People who seek God are finding Him. Guaranteed. God says so within His words.
- No one has any excuse. God says so. And He knows how to find people who seek Him.
- There are examples within the Bible.

[26] Acts 8:26 *And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.*

- Jesus Christ told Philip to arise and go to this place. Why? I am sure you remember Acts Chapter 8.

[27] Acts 8:27-28 *And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.*

- This man wasn't saved at this point, but he was seeking the Lord. He was reading God's words.

[28] Acts 8:29-31 *Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.*

- This man asks, "How can I understand without some guidance?" Hey, I need some help.
- Please teach me, Philip. Come up here and sit with me. This man wants to find God with a passion.
- So what did God do? "Philip, arise, and go to this man." This happens all the time in today's world.
- And it's my job, your job, and the job of saved Christians to do this work. Arise and go.
- Preach Jesus Christ so people can be saved. God will send someone to these people.

[29] Acts 8:32-34 *The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?*

- Who are you talking about, Philip? What is His name?

[30] Acts 8:35-37 *Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*

- That's a saved man right there because God sent Philip to this man to preach the Gospel.
- He believed in Jesus Christ. He was saved before he was baptized in water.

[31] Acts 8:38-40 *And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.*

- When Philip did the job God sent him to do, he took him away. The eunuch went on his way REJOICING!
- Philip kept preaching the Gospel wherever he went.
- God knows how to send His people to the right people and places.
- He will send someone to those who seek God.

[32] Romans 10:13-15 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

- God will send people. You must trust the word of God. He says that He will send people.
- He wants all people to be saved through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.
- If there's anyone we can trust, it would be God. We trust His words.
- For those who never seek God, they may never hear the Gospel. But He gives them chances.
- They reject Him over and over again. They know He's there. They reject Him anyway.

[33] John 1:5-8 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*

[34] John 1:9 *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

- Every person alive was given life by Jesus Christ. This didn't just happen by chance.
- God knows all of these people. He gives them proof of Him every single day.

- God sent Peter to Cornelius to show the Jews that the Gentiles can be saved too.
- Many people were saved because God sends His people to preach the Gospel.
- God knows where to send His people. The question for this sermon is:
- “What happens to those who have never heard the word of God?”

We know that babies and some children will go to heaven because they are written in the Book of Life.

- God doesn't take their part out of the Book of Life. They are innocent children.
- But once they get past this age of innocence, there will be consequences for not seeking God.
- God gives people many chances to seek Him. If they never seek Him, they may never hear the Gospel.
- There may be some that never seek Him and still hear the Gospel. But they reject Him.
- If one never seeks after God, there may never be a person who preaches the Gospel to them.

What good would it do? God knows if someone will ever believe or not.

- He may or may not send someone to preach the Gospel to unbelievers in this world.
- But, we know for sure that these people have no excuse. God shows Himself to them.
- They reject Him. Why would He send someone to preach the Gospel to them?
- If they end up being rejected, there's no point. Jesus skipped over people too. Why? He knew.
- We preach the Gospel to every creature because we don't know.
- Do we want to reach everyone? Yes we do. Will everyone actually hear the words? I don't think so.

We try with so-called “Christians” and they just don't get it. They don't “HEAR” the Gospel.

- But it was preached to them. It didn't profit them at all, though.
- Some may never hear it because they don't care to seek God. There are no excuses for either.

Let's pray.