

Romans 10:5-15

5 Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: "The person who does these things will live by them." 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 message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9 If you declare 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 profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes 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 anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

I remember being on holiday in St Lucia and I attended the local Anglican Church.

It was a traditional Anglican communion and two elderly West Indian ladies in the most marvellous hats offered me a lift home. As we pulled up outside my hotel - both ladies turned to me and said.

Now young man we want to ask you something.

Are you saved?

Importantly in these verses this morning Paul helps us answer life's ultimate question and it's my question for all of us this morning:

'Are you saved?'

Helpfully Romans shows us how salvation happens which not only do we each need to hear afresh every Sunday- but those who don't yet know Christ in this parish also need to hear it.

The word is near....

He is near

But and here's Pauls ask of the readers to this letter

'How will they hear unless someone preaches to them.'

And God is looking for something.

He's looking for.

BEAUTIFUL FEET - In order to take the gospel to those who have not yet heard it.

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.

Feet are rather funny things aren't they? - beautiful is a not a word that usually comes to mind when thinking about feet.

What He is seeking from us this morning to get our feet active is a twofold response. Firstly - from our hearts then from our voice.

The mission of his church demands both.

So I have two words for you:

'Call' and 'All'

Let's with start with call

1. *Call on the Lord.*

Believing 'on' Christ is expressed here in terms of calling on the Lord or confessing the Lord.

I am meeting new people locally day by day. My opening salvo to them isn't:

Have you called on the name of the Lord?

And it might be a relief to hear that I'm not walking around the villages calling people to repent. While all of us do need to repent- it's the Holy Spirit who does both the calling and softening of hearts to arrive in a place of repentance.

Three times the writer to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 95 'Today, if you hear my voice do not Harden your hearts.'

Now of course we play our part. We pray for people. We share our testimonies. We extend kindness and grace. We offer hospitality.

But, eventually we do need to do something else.

'Because,.... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified and with the mouth one confesses and is saved'

The reason he mentions both hearts and mouths is he is quoting and echoing

Duet 30 v 14

You can almost see the cogs turning in Paul's brain as he muses on this.

What does the heart do with Christ? It believes.

What does the mouth do? It confesses.

That's what our hearts and mouths are for.

The backstory to Romans 10 is Romans 9 where Paul says 'I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart' (Romans 9 v 2) for his people the Jews who have rejected Christ.

In Romans 10 his focus is Gentiles.

What is the pathway to God for Gentiles?

It's to come to Jesus and to trust him. You have faith that what he did on the cross he did for you and me. And that 'God raised him from the dead'

My father loved horses and horse racing and he once bet a terms school fees on a horse that he believed was a sure thing.

The words 'stewards enquiry' lived long with us with as a family. Although the horse came first, it went the wrong side of was a marker post.

However, Salvation is a sure thing - because we're asked to believe in a win that's already happened.

Unlike the 3.30 at the Kimble point to point in 1983.

So we can sum this up like this: salvation is coming to God which means believing in Christ in your heart for all that he has done for you, and then giving expression to it with your voice.

So that's the process.

From heart to voice.

Next.

2. All : All are invited.

The everyone in this passage is a quote from Is 28 v 16

Everyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.

Shame is such an evocative word isn't it?

We sometimes describe people as 'having no shame' and by that we mean they are full of self- confidence or a sense of entitlement. A brazen ness.

If our collective sin was revealed to us this morning we'd feel shame. There are things we've each said and done and not said and done that we'd rather everyone didn't know about.

We've all missed the marker post.

Romans 3 23.

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Brene Brown is a psychologist and she's written widely on shame. In her book 'Daring greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead ' she says we all carry a level of shame.

'Shame is an intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging' and she says those of us who have carried shame need to:

'Talk to yourself like someone you love'

Many live feeling that somehow they don't measure up or have failed. Maybe that's you.

Especially when it comes to the idea of having a relationship with the living God.

But I want you to know Jesus loves you. He's born your pain and shame at the cross.

Have you taken that
to heart?

For those of us who have- that means at the final reckoning there is nothing to fear.

You'll never be put to shame.

That call of God in the Garden

Gen 3 v 9 say this:

9 But the Lord God called to the man,

"Where are you?"

He says that to us this morning.

Let me end with some words of

Martin Luther

The Law says 'Do this and it is never done. Grace says, 'Believe this' because everything is already done'

