

word, hearing, faith applies to both external general revelation and the special revelation of the gospel, and the Israelites heard both "words" but rejected them. Since the first option is not supported by Scripture in other places, the second option would appear to be preferred.

But why "the word of Christ"? This could be understood to refer to the fact that all things came into being through Christ (John 1:3), and that the "words" that the heavens are recounting (Psalm 19:1, 4) are therefore a revelation of (or "word" concerning) Christ's handiwork, then "the word of Christ" could refer to either or both the gospel of Christ's redemption (of verse 16) and/or the external general revelation of God's glory and handiwork (of verse 18).

Summarizing, then, the teaching of Romans 10:16-18, we note the following: verse 16 tells us that not all Israelites responded in faith to God's special revelation of the gospel that they heard; verse 17 tells us that faith comes by means of hearing and responding to God's revelation; and verse 18 tells us that the Israelites (as well as all other human beings) heard God's external general revelation. Verse 18 also implies that not all of those who heard responded in faith to that "word".

From these considerations we can deduce certain helpful concepts and truths.

First, it is appropriate to speak of revelation generically (i.e., both general revelation and special revelation) in terms of "word". Both forms of revelation are a word from God.

Second, both words convey truth about God. General revelation discloses God's glory and handiwork; special revelation discloses God's grace and justice in the good news of salvation from sin through the redemptive work of Christ.

Third, it is appropriate to speak of a positive human response to revelation in terms of faith. Faith is always a response to a word from God. Since both forms of revelation are a word from God, then human beings can respond to both words in faith.

Forth, in order to get and keep clear on faith as response to distinct forms of revelation, it would probably be helpful to make the following distinctions:

<u>Form of Revelation</u>	<u>Kind of Faith-Response</u>
general revelation	general faith
special revelation in scripture	special faith
special revelation of the gospel; i.e. of Christ as Redeemer	saving faith