

Romans 10:11-15
A Disciple is Committed to Outreach

Last week, I began a new series on the subject of discipleship

- I know that it was blunt in some areas

The reality is that we all need to be challenged and confronted at times

- Myself included

We discussed the Great Commission

- What Jesus commanded His disciples there on the mountain in Galilee

We know that it is not until Acts 1 that Jesus ascends into heaven

- The interesting thing to note is that there are no commands given by Jesus in that chapter, before He ascends

I can't prove this for sure, but it could very well be that Jesus' last command was there on that mountain

- **“make disciples”**

That imperative is still as active now as it was then

- Are we being faithful to the Great Commission?

Jesus gives one command, **“make disciples”**

- But that command is supported by three participles
 - o **“going”**
 - o **“baptizing”**
 - o **“teaching”**

What I want us to do is to take one of these per week over the next three weeks

- After that, we will look at some descriptions of what a disciple is to be

This morning, I want us to think about the critical aspect of outreach

- I recognize that some of you are more gifted in this area than others

But the issue of outreach is not contingent upon your giftedness or lack thereof

- It is contingent upon your obedience

The idea of talking to unbelievers may intimidate some of you

- If so, you aren't alone

Evangelism is much like prayer

- We don't do it as often as we need to

Who could honestly say, “I am as evangelistic as I should be”?¹

- Who could say, “I pray as much as I should”?

I can't say that

- If you think you can, you need to re-evaluate

¹ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 99.

So I am going to assume that we are all in the same boat this morning

- We all need to grow in our understanding of evangelism
- We all need to grow in our practice of evangelism

I know that Bruce is putting together a class on evangelism

- So I don't want to take away from that

But I would like to begin by asking the question, "What are some common hindrances to Christians sharing the Gospel?"

- Asked another way, "What keeps you and me from being more faithful in our witness for Christ?"

1. Fear

Fear is a common obstacle that I encounter

- In my own life
- In the lives of others

There are numerous types of fear

- Fear of confronting people
- Fear of saying the wrong thing
- Fear of "messing up" the Gospel presentation

Much of the fear that we encounter can be traced back to some simple truths

- High fear of man – we don't like offending people
- Low fear of God – we fail to trust that God will give us grace, courage, and boldness

2. Sin in our lives

If you are not confessing your sins regularly, it will have disastrous effects

- Effect on your assurance
- Effect on your effectiveness

If you are harboring sin in your life, you are opening the door for Satan to impede the work of God in your life

- Confess your sin quickly
- Repent of it!

3. Seriousness of the task

If we stop and think about what's at stake, it frightens us!

- Issues of heaven and hell
- Eternal issues!

You mean that I have to save someone?

- Certainly not!

You and I can never save anyone

- All we can do is present the message and pray for God to work

4. Wrong view of success in evangelism

How do you define a successful evangelistic encounter?

- Having that person confess Christ?
- Getting all the way through the Gospel presentation?

Both of these are wrong views of success when it comes to evangelism

- If you look at Jesus' own ministry, not everyone He spoke with embraced Him

Here is a Biblical definition of evangelistic success

- Faithfully and clearly presenting the Gospel message

Even if someone doesn't embrace Christ, you have still been faithful

- Even if you don't get all the way through your presentation, you have still been faithful

5. Too busy

We are all busy people

- Just ask us!

But we have to ask, "What is filling my time?"

- It comes down to a series of priorities

We discussed last week that the Great Commission should factor into our daily time management

- Are we making time for disciple-making?

I am saying that you forsake your career and family in order to evangelize non-stop

- God clearly calls you to provide for your family
- God clearly calls you to spend time with your family

The key word is balance

- Are we scheduling time for evangelistic opportunities?

6. Spending the bulk of our time with other Christians

This is a big obstacle

- I would challenge you to think through this one

How many of us have put ourselves into a Christian bubble?

- Christian mechanic
- Christian dentist
- Christian pediatrician

If we aren't careful, we can actually isolate ourselves from the world!

- That was one of the mistakes of the Jews!

God wanted Israel to be a light to the Gentiles

- However, they removed themselves so much that they forfeited their witness

Do we have regular contact with unbelievers?

- If not, then you need to make some new friends!

Not only do we need to think through these obstacles and hindrances, but we also need to remind ourselves of the condition of the unbeliever

- Let's view the Biblical portrait of the unbeliever

This should sober us

- Because this is exactly who we would be, apart from the grace of God

1. Spiritually dead

Paul writes in Ephesians 2:1, “**and you were dead in your trespasses and sins**”

- Not a physical death
- But a spiritual death

In other words, as you and I go out to proclaim Christ, we are talking to people who are spiritually dead!

- People without a spiritual pulse (even though they may be religious)
- People who can't initiate anything spiritually

Jesus said, “**no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father**” (John 6:65)

- Without the doctrine of election, we would have no assurance that our evangelism would be effective!

When Paul was in Corinth, God told him, “**Do not be afraid *any longer*, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city**” (Acts 18:9-10, emphasis mine)

2. Spiritually blind

The people to whom we talk are not only spiritually dead

- They are also spiritually blind

Listen to these sobering words from Paul, “**if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**” (2 Cor 4:3-4)

- Did you catch that?

Satan has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving!

- The result is that “**they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**”

Is it any wonder that unbelievers act the way they do?

- That they think the way they do?
- That they talk the way they do?

Unbelievers have no spiritual perception

- They need someone to guide them

That's why we have to proclaim Christ!

- Point them toward the Savior!

3. Spiritually hopeless

Paul explains unbelievers in this manner, “**having no hope and without God in the world**” (Eph 2:12)

- Without hope
- Without God

No God, no hope

- Know God, know hope!

Unbelievers have no spiritual promise

- That is only for believers

I want us to turn to the book of Romans

- We will focus on chapter 10

Romans 9-11 deal with God’s perspective toward the Jews

- Has He rejected His own people? (no)
- Does God still have a place for them in His future program? (yes)

In the middle of Romans 10, the apostle Paul deals with the subject of proclaiming the Gospel

- This will be our focus this morning

Let’s read Romans 10:11-15

Let’s consider these five verses by focusing on two evangelistic truths

- The Gospel promise (10:11-13)
- The Gospel progression (10:14-15)

I. The Gospel promise (10:11-13)

11 For the Scripture says, ‘WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’”

The apostle Paul references many OT quotations in Romans

- He does this to show that his message is linked to the truths of the Old Covenant

Several times in the book of Romans, Paul links the thought of Scripture speaking

- Rom 4:3, “**For what does the Scripture say? ‘AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.’**”
- Rom 9:17, “**For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH.’**”
- Rom 10:11, “**For the Scripture says, ‘WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’**”
- Rom 11:2, “**Or do you not know what the Scripture says in *the passage about Elijah*, how he pleads with God against Israel?”**

The Scriptures continue to speak

- Even though they were written thousands of years ago, they still speak

Hebrews 4:12 tells us, “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart”

- God’s Word is living because God Himself is living
- God’s Word is active because God Himself is active

Here in Romans 10:11, Paul goes back to the Old Testament yet again

- Specifically, he quotes Isaiah 28:16

Romans 10 has been showing the Jew that his zeal has been misguided

- It had the wrong target
- It had the wrong content

The Jew thought that the Law was the focus

- He thought that partial obedience to the Law would bring about a righteous standing with God

But as Romans 10:4 says, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes”

- Christ is the goal
- Not the Law

Christ has made righteousness available “to everyone who believes”

- Again, faith is shown to be the only means of bringing someone into a righteous standing with God

Look at these verses in the near context

- Rom 10:4, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes”
- Rom 10:9, “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”
- Rom 10:10, “for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation”

For the person who has saving faith in Christ, Isaiah 28:16 has this assurance

- They “will not be put to shame”

In Romans 5:5, Paul uses this same word, “hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us”

- True, Biblical hope does not “disappoint”
- It does not bring shame, disappointment, dishonor, and humiliation

No born-again believer need ever feel that he is shamed and disappointed because of Christ

- Rather, Christians experience joy in their relationship with Him

Unbelievers think it is disgraceful and humiliating to trust in Christ

- But they don’t know the joy and peace of knowing Christ as Lord and Savior

How embarrassing and damning it will be for those who have put their trust in something or someone other than Jesus Christ²

- That, my friend, will be shame
- Eternal, everlasting shame

² William R. Newell, *Romans: Verse-by-Verse*, 400.

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek:

Salvation is not limited exclusively to Jews

- Even in the Old Testament, it was never restricted only to the Jewish nation

What is Jacob teaching us in the book of Jonah?

- God sent a Jewish prophet to a Gentile city
- The Gentiles repented!

A righteous standing with God is open to “**whoever believes in Him**”

That thought is further developed here in verse 12, “**for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek**”

- It matters not whether you are a Jew or Greek
- Both are sinners in need of a Savior

Back in Romans 3:21-22, Paul used similar terminology, “**But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction”**

- In this passage in Romans 3, the case was made that Jews and Gentiles are equally guilty in the sight of God³
- Neither group was exempt from God’s judgment

Salvation is the primary issue that divides humanity

- Not race
- Not sex
- Not age

Unbelieving Jews need the Gospel just as much as unbelieving Gentiles

- Both are equally sinful

With all the privileges and blessings that the nation Israel enjoyed, they were still in the same situation as the Gentiles around them

- They needed salvation through Christ

for the same *Lord* is Lord of all,

The reason why there is no distinction between Jew and Greek is simple

- “**the same Lord is Lord of all**”

Jews and Greeks both need a Savior and Deliverer

- His name is Jesus

Romans 10:9 stated, “**that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved**”

- One must confess “**Jesus as Lord**” in order to be saved
- One must believe “**that God raised Him from the dead**” in order to be saved

³ F.F. Bruce, *Tyndale NT Commentaries, Romans*, 193.

Jesus Christ is the only Lord

- He is the only Savior
- He is the only Messiah
- He is “**the way, and the truth, and the life**” (John 14:6)

abounding in riches for all who call on Him.

For the one who believes in Christ, God is seen as “**abounding in riches for all who call on Him**”

- God is not stingy
- He is very generous

Let me begin by stating what this verse does not teach

- It does not teach the “health and wealth” false gospel that is being proclaimed in some churches

Paul is reminding Christians that the Lord that they submit to is the One who owns everything

- “**The earth is the LORD’S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it**” (Ps 24:1)
- “**‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ declares the LORD of hosts**” (Hag 2:8)

God does the most amazing thing

- He bestows some of His riches to those who are undeserving and ungrateful
- We as Christians are called to be faithful stewards

13 for “WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

Here in Romans 10:13, Paul quotes yet another Old Testament citation

- This time, it is Joel 2:32

Even from the Old Testament itself comes this universal call to salvation

- The Jews could not lay claim to exclusive rights and privileges

Notice the basic truths of this verse that are so simple, the Jews tripped over them⁴

- First, salvation is promised
- Second, it is a be-saved, not save yourself, salvation
- Third, it is the Lord who saves
- Fourth, God saves all those who call upon Him – whether he be a Jew or Gentile

In Romans 10:11, the truth was, “**whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed**”

- Here in Romans 10:13, the truth is, “**whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved**”

These are not two contrasting ideas

- Belief vs. calling
- Not being disappointed vs. being saved

These are the same truths, stated differently

- Believing is synonymous with calling upon the name of the Lord
- Not being disappointed is the same as being saved

⁴ Newell, 401.

Paul is using different terminology and word order to drive home his truth

- Anyone can be saved if he has saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Yet again, Paul here in Romans 10 identifies Jesus Christ as “**Lord**”

- Verse 9
- Verse 12
- Verse 13
- Verse 16

Jesus is the Messiah

- He is Yahweh of the Old Testament

You will never call upon the name of the Lord until you see yourself as a sinner⁵

- Unable to save yourself
- Inadequate spiritually
- In desperate need of Divine help

This universal call is made very clear

- Salvation is available to all who believe

Isn't that a great reminder?

- We shouldn't limit our evangelism to a certain group of people
- Rather, we should scatter the seed of the Gospel far and wide

We have examined the Gospel promise (10:11-13)

- **Now let's examine the...**

II. The Gospel progression (10:14-15)

In verses 14-15, Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions

- These four questions trace themselves backward

The apostle proceeds from the effect to the cause⁶

- He is working backward to the source

You will also notice that Paul does not supply answers to these questions

- They are self-explanatory

A. Question 1 (10:14a)

14 How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?

Over the past two verses, we have seen that it is necessary for one to “**call upon**” the Lord in order to be saved

- 10:12, “**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him”**
- 10:13, “**WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED**”

⁵ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 388.

⁶ William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary, Romans*, 349.

But the question needs to be asked

- How can sinners call upon Jesus if they haven't believed?

There has to be a point where a sinner is convinced of his need for a Savior

- There has to be a point where that sinner senses the need to call upon Jesus for salvation

It was after Seth's son Enosh was born that we are told, "**Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD**" (Gen 4:26)

- Men began to see their need of a Savior

Before someone can "**call upon**" Jesus as Lord, they must believe

- ***But that brings up the second question***

B. Question 2 (10:14b)

And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?

Belief is necessary in order for a sinner to call upon the Lord

- But how can a sinner believe unless they have heard the Gospel?

So one must hear the Gospel before believing the Gospel

- One must know what to believe before believing

It is through the preaching of the Word of God that sinners are convicted of their sins

- Romans 10:17 says, "**So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ**"

God brings sinners to a point of repentance when the Word of God is made clear to them

The apostle Paul stresses the element of hearing for a simple reason

- In that day and age, very few people had access to a private copy of the Scriptures⁷
- Most often, people knew the Scriptures by hearing it read by someone else

It would be during the hearing of God's Word that the Holy Spirit would do His work

- Of conviction
- Of repentance
- Of faith

Bottom line

- No one could believe unless he first heard the message

But that brings up the third question...

⁷ Harrison, 113.

C. Question 3 (10:14c)

And how shall they hear without a preacher?

In order to call upon the Lord, one must believe

- In order to believe, one must have heard the Gospel
- But in order to hear the Gospel, it was necessary to have a “preacher”

When we hear the word “preacher” we think of a Sunday morning setting

- A guy in a suit stands up and preaches on Sunday morning

But that isn't exactly what Paul has in mind

- The act of preaching is simply the heralding or proclaiming of a message

Some of you are preaching the Gospel during the week

- At your place of employment
- On the streets
- In your home

True, Biblical preaching doesn't have to take place within the confines of a church building

- I have preached around a campfire
- I have preached in nursing homes
- I have preached in prisons

Paul reminds us, however, that in order to call upon the Lord, there must be faith

- In order to have faith, there must be the hearing of the Gospel
- In order to hear the Gospel, there has to be someone who proclaims that Gospel

D. Question 4 (10:15a)

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent?

How can preachers proclaim the Gospel without being sent?

Throughout the Scriptures, people don't take the initiative in preaching

- They are sent out
- There are no self-appointed preachers!

God-called proclaimers of the Gospel are sent by God

- They don't send themselves

Listen to the very first verse of Romans, “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called *as* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God”

- He himself was “called *as* an apostle”
- He didn't call himself

Jesus told His disciples in John 20:21, “as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

- God does the sending

Not everyone who preaches has been sent by God

- Some people are preaching out of false motives

Listen to the words of Jeremiah 23:21-22, “I did not send *these* prophets, but they ran. I did not speak to them, but they prophesied. But if they had stood in My council, then they would have announced My words to My people, and would have turned them back from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds.”

If God had not sent preachers to the Jews, then they could blame God

- They would have an accusation against Him

But had God sent messengers to Israel?

- Definitely!

God sent many prophets to Israel

- They warned the nation of impending judgment
- They prophesied of the Messiah Who would come
- They spoke of the blessings of those who trust in Him

But Israel rejected them

- Rejected the prophets
- Rejected the Messiah

Unbelieving friend, do you realize that when you reject the messenger of the Gospel, you are rejecting Jesus Christ Himself?⁸

- A faithful messenger of the Gospel doesn't preach his own message
- He preaches Jesus Christ and Him crucified

Christian friend, when someone rejects you, they aren't really rejecting you

- They are rejecting the message you preach
- Ultimately, they are rejecting Christ

Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!”

Paul cites yet another Old Testament truth

- This truth is found in both Isaiah 52:7 and Nahum 1:15

Israel had been in exile to the Babylonians for many years⁹

- They had been away from their homeland

But then messengers began to carry word that the exile was nearly over

- This was wonderful news!

Some of these messengers had been travelling for many miles to tell the message

- They were dirty
- They were stinky
- They were tired

⁸ Hendriksen, 350.

⁹ Steven A. Kreloff, *God's Plan for Israel*, 65.

But it didn't matter

- The focus was not on the messenger
- But on the message

The apostle Paul picks up this Old Testament quotation to show “**how beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings**”

- Why emphasize their feet?

Their feet enabled these messengers to carry the message

- Their feet, in essence, brought the good news to those who needed to hear it

This Text is brought into the context of New Covenant preaching here in Romans 10

- Today, when we take the Gospel to those who need to hear it, our feet are “**beautiful**” as well

As born-again believers, we are called to take this universal Gospel to the ends of the Earth

- Let's not forget to tell the Gospel to the unbelieving Jews around us
- They should be included in our evangelism

The Law was not the “**glad tidings**” of which Paul spoke

- The Law could never bring about salvation for a sinner

So we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ

- It is the only message which can bring about forgiveness of sins
- It is the only message that God has promised to bless

Think through this progression of truths

- In order for a person to believe, he must hear the Gospel
- In order for a person to hear the Gospel, he must have the Gospel proclaimed
- In order for the Gospel to be proclaimed, there must be people sent out to do this

As we think about outreach, what are the obstacles that stand in your way?

- What keeps you from being a more effective witness?

The problem is never the message

- “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek**” (Rom 1:16)

We have the most amazing message!

- Because we have the most amazing God!

As we think about the Lord's Table, we should be eternally grateful that Jesus Christ came to this Earth

- He left the applause of heaven in order to come and live among us

Jesus lived the perfect life that we could never have lived

- He was crucified on the cross for OUR sins
- He died in OUR place

Jesus was committed to evangelism

- Not just with His words
- But with His very life

The reason why there is outreach is because there is a Savior

- Jesus is that Savior
- He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world

We all fall short when it comes to telling others about Jesus

- But God will forgive you
- God will give you grace to be a better witness for Him