

# sermon study summary

## What About Those Who Have Never Heard of Jesus?

Why Believe Series Part 10

Dr. Henry Schorr

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Jesus said, **“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”** (John 14:6). Does the Bible teach anything about those who have never heard of Jesus?

1. People from EVERY nation, every tribe and every language will one day be in heaven (Rev. 5:9).

2. LARGE NUMBERS of people from every people group will be in heaven (Rev. 7:9).

3. **General revelation.** God reveals Himself in a general way to everyone—through His creation and through writing His moral code on every person’s heart. See Romans 1:18-24. God has made His reality plain to every person. They clearly know there is a God and therefore they are without excuse. Even though every human being knows intuitively there is a God, many have suppressed this truth. **“They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator....”** (v.23).

In Romans 2:14 the Apostle Paul teaches that those who do not have the law (or do not have knowledge of the Ten Commandments) still have a basic knowledge of God’s moral code written on their hearts. They know that actions such as murder, rape, lying, stealing and falsehood are wrong.

People cannot plead ignorance with respect to God the Father for He has made His reality plain to them. Those who know about God but don’t want to worship Him worship idols—either wooden ones or contemporary idols like money and possessions or success.

Those who never heard of Christ will not be held responsible for that lack. However, they will be held responsible for what they did with God the Father, who has PLAINLY revealed Himself to them through creation and their conscience. If they know very little about God but their heart’s desire is to know Him, God will make Himself known to them in a greater way.

The Lord looks first and foremost at the heart and not at external religious activity. If people substitute religious rituals and activities for true worship, all their religious activity is unacceptable to God. If they are indifferent to God, they will receive little if any additional light.

4. **God’s special revelation.** Hebrews 11:6 says that God is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. He reveals Himself more specifically to ALL who sincerely seek Him.

Romans 1:16-19 teaches that God judges people according to their hearts and according to how they respond to the amount of truth or light they receive. Regardless of when or where a person lives in the world, God has made a way for everyone to first get a glimpse of His reality through His creation and if, in response to that, they sincerely seek God, He will provide a special revelation to that person. IF they respond with trust and love, God will apply the saving blood of Jesus to their account even as God credited the blood of Christ to Abraham’s account.

5. There is **no salvation** apart from Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12 says, **“There is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”**

6. **God is just.** The Judge of all the earth will do right (Genesis 18:25). **“He will judge the world in righteousness and the people with equity”** (Ps 98:9). God is good. **“He does not want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance”** (2 Peter 3:9).

**To followers of Christ:** Share the story of Jesus with someone in your sphere of influence.

**To those who don’t know Jesus:** He’s trying to get your attention. Call on Jesus today.

### THE WORD (NIV)

#### Psalm 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

#### Romans 1:18-20

<sup>18</sup> The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

#### 1 Samuel 16:11

So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”

#### Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

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# sermon study guide

## IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Share the last time you saw the effects of the wind. How do you know?
2. Have you met someone who does not know or has not heard the name of Jesus? If yes, how did that make you feel?

## UP – PURSUE GOD

3. Read Psalm 19:1, Romans 1:18-20 and Acts 9:1-9,15-19. How does God make Himself known to all people? How was Paul's experience different?
4. In 1 Samuel 16:11, God looks at our hearts, not our external activities. Does this scare you? Does this provide hope for you? Explain.

## OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. Read Hebrews 11:6. If we are on a journey to discover God, He will provide insight about Himself. Why is believing in His existence not enough? In what ways can we help others in their journey to Jesus?
6. How can we prepare ourselves before we go out and proclaim that Jesus is Lord?

### **For Personal Reflection / Prayer:**

*Meditate on the first time you heard of Jesus. What made you hungry or thirsty to know Jesus more? Share it with others.*

## *THE WORD (NIV) cont'd...*

### **Acts 9:1-9,15-19**

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest<sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.<sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

<sup>5</sup> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.<sup>6</sup> "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.<sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.<sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.<sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

<sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."<sup>18</sup> Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,<sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

**This week's writers:** Elsa Henderson, Mark Eckstein, David McMillin, and Jorel Quemuel