

Preaching and Publishing

Romans 10:6-15

March 3, 2024

Please open your Bibles to Romans 10 this morning. A lawyer, a doctor, and a preacher went hunting together. As they were walking, along came a big buck. The three of them all shot at the same time and the buck dropped in his tracks. They all rushed up to check it out but could only find one bullet hole. They began to argue over which one hit it. A few minutes later a game warden came by and asked what the problem was. The doctor told him and the warden said he'd take a look. Within a few seconds he turned around and said, "There's no doubt about it, the preacher shot that buck." While the preacher rightfully puffed out his chest, the others protested and asked how he knew so quickly? "Very easily," he said, "Just like his sermons, the bullet went in one ear and out the other."

I get a lot of preacher jokes and probably inspire a lot more. What many Christians don't know is that each believer is a preacher too! Say preacher. Let's find out why that is true by reading from Rom 10:6-15. Please stand if you are able. 6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: 9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

We often consider this a salvation passage and we should. If you haven't memorized verses 9-10, that is your homework! Those two verses are a very brief summary of what's necessary to be saved. Paul contrasts this with the works based ideas in the verses before it. Praise God we don't have to bring Christ up or down. He is near you and in your heart and mind if you will only reach out and believe! Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. And mean it! That He controls your life and calls the shots and that we aren't just giving Him lip service as we go do whatever we want. Far too many Christians do that today. If you've never made Jesus Lord, don't wait! Put Him on the throne in your heart and obey Him fully! As you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. Internal belief and external confession. Knowing and believing it

and then making it known to others. And, Paul says, everyone who calls on the Lord in this way **will be saved!** Learn these verses and share them with your unsaved friends.

But today we're going to take it a step further and look a part of this passage we've never really addressed before, verses 14-15. How can they believe and call on someone they've never heard of? And how can they hear without someone telling them? Paul asked these rhetorical questions with the implied answer that they can't do either one if no one tells them! Now over in Romans 1, he does tell us that all people are without excuse because everyone can tell from creation that there's a god of some type. That's general revelation. But they can't tell from Creation that God sent His Son Jesus nor that He died and rose again unless someone tells them. The way we learn about virtually everything is by being told either in a classroom, on social media, in a book or magazine, by word of mouth, or an advertisement. Telling and listening are the primary means by which we learn. And this is where you and I come in.

Say I'm a preacher. Wait, what? I've never been to seminary, I've never been ordained. I'm no preacher. Well, with the Greek definition here, you are if you're a believer. The word for preach literally means to cry out publicly or to herald the news. In colonial times, they had town criers who would shout the news and spread the word about important events. That was before TV, radio, or the internet. Some newspapers became known as the town crier or, in our case, the Shenandoah Valley **Herald**. It heralded the news for all to read.

Used in this context, it specifically means to make Jesus publicly known! So yes, it includes folks like me that are called preachers. But the word is also used in Mark 1 where Jesus healed a leper and the man went out and began to spread the news **talking freely**. Same word. He wasn't in a pulpit but he was sharing his good news. Heralding, crying out. In Mark 5, Jesus had cast a Legion of demons out of the man and sent them into 2000 pigs which promptly ran down the cliff and drowned. That was quite a drop in pork bellies. And when the man wanted to just hang with Jesus, Jesus told him instead to go home and tell his family what happened. And it says he went away and began to **tell** how much Jesus had done for him. Same Greek word. He was a herald, a town crier, a proclaimer of good news.

And that's exactly what you and I are commissioned to do by Jesus Christ. We need to go and tell how much Jesus has done for us! We've looked at the Great Commission from Matthew, but Mark records it a little differently. He says in Mark 16:15, "Go ye into all the world, and **preach** the gospel to every person." Same word and it doesn't just mean stand up in church and give a sermon. It means go and tell! Share! Herald! Cry out! Everywhere and to everyone! This isn't just preacher work, it's every believer work!

How can you tell people at your work or school about what Jesus has done for you? Maybe we don't do this so much because we forget how much Jesus **has** done for us. If that's the case let me remind you. You and I both were bound for hell with no hope and no chance to avoid it. Our only condition was everlasting misery and agony. We were dead in our sins. We had no glimmer of a positive outcome at all in any way. And then came Jesus. And He loved us and ministered to us and died for us and rose again for us and saved us from everlasting hell to everlasting glory. And then blessed us infinitely in other ways. If you've forgotten what Jesus has done for you take some time to recall it all and then start proclaiming! The leper and the demoniac had no problem remembering what Jesus had done for them. And they had no problem telling others about it.

Personal testimony on advertisements is very powerful. It's even more powerful if you know the person isn't getting paid to tell you! When you find an app that's really helpful, like Waze, you tell others! Someone told me this week about a good scope he's happy with. How will they know unless we tell them?

When you're pleased with a car or car dealer, what do you do? You tell people. When you find the perfect cleaning product for your house or in this case, your life! When you finally try Beans BBQ? You share it, especially with your friends, but not before the ribs are gone, right? Why do we tell people about all these other things but never about Jesus? I told someone about a spot where I'd seen a really big buck. He went there, built a stand and killed it! I regretted telling him. He never heard about some of the other nice game I saw. But with Jesus, there's enough big bucks, enough ribs to go around! Enough salvation for all!

The BLAST program has grown by word of mouth. TV ads are great-I'm thankful to finally see some about Jesus! FB ads, billboards, etc are great. But the most powerful method is simply telling someone else. Say Word of Mouth. We have the best news ever. The best "product." The best "solution" to sin, addiction, misery, poverty, homelessness, the world's problems! As more and more people come to faith in Jesus, Jesus does more and more through them to minister to all these needs. But how can they minister and help unless they know Jesus. And how can they know Jesus if they've never heard of Jesus? And how can they hear about Jesus if we never tell them about Jesus? 2 Tim 4:2 tells us to, "Preach (or proclaim) the Word; be prepared in season and out of season..." Be ready always! Whenever the opportunity arises.

The word for preach or proclaim here also means to publish or make widely known. Say publish. I've been privileged to have published some books. Anyone can do it now with self-publishing. But we all publish something every day. On Facebook, Instagram, X, TicToc, Snapchat, email, websites, etc. Whatever we say and do is our publication. What are you publishing? We have all these influencers today who are posting all kinds of things, some good, many bad. How are you influencing others by

what you're publishing? By what you're living? By what you're putting out there? We're all influencers, we just need to be influencing others for Jesus!

We learned in our study of how we got the Bible that Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press to publish the God's Word! And it opened the door to the publishing of many more great books about Jesus! There are Christian publishing houses that publish many books about Jesus! But a lot of garbage is also being published today. In print as well as online and social media. A lot of lies and worse. How are you using your opportunities to publish Jesus?

In Mark 13, Jesus said that the end would not come until the gospel was first preached to all nations. The KJV says published among all nations because it's the same word. When Luke tells about the demon possessed man, the KJV says, "he published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him." Each Christian is commissioned to be a publishing house for Jesus' good news! A broadcaster, a cell phone tower proclaiming only Jesus into a world that desperately needs Him!

Going back to our Scripture today, right after Paul highlights the need for Gospel proclaimers, preachers, and publishers, he asks this question, "15 And how can they preach unless they are sent?" Say sent. The Greek word is apostello (ap-os-tel'-lo). The word is very similar to apostle and they both have similar meanings. Apostello means to be sent out on a mission and an Apostle is the one who is sent on that mission. An apostle is an ambassador, in this case not for the President, but for King, King Jesus. And we are the ambassadors who have been sent out! When were we sent? Oh, that's right, when Jesus gave us the Great Commission and said, "**Go** and make disciples of all nations." That's when. So you already have your commission, your marching orders, your send off.

But let me mention the importance of the church officially sending some of our members out for special missions. Like on a mission trip to Guatemala or a Samaritan's Purse disaster trip. Like when the congregation recognizes spiritual gifts of evangelism or preaching within one of its members and officially calls that person to the ministry. Valley Pike called me to the ministry, helped me get trained, and then sent me out as an ambassador when the time came. This is an important function of every church; to look for and recognize gifts for public proclamation and to encourage folks to develop and use them. Bro Carl Plum recognized that in Bro Phill Noel and put his hand on his shoulder and said, "I think God may be calling you to the set apart ministry." CBC needs ministers today. Other churches need ministers. Let's identify individuals at Antioch with these gifts, let's call them, let's empower them and then, let's send them! Each church should be a sending church! So that Paul's question can be answered.

How can they preach unless they're sent? We can solve the sending problem! Now it's up to the individual to answer the call to be sent! To accept God's

calling on their life and live into it. It's heartbreaking to see people whom God has gifted to squander their callings, to neglect their gifts. Pray for God to continue to call and raise up pastors and missionaries, Sunday School teachers and Bible Study leaders and others who can be effective apostles, ambassadors for Jesus Christ and that those individuals would answer God's call and say yes. Every church including Antioch needs to be calling and sending preachers. Both those to the set apart ministry and those to lay ministry.

As we do publish and proclaim Jesus, we get a special gift. Say pretty feet. Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" He's quoting part of Isaiah 52:7 the full text of which says, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" We have the high privilege of proclaiming salvation! Of decreeing eternal peace through the Prince of Peace! We don't just have good tidings, we've got the best tidings! Our God reigns! And as we fulfill our callings to go and share this best of news, our feet get prettier and prettier ☺. We won't need pedicures.

There's a story in the Old Testament of Ahimaaz. After David's men had won a battle, Ahimaaz wanted to run and tell the king. Joab the general, sent another man instead. Nevertheless, Ahimaaz outran the other guy and got to tell David first. Oh for that kind of passion to outrun others to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ! Instead of sitting on the couch saying, "I'm glad Franklin Graham's out there." There are people at your work Franklin Graham can't reach! You can! But how can they believe if they never hear? And can they hear if they are never told? You know them, you have a relationship, you have an inside track. Use it to tell them about Jesus!

I heard a little short poem years ago and for some reason it stuck with me. "My friend I stand in judgement now and feel that you're to blame somehow, for though we lived side by side each day, never did you point the way!" How are your relatives, your friends, your coworkers going to feel when they die, and they will one day, and when they stand before God, and they will one day, and they are condemned to hell, and they will be one day if they never accepted Jesus, and they find out that you knew the whole time and kept your mouth shut. How would you feel? How would you feel if you died of starvation and found out your friend had a whole warehouse of food?

They can reject it, turn it down, even criticize you for it. And maybe you've already told them and this has happened. That's OK. What they do with the news is up to them. If you warn me about the dam upstream that's getting ready to break and I don't move out of the way, my blood is on my own hands. But if you know and don't tell me, my blood is on your hands. Our work is to broadcast the news in whatever way we can. They can let it go in one ear and out the other. But our job is to tell them. Will you preach it and publish it this week?

If you've never believed in your heart or confessed with your mouth---