

Rev. Lex DeLong / General Adult

Romans Road to Recovery / Gospel; Witness Text / Romans 10:14–17

Faith is not a self-made spark; it is a gift that arrives through a voice that finds great joy in giving the message as God-chosen, human messengers, carrying the very Word that brings His children home.

Notes

04/19 Rom. 10:14-17 Title: "The Beautiful Feet," Subtitle: The Essential Chain of Proclamation, Main Idea: Faith is not a self-made spark; it is a gift that arrives through a voice. God chooses human messengers to carry the very Word that brings His children home, Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-10 (Communion)

- The war is over. The King has won. But who is carrying the news?
- Faith isn't a self-made spark; it's a gift that arrives through a voice.
- Discover the joy of being God's messenger

This Sunday at 10:30 AM. Livestream: [\[Link\]](#) #Romans10

Title: The Beautiful Feet

Subtitle: The Essential Chain of Proclamation

Text: Romans 10:14-17

Communion Text: Isaiah 52:7-10

Date: Sunday, April 19

Main Idea: Faith is not a self-made spark; it is a gift that arrives through a voice that finds great joy in giving the message as God-chosen, human messengers, carrying the very Word that brings His children home.

Introduction

- On January 8, 1815, thousands of men fought and died in the bloodiest conflict of the War of 1812—the Battle of New Orleans. The profound tragedy of that day wasn't just the terrible loss of life; it was the fact that the war was already over. The Treaty of Ghent had been signed in Europe weeks earlier. The victory was secured, the peace was real, but because the heralds carrying the news had to cross the Atlantic by sail, men perished in ignorance of a peace that was already theirs. They died in a war that had already been won.
- This is exactly why the ancient world placed such high value on the runner. Imagine standing on the stone walls of a besieged city in ancient Israel. Your survival

depends entirely on a battle happening over the horizon—a battle you have no power to fight. You are helpless. All you can do is stare at the mountain ridge and pray. When a runner finally breaks over that horizon, covered in the mud and dust of the road, shouting, "Victory! Our King reigns!"—to the starving people inside those walls, there is nothing in the world more beautiful than the dirty feet of that messenger.

In Romans 10, the Apostle Paul weaves this exact imagery into the life of the Church.

- Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ declared, "It is finished." The war against sin and death was won. The treaty of peace was signed in His blood. Yet, all around us, men and women are perishing in the rubble of a defeated rebellion simply because the news hasn't reached them.
- **The Current Reality:** Paul's focus throughout consistently protects the absolute sovereignty of God in His choosing, while elevating the joyous, God-ordained privilege of the church to be the heralds of His saving Word.
- Now, in this age of Grace, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom 10:13).
- The gospel has no ethnic boundaries, but God has limited its delivery to a single mechanism: **the declaration of the only truth, Jesus Christ, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Light."** (Jn. 14:6)
- So, how do those who are lost and spiritually dead move to a place of calling on the Lord?
 - Paul here in Romans 10:14-17 walks us backward through the anatomy of saving faith. He starts with the final result—a sinner calling on the Lord—and traces the line all the way back to its origin: God choosing His people and sending a herald to bring the Good news that the battle is over and He is King, so that His people can come home to Him.

Main Idea:

Faith is not a self-made spark; it is a gift that arrives through a voice that finds great joy in giving the message as God-chosen, human messengers, carrying the very Word that brings His children home.

I. There is Joy in Speaking the Gospel (v. 14)

- Since God's sovereign plan ordains both the end result—saving His chosen people—and the method to get there—the proclamation of His Word—Paul maps out this anatomy by starting at the finish line. Sometimes to understand the anatomy of a significant, heroic event, you have to start first, with understanding the event itself.

- Using rapid-fire rhetorical questions, Paul proves that the delivery of the truth is the essential, God-ordained means for awakening dead hearts.
- Because salvation rests entirely on God's grace (Eph. 2:8-9), His sovereign will can never be thwarted by our disobedience.

Job 42:2 NASB95

² "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.

Isaiah 14:27 NASB95

²⁷ "For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate *it*? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?"

Proverbs 19:21 NASB95

²¹ Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand.

Isaiah 46:10 NASB95

¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

- So, because salvation rests entirely on God's grace (Eph. 2:8-9), His sovereign will can never be thwarted by our disobedience. However, our silence means we forfeit the profound, joyous privilege of being the instrument He uses to bring His children home.

A. A sinner cannot call on a Savior they do not trust in (v. 14a)

v. 14a *"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?"*

- To "call" (epikaleomai) is an act of desperate reliance.
- It is the action of a drowning man crying out for a life preserver with no one there to hear.
- No one cries out to a God they believe is impotent, apathetic, not around, or a myth.
- Actionable faith requires an object to trust in.

B. A sinner cannot trust a Savior they have not heard of or from v. 14b

v. 14b *"And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?"*

- Grammatically, the Greek can be translated "whom they have not heard" (like in the NASB), implying that in the preaching of the gospel, the sinner actually hears the voice of Christ Himself through the messenger.

John 10:27 *"27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;"*

- Faith is not a leap in the dark; it is a response to revealed truth from a voice that represents safety and belonging.
- You cannot trust a person who you have never heard of or heard from.

C. A sinner cannot hear without a herald (v. 14c)

- v. 14c "And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"
- The word for preaching (kēryssō) refers to a town crier or herald.
 - This is not a conversational suggestion; it is an authoritative, public declaration of a king's decree.
- If the herald stays silent, the town never hears the decree.
- We have the privilege and opportunity to open our mouths to be the ordained means of grace.

II. You Can Step Out and Speak with Authority (v. 15)

- The chain does not begin with the preacher's decision to go; it begins with God's sovereign decision to send.
- By God's design, we are invited to experience the joy of participating.
- That joy requires that we must willingly deploy ourselves under His command, recognizing the honor of our commission.

A. The messenger operates under God's delegated authority (v. 15a)

v. 15a *"And how are they to preach unless they are sent?"*

- The word "sent" (apostello) is the root word for "apostle." One who has met Christ Himself, and is now to herald the message of God about Jesus to others.
- It means to be dispatched with the full backing and ordained message of the sender.
- We do not generate the message, nor do we go on our own authority.
- We are ambassadors in a foreign land during this present evil age, moving with the authority of the King of glory.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *"20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God*

were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

- Because the messenger is sovereignly sent by God, the herald demands a hearing not based on their personal eloquence, but entirely based on the authority of the One who signed the decree.
- Just one caveat here, God does not send us without the ability to use our voice to proclaim. Everyone God has called to Himself, has the power - the ability to proclaim the good news.

Acts 1:8 "8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.""

Remember: the messenger operates under God's delegated authority.

Because that is true, we can and are purposed to...

B. Willingly deploy our "beautiful feet." (v. 15b)

v. 15b "As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"

- Paul quotes Isaiah 52:7.
 - In the historical context of Isaiah, Israel was in exile in Babylon.
 - The watchmen on the walls of ruined Jerusalem (spoken of by Jeremiah in tears) were waiting for a runner to come over the mountains with news of national delivery from bondage.
- In the same way, watchmen standing on today's ruins, wait for a runner to come over the mountain of sin's carnage with news of final spiritual delivery out of bondage, for sin's captives.
- Here in Romans 10:15, Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet..." The Greek word used here is *hōraios*.
 - The Meaning: In modern English, "beautiful" usually means aesthetically pleasing or pretty. But *hōraios* comes from the root word *hōra*, which means "hour" or "season." Literally, it means "happening at the right hour, timely, or arriving exactly when needed."
 - A messenger's feet running over a dusty mountain aren't aesthetically pretty—they are dirty, calloused, and bloody. But they are *hōraios*—they are "right on time."
 - To a captive waiting in a ruined city, nothing is more beautiful than a rescue that

arrives before it's too late.

- Why the "feet"? Because feet covered in the dust and mud of the road are beautiful when they carry the news that the war is won.
- We are invited to willingly deploy our feet into the mess and dust of the world to carry this triumphant news.
- So, carry the news you were meant to and enabled to proclaim. Be the runner who brings the news of delivery to those in bondage, because you can trust, not yourself, but the power and the message you have been given, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

III. We Can Trust the Truth (v. 16-17)

- If the message is so good, why doesn't everyone believe it?
- Paul addresses the historical reality of Israel's unbelief to remind us that we cannot manipulate hearts; we must rely entirely on the Word of Christ to **ignite** faith.

A. There is tragedy in a hardened response (v. 16)

v. 16 *"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?'"*

- Dispensational note: Paul quotes Isaiah 53:1 to explain Israel's national rejection of the Messiah, in Paul's day.
- The failure here is not in the message or the messenger, but in the rebellious heart of the hearer.
- **Notice:** Paul equates "believing" with "obeying" the gospel. The Greek word for obey is hypakouō, which literally means "to listen under."
- The gospel is a command to believe and repent, the act of turning from one thing to head towards another.
- The gospel is not an invitation to a conversation of the mind; it is a command to step out from under the authority and rule of sin and step under the authority - of the declaration - of the rule - of the King who created you, in the flesh and again through Jesus Christ.
- Unbelief is ultimately an act of disobedience, of rebellion against the true King's decree, by continuing on the same old path that leads to destruction. It is hearing the message but refusing to "listen under" its authority.

Matthew 7:13-14 NASB95

13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that

leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

B. Rely on the Word of Christ (not your words) to ignite faith (v. 17)

v. 17 *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."*

- "The word" here is *rhēma*, meaning the specific, spoken utterance or declaration of Christ.
 - Compared to the heavy, works-based religion that can never attain by climbing up to God, the *rhēma* is beautiful because it is accessible.
 - A sinner doesn't have to climb a mountain of good deeds to find God, they simply have to hear the message from Christ that the herald brings right to their front door.
- We cannot manufacture faith in our listeners through emotional manipulation, clever apologetics, or impressive programming.
- Because salvation is of the Lord, we must trust the truth and rely purely on the objective, spoken Word that the Holy Spirit uses to bring the voice of Jesus through us, which has itself alone, the power to ignite the spark of faith in a spiritually dead heart.
- The Holy Spirit does not promise to ignite saving faith through our political opinions, our life advice, or our personal philosophies.
- The Spirit only promises to ignite faith when the specific, historical reality of Jesus Christ is the subject of the declaration **and** the substance of the declaration.

Communion Transition: The Bared Arm of God (Isaiah 52:7-10)

- So, look back with me to the source text of Paul's quote.

Isaiah 52:10 says, "The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

- When a warrior prepares for battle or a laborer for heavy work, they roll up their sleeves to bare their arm.
- Where did God "bare His holy arm" to accomplish salvation? At the cross of Jesus.
- As the men come forward now to serve communion, we will take the bread and the cup remembering the very event that makes the message that God has given us, the message of "good news."

- The elements we participate in during communion are a physical proclamation—a visual sermon—of the broken body and shed blood of the King who waged and won the war.
- As the men come forward to serve communion, consider the following challenges:

Here are some...

Actionable Applications:

- Audit Your Conversations
- ++Evaluate Your Feet
- ++Rest in the Power of the Seed

Audit Your Conversations:

- Are you sharing the Word of Christ or just giving moral advice? People do not get saved by hearing about our generic spiritual journeys; they are saved by hearing the objective facts of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. We must speak the *rhēma*, **The Word of Christ**.

Evaluate Your Feet:

- The text says the feet of the sent ones are beautiful. Are you willing to be inconvenienced, to get your "feet dirty" in the messy lives of your neighbors, coworkers, and family members to carry this news? Embrace the privilege of being the physical instrument God uses to deliver **His saving grace**.

Rest in the Power of the Seed:

- Like the prophets of old (v. 16), you will face rejection. Do not let the unbelief of others make you doubt the power of the gospel. Your job is not to manufacture the harvest; your job is to carry the mail. Deliver it faithfully, and **leave the sovereign awakening of faith to the Spirit of God**. When you do, you present yourselves available for the immense joy that God intends for you as you carry his good news faithfully.

Conclusion: Deliver the King's Peace

- As we hold the bread and the cup today, we hold the tangible proof that the war is over. The treaty of peace has been permanently signed in the blood of Jesus Christ. No, by partaking, we declare that we strive to live according to the very **Word of Christ**.
- Earlier, we looked back at the profound tragedy of the Battle of New Orleans—men dying in a war that was already won, simply because the heralds did not arrive in time.

- Look out the doors of this church. Look at your neighborhood, your workplace, and your own family. The same tragedy is unfolding right now. People are perishing in the rubble of a defeated rebellion, unaware that the King has already secured the victory.
- You are the runner on the mountain. Your feet are *hōraios*—**they are right on time** for someone in your life who desperately needs to hear the *rhēma*, **the word of Christ**.
- As we partake of these elements, let the physical reality of this bread and cup remind you of the objective, the finished work of the gospel in you. Then, let us go out with immense joy, step into the mess of this world, and deliver the message of the King.