

**Romans**  
**Human Responsibility (Part 6)**  
**Romans 9:30 – 10:21**  
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Well, I invite you to take your Bibles and turn back to Romans, chapter 10, as we continue what has been a number of years' journey through Paul's letter to the churches there in Rome, Romans, chapter 10.

Years ago, I had the opportunity to read the biography of William Carey. William Carey, as you know, was a missionary to India and really rightfully considered the 'Father of Modern Missions.' It was one of the greatest Christian biographies I have ever read, and in fact I wholeheartedly recommend it to you. Specifically, it's the one written of Carey by his great-grandson, S. Pierce Carey.

You may know the story of William Carey. As a young boy, he developed a love for the journeys of Captain Cook and other world explorers, and eventually as he became a Christian and as he grew into an adult, that passion translated into a passion to see the gospel taken to every corner of the globe. Carey was especially driven by what he saw as the missionary heart of Jesus Christ Himself. In fact, this is what Carey wrote:

If Christ could stoop so low as to visit our sinful world and be moved with compassion upon the most undeserving and guilty, the most sinful and depraved, in what better way could we demonstrate that we are partakers of His grace than by earnest endeavor to imitate His example by laboring to promote the salvation of the most ignorant and helpless of mankind?

As Carey tried to motivate others in his home country toward a passion for missions, he encountered fierce opposition and resistance. In fact, on one occasion, he addressed the Ministers Fraternal of the Northampton Baptist Association in the year 1787, concerning this very issue of missions. It was there, after he finished his impassioned plea, that John Rylands,

Sr., famously replied this to Carey, “Young man, sit down. Sit down. You are an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He’ll do it without consulting you or me.”

In the year 1792, some five years later in response to those kinds of attitudes, Carey wrote a pamphlet entitled, “An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen.” It really became the Magna Carta of modern missions. It was that very same year, in the year 1792, that he also preached his famous sermon, “Expect Great Things From God; Attempt Great Things For God.” The very day that he preached that sermon, before the end of that day, the Northampton Baptist Association adopted this resolution, “Resolved that a plan be prepared against the next ministers’ meeting at Kettering for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the gospel among the heathen.” Out of that, the modern missionary movement was born.

Now William Carey, as you may know, although some of you, from different backgrounds, may not be aware of this, he believed very strongly in God's sovereignty in salvation. In fact, he referred to himself as a Calvinist. But he understood that if God chose those whom He would save before the foundation of the world, as we learned in Romans 9, He must also have chosen the means by which He would accomplish their salvation. And that is exactly what we learn in our text in Romans, chapter 10, today.

Just to remind you, we’re studying Paul's explanation of “Human Responsibility.” In chapter 9, he dealt with “Divine Election”; but beginning in chapter 9, verse 30, and running through the end of chapter 10, he addresses this issue of “Human Responsibility.” When people hear the gospel and don't believe in the gospel, including the Jewish people, which is really the focus of these chapters, they are personally responsible.

Now, what are the primary factors that contribute to responsibility for not believing the gospel? We’re looking at three factors; so far we’ve looked at one of those factors, and that is “A Failure

to Understand the Purpose of God's Law.” That's the end of chapter 9, verses 30 to 33, a failure to understand what God's Law is even given to us to accomplish.

Then we're in the middle of looking at a second factor and that is found in chapter 10, verses 1 through 15, and that is “An Unwillingness to Accept Salvation by Faith Alone.” Not only do they think they can earn their own way, but there is an absolute unwillingness to accept salvation by faith alone. That is borne, as we saw in verses 1 to 4, in some cases out of an abysmal ignorance of faith. They did not know, Paul says. He doesn't mean they hadn't heard; they had. This was a self-imposed ignorance, but nevertheless, they didn't really get it; they didn't really grasp the reality of faith as the way to be right with God. Part of the reason was they had embraced the diametrical opposite of faith, and he develops that in verses 5 through 8. There are these two paths to seek to be right with God; there is the righteousness based on keeping the law, and there's the righteousness which comes to us from God through faith. They had embraced the way of works.

In verses 9 through 10, Paul explains what the way of faith looks like, what faith is, and he explains there the dual aspects of faith. We'll come back to that, so I'll pass over that for now.

And then last week, in verses 11 to 13, Paul drew out the practical implications of faith. It includes the fact that that message, that way of being right with God, is universal in its scope. It includes the fact that it is individual; it's personal in its application. It also is a promise from God as well as an invitation. He ends in verse 13, “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

Now in our text this morning, Paul takes this a step further. Here he explains, in verses 14 and 15, the normal course of faith, the normal path or the normal course that faith takes in an individual life, but he does it in reverse. And I'll make this clear before we're done this morning; he does it in reverse. But let's look at our text; you follow along as I read Romans 10; and just to get a running start and context, let's pick it up in verse 13:

For “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe

in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!”

Now the obvious point of verses 14 and 15 is to explain to us the normal course or the normal path that faith takes. While that is the main point, it is impossible to separate this text from its massive implications, and so let me summarize this passage, including both its meaning and intent as well as its implications. Here's how I would summarize these verses, and then we'll take it apart together. God has ordained the normal course by which people come to saving faith, and that normal course becomes the main motive for both personal evangelism and world missions. Let me say that again, God has ordained the normal course, the normal path by which people come to saving faith, and when you understand that normal course, that becomes the main motive for your being a personal evangelist and for your embracing the priority of world missions.

Now, let's look at it together. I want you to notice, first of all, the logical connection between these two verses, verses 14 and 15, with what has come before. Back in verse 13, Paul has just said, quoting Joel 2:28, that “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” Now he explains all that has to happen before someone will call on the name the Lord. Whoever calls will be saved, but some things have to happen first. In a series of rhetorical questions, Paul unfolds several conditions that are necessary before someone will call on the name of the Lord. That's how these verses connect with what comes before.

But let me also point out how they connect with what follows. Beginning in verse 16, and running down to the end of the chapter, verse 21, Paul is going to argue that in the case of the Jewish people, all of these conditions have been met except for one, and that is their believing, their believing.

All that's missing in their case is faith. But he will say that's not God's fault; God has made His plan clear in the Old Testament. He's going to quote a number of passages in the end of the

chapter from the Old Testament. And God has made His plan clear in the New Testament proclamation of the gospel which they had heard from Paul as well as for many others. So Paul's point, in the last part of this chapter, is going to be that God held the Jewish people of the first century, who had refused to respond to His gospel, responsible just as He holds people today, people even in this room who have heard the gospel and not responded to it, responsible for their rejection as well. In fact, Paul identifies the real problem of such people down in verse 21, the last verse of this chapter where he says the problem is they are “DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE.” People who hear the gospel and don't respond are, in the end, disobedient and obstinate.

Now, go back to verses 14 and 15. You'll notice that the pronoun ‘they’ occurs throughout these verses. So understand it refers specifically in the context here of the Jews but not just of the Jews, it applies universally to anyone who hears the gospel and refuses to embrace it.

Now, look again at verses 14 and 15, you'll notice they contain four rhetorical questions; each of those questions begins with the interrogative ‘how,’ and in each question, Paul repeats the verb from the previous question, and that creates a chain of conditions or steps that must be normally followed when a person is saved. In fact, this passage has been called the “Golden Chain of Evangelism.” There are four questions, four rhetorical questions, but as I think you'll see by the time we're done, there are actually five separate points that Paul is making here. In this series of rhetorical questions, Paul explains five conditions that must be met in the normal course of saving faith. Let's look at them together.

The first condition, and frankly I'll just mention it pretty much in passing since we studied it last week in verse 13; the first condition is calling on Christ, calling on Christ. He alludes to it there in verse 14, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” Verse 13 says you must “CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD” in order to be saved. What does that mean? Well as we discovered last week, (If you weren't here you can go back and sort of catch up because I'm just to give you a summary of what we learned.) but we discovered last week that to “CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD,” means to call upon Him in a prayer of repentance and faith, pleading for the forgiveness of your sins, pleading for His grace, pleading for

salvation. It is a prayer to call on the name the Lord, is a prayer that expresses genuine faith in the heart, seeking forgiveness.

If you want a powerful example of calling on the name of the Lord in order to be saved, reread the parable in Luke 18 we read just a few moments ago in our Scripture reading. It's the tax collector who finds himself overwhelmed by his sin, willing to let go of his sin, seeking the forgiveness that's made possible through the innocent death of a substitute. That is what it means to call on the name of the Lord. So the first condition then that must be met in the normal course of saving faith is calling on Christ.

Now, that brings us to our text itself. The second condition is believing on Christ. Verse 14 says, "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" You see, before you can call out to God in a genuine prayer of repentance and forgiveness, you must first have believed. Sadly, there are many people in our culture who have been taught to pray what's called the "Sinner's Prayer" as a kind of mantra. Now I'm not down on a sinner's prayer; sinners pray; sinners cry out to God for forgiveness, and I think people have been saved by praying the "Sinner's Prayer."

But understand this; it's not like a magic formula. Many who pray the so-called "Sinner's Prayer" do so, not from a genuine heart of faith, a heart that's willing to confess Jesus as Lord as we learned in the earlier verses. But the true sinner's prayer, like that of the tax collector in Jesus's story, is an expression of a heart that has already believed. It can't call on Him in whom they have not believed. That is crucial in this process.

Now notice that expression, it's an unusual expression for Paul; literally, he says, "It is into whom they have not believed," or if we turn it around and say this, "You need to believe into Jesus." Paul only uses that expression a couple of times, but it is pervasive in John's Gospel and in his first letter, 1 John.

What does it mean to believe into Jesus? It underscores the idea of complete and total trust and reliance on another person; it means to throw yourself entirely, your entire trust, your entire

reliance onto Jesus Christ. And if we have any question about what it means, remember here in the very context, Paul has already explained what it means to believe in Christ. Go back to verses 9 and 10; here we discover what faith looks like. Verse 9 says "...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." And then he shares the same aspects of faith in a different order and slightly differently worded in verse 10, "...for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Here, Paul defines true saving faith or as we described it, the faith that truly saves has two dual aspects, two basic aspects. Did you see them in verse 9? Number one, you must believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. You must believe the facts of the gospel; Jesus who He is and about His life, His death and His resurrection, and you must assent to those. You must believe in your heart. There's an emotional assent to their truth, and he says specifically, you must believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. That is shorthand; that expression is shorthand as we saw for believing all of Jesus's claims about Himself, all that He claimed to be, and believing in His saving work. That's what it means to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. You must believe in your heart in the claims of Jesus Christ, that He claimed to be God, that He claimed to be the Son, sent by the Father to redeem fallen humanity. You must believe in His perfect life lived entirely without sin. You must believe in His death as a substitutionary sacrifice and in His resurrection and ascension. You must believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.

But secondly, you'll notice in verse 9, he also says there's another part of true saving faith. You must confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord. What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord? Well, we saw when we studied this; it means to confess two things. It means to confess that Jesus is God, and it means to confess that He is your master. That's how that word 'Lord,' (*kurios*) is used in the New Testament. Again, if you want a beautiful picture of this, look at Thomas eight days after the resurrection when he sees the resurrected Christ and he says, "My Lord, my kurios, my master, and my *theos* - my God!" That's what it means to confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord. It includes repentance from sin because it means you must reject your old masters, sin and self and Satan; it includes trusting in Christ alone for salvation and having a

heart of submission to Him and to His will. Here's Paul's point here in verse 14. Before anyone can call upon the Lord in repentance and faith, he or she must first have already believed like that, like verses 9 and 10. To genuinely call upon the Lord in the way that the tax collector did, that's what must happen. So to be saved then, you must meet these conditions: Calling on Christ, number one; number two, believing in Christ.

The third condition may surprise you a little bit, but this is what Paul says. The third condition is hearing from Christ, hearing from Christ. Notice verse 14, "How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" Now remember, every word of the Scripture, Paul says, is breathed out by God; it is the product of the breath of God. That means God has perfectly chosen, in the Holy Spirit, every single word and so every word matters. It also means that every word that isn't said matters. Notice what Paul does not say in verse 14. He does not say, "How will they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" What he says is, "How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" In other words, you cannot believe in Jesus if you have not first heard Him.

Now, that immediately raises the question, how in the world can people who live outside of the first century and away from the land of Israel hear Jesus? Well, this is something that's really a part of everyday life. Let me explain it to you like this. When you hear from the official representative of someone, you assume you are hearing from the person that they represent. For example, this is a busy real estate season across the country as people end up their school years; they have the summer they want to make that change for whatever reason; so homes go on the market, and other people show up to buy, and so a lot of that happens during the summer months.

Now, if you're buying a house and many of us here have had that, I started to say opportunity-- that's probably not the best word, that responsibility. If you're buying a house, you don't interact directly with the seller; you interact with the seller's real estate agent. So if you say, "Boy that's the perfect house," and you're agreed, you and your family, "That's the house we want." Your realtor contacts the seller's realtor and makes an offer. Now if the seller of the house isn't happy with your offer, what happens? The seller communicates back to his real estate agent to communicate with you. So you get a call from your realtor through the other real estate agent



saying, “Sorry, that's not enough money.” Now, when you report that counteroffer to your spouse, what do you say? “The seller said he wants more money.” How do you know that? You didn't talk to the seller? It's because, when someone has been designated as the official representative of someone, you assume when you hear from that person, you're hearing from the person they represent. That's what's happening here.

In the same way, when you hear the gospel accurately presented from someone Christ has authorized to speak on His behalf, and we'll talk about who that is in just a minute, you are hearing Christ. This is exactly what the Scriptures teach. Go back to Luke, chapter 10, Luke chapter 10, as Jesus prepares to send out the seventy, and He gives them all the instructions they need, He concludes His speech to them, His commission of them in verse 16 of Luke 10. This is remarkable. He says, “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

Do you hear what Jesus is saying? Let me just say if you're here this morning and you're not in Christ, you are hearing Christ's words from His Word this morning; and if you don't listen to His words, then Jesus says you're not listening to Him; and if you're not listening to Him, then you're rejecting Him, and you're really rejecting the Father who sent Him, that's just the reality. On the other hand, notice how he says, “The one who listens to you listens to Me.” So if you're listening to the Word of Christ, if it matters to you, you're not listening to me, this is not between you and me; this is between you and Christ; that's what He's saying.

Turn over to John, chapter 10; Jesus makes the same point in different language. John 10, He is talking about Himself as the good Shepherd and as the door to the sheepfold, an image that would have been very common and understandable in the first century. Notice John 10:2:

He who enters by the door (He's talking about Himself.) is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep (Listen to this.) the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they

simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.

What's Jesus saying? He's not talking about some mystical voice in your head; Jesus is speaking to you. He's not talking about some book written by a woman that says Jesus has spoken to her, and she's now speaking to you and Jesus is calling you through that book. This is not what we're talking about here; we're talking about Jesus's words. He, earlier in the Gospel of John, says, "You don't hear the words of God, you don't hear My words because you don't belong to Me!" Just like one man's sheep don't respond to another shepherd, you're not listening because you're not my sheep. "My sheep hear My voice," meaning His words in the Word of God.

Turn over to Ephesians, chapter 4; Paul makes the same point here. He's talking, in verse 17 of Ephesians 4, about the fact that we need to stop living like the pagans we used to be, and he says the reason that's true is because, verse 20, you have become disciples of Jesus Christ. He uses a discipling word, "You did not learn Christ in this way." You haven't become disciples of Christ in a way that lead you to think you can live like you always lived. And then he makes this remarkable statement in verse 21, "...if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus." He's alluding to the same reality. When you became a Christian, when you heard the gospel, I mean when you really heard it, you heard Jesus in His gospel through His messenger. That's what Paul is saying here.

Right now, as I am teaching you the Word of Christ, to whatever extent I am accurately reflecting the truth of His Word, Christ Himself is speaking through me to you. This, as I said before, this isn't about me and you, this is about you and Christ; this is about all of us and Christ. He is speaking through His Word, and Paul says, "You cannot believe in Christ until you have heard from Christ speaking through His messenger." This is the normal course of faith. You hear from Christ, about Christ, and you believe in Him; and because you believe in Him, you call on Him, and therefore you are saved. That's the normal course of faith.

Now, let me stop here and say that I keep using that word 'normal' because this isn't the only way that God can bring people to a knowledge of Himself; this is the normal way, the common way, the customary way. There are a couple exceptions; let me point them out to you. First of

all, if you believe as I do, as our elders do, as most of the teachers and believers in the history of the church have believed, you believe that children and the mentally disabled who die before they reach a capacity to understand either their sin or the gospel, that God graciously saves them, not because they deserve it, not because they don't bear the guilt of Adam's sin and the moral pollution of that sin, they do, but God extends His grace to them and saves them. But clearly, they don't follow the normal course of faith that's outlined in this passage. God intervenes in a different way.

There's a second exception, I would say, to this normal course of faith, and that is at times Christ can, He can choose to directly intervene to bring someone to a saving knowledge of Himself. Of course, the chief example of that is the apostle Paul on the Damascus Road. Undoubtedly, he had heard the gospel from the Christians he tortured and killed. He heard it; he simply didn't believe it, refused to believe it. In fact, he was headed to Damascus to imprison believers and to see some of them tortured and killed, and Christ directly intervened and confronted him and brought him to a knowledge of Himself.

I think while that doesn't happen commonly in our world, I still think it happens. When I was in Lebanon last year, I talked with several pastors and missionaries who serve on the Syrian border, and their ministry is to Islamic refugees; these are people who are still Muslims; and several of these pastors, dear brothers in Christ, told me not of second and third hand experiences, but of firsthand encounters and experiences with Muslims who had come to genuine saving faith in Christ through dreams that they had had which confirmed the gospel that they had heard.

Now, what do you do with that? I would simply call that God's providence; I wouldn't call it a miracle. I would just say God, in His providence, just as He can do with all of life, and you know, "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord;" certainly the heart of any man is. I think he caused them, to enable that to be the truth to be confirmed because of the huge price that that means for them in their culture.

But either way, I do believe that those are genuine conversions where God intervened directly. Now, just in case you think that, you know, Tom is stepping outside the bounds of orthodoxy

here in this statement, let me quote for you the second Helvetic Confession. This is by our reformed brothers in Switzerland, those who came out of the Reformation, and it was embraced in a number of nations across Europe, in Scotland, in France, and other places. This is what the Helvetic Confession says. It affirms that “God normally saves through His Word,” just as we’re seeing here in verses 14 and 15, and then they say this:

We recognize that God can illuminate whom and when He will even without the external ministry (That is the external ministry of the Word.) for that is in His power, but we speak of the usual way of instructing men delivered unto us from God both by commandment and examples.

So I think there are a couple of exceptions, but the exceptions only punctuate and validate the rule; and the rule that Paul is sharing here in these verses is that the normal course of saving faith is that a person must first hear the gospel about Christ, from Christ, through his messengers in order to believe in Him.

A fourth condition that must be met for salvation, back in our text, is preaching about Christ, preaching about Christ. Look at verse 14 again, “And how will they hear without a preacher?” Ordinarily, in order to hear about Christ from Christ, there must be a preacher. Now, that noun form, of course, is also the same family as the verb ‘preaching.’ The New Testament uses at least thirty-three different Greek verbs to describe Biblical preaching. But far and away, the primary one, and the one that’s used here, is the Greek word, ‘*kerusso*.’ It means ‘to proclaim like the herald of a king;’ that’s the way this word is used. So the king sends someone to make an announcement; they come with the full weight and authority of the king, and they announce on his behalf, that’s this word. Now in the New Testament, *kerusso* is used in an official way of spiritually gifted and called preachers. For example, this word is used of John the Baptist in Matthew 3, verse 1. It’s used of Jesus Himself in Mark 1:14. It’s used of The Twelve in Mark 3:14. It’s used of Philip, the deacon from the Church in Jerusalem, in Acts 8, verse 5. It’s used of Paul in Acts 9, verse 20. It’s used of Silas in 2 Corinthians 1:19.

But here’s where I want you to go with me. It is used of Timothy and of all biblical elders in 2 Timothy 4, verse 2, where Paul says to Timothy, and not just to Timothy but to all legitimate

elders of all true churches, “Preach the Word, *kerusso* the Word, declare as a herald the Word of God.” Now I know that what I’m doing right now is not popular in today’s world. If I were pursuing popularity, we’d be having a discussion; we’d be like in a coffee shop, talking about our views of the Scripture. That is not what Christ has called the elders of His Church to do. He has called them to *kerusso*, to proclaim as a herald, announcing the Word of the King. That is my responsibility; that is the responsibility of the elders of this church and of every church. In fact, what you have here, in this statement, really underscores the priority and importance of preaching even for salvation.

In fact, turn over to 1 Corinthians; 1 Corinthians, chapter 1; Paul says something remarkable here. He has just said, in verses 14 through 16, that when he was in Corinth, he didn’t baptize many people. He’s not downplaying the importance of baptism; he understands that it’s commanded of all believers. But he himself only baptized a few people in Corinth, and he mentions them. And then he says this in verse 17, “For Christ did not send me to baptize.” In other words, the ministry is not chiefly about ceremony, although baptism is a required ceremony. The ministry is not chiefly sacerdotal, having to do with priest things. Instead, he says, He sent me to *kerusso*, “to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.” Verse 18, “For the word of the cross (That is the message about the cross.) is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, (that message) is the power of God.”

Now go down to verse 21, “...since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” In other words, one of the chief means that God uses to communicate the truth of the gospel is through preaching. And I think in this context, he’s talking about what I’m doing this morning, official preaching, and I think you understand that. I suspect if I were to ask for a show of hands, while many of us here came to faith through the personal testimony and

evangelism of individuals, I suspect the majority of us in this room came to faith through the preaching of the Word of God. That's God's plan.

But I think back in our text in Romans 10, I think this word for 'preachers' goes beyond preachers in an official sense like we have just seen. I think it's even broader than that because this word is used more broadly than that in the New Testament.

You remember the demoniac of Gadara? In Mark, chapter 5, Jesus delivers him; he is gloriously and amazingly saved; and in a moment's time, he's delivered of the demons, he's saved, he's sitting there clothed and in his right mind. In Mark 5:19, Jesus said to him, "Go home to your people (And notice the verb Jesus uses.) and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you." So all Jesus does is say, "I want you to go share the testimony of what I've done. Go tell people what I've done." The next verse, chapter 5, verse 20 of Mark, it says, "...he went away and began to proclaim (to *kerusso*.) in (the) Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him."

So here's a man who wasn't commissioned to preach like John the Baptist or Paul, but who preached just the same as he declared what God had done for him in Christ. And of course in the Great Commission, Jesus officially commissioned all of us to proclaim the good news to others.

So in other words, back in Romans chapter 10, Paul is saying before a person can call on the Lord, they must believe in Him; and before they can believe in Him, they must hear Him in the gospel through His messengers; and before they can hear Him in the gospel, someone must preach the gospel to them.

There's a fifth and final condition that must be fulfilled in the normal course of saving faith and it's this, being sent by Christ, being sent by Christ. Verse 15, "How will they preach unless they are sent?" Now the Greek verb for 'sent' there is '*apostello*,' you hear it; it's the verb form from which we get the noun 'apostle.' An apostle simply means one who is sent, that's all it means; preachers must be sent. In other words, Christ must officially authorize and send those heralds

who represent Him. Whom does Paul mean? Who has been sent to preach the good news? Specifically, I think there are three groups outlined by the New Testament who have been sent.

First of all, the apostles that Christ Himself sent. In fact, back in Romans, chapter 1, verse 1, Paul says, literally he says, “I am a called apostle. I am a called by God sent one”. That’s what he says, “I’m a called by God sent one.” Clearly that’s true of the other apostles. In Mark, chapter 3, verse 14, it says Christ appointed twelve; He selected them; He appointed twelve so that they would be with Him; and listen to this, (and that He could send them out to (*kerusso*), to preach.

In Acts 10, verse 42, Peter is talking to Cornelius, and he says, “(Christ) ordered us to (*kerusso*) to the people, (to preach to the people) and (to) solemnly...testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.” So clearly, the apostles themselves were sent by Christ; they were sent to us through their writings.

There’s a second group, however, in the New Testament that were sent; the missionaries that Christ’s church sends. It’s interesting; you see this unfold the book of Acts. Now, the first two references I’m going to share with you don’t use the verb ‘*apostello*,’ from which we get ‘apostle.’ They use a different word, but the same idea is there. Acts 13, verse 3, says the church in Antioch “laid...hands on (Paul and Barnabas and) sent them (They formally commissioned them on behalf of the church and Christ.)” In Acts 15:3, Paul and Barnabas were “sent on their way by the church.” But then you get this same verb in 2 Corinthians, chapter 8, verse 23, where Paul says of those who were sharing the gospel, “...our brethren, are messengers.” literally “our apostles,” but then he doesn’t say of Christ, he says “they are (apostles) of the churches;” they have been sent by the churches. So the same is true today; not only were the apostles sent by Christ, but because God has put elders in place in this church, the church sends out missionaries and they are “sent ones.”

But there’s a third category and that’s all Christians. Christ has sent all Christians in the sense of the Great Commission. Matthew 28, verse 18, “Jesus came up and spoke to (all of His disciples,) saying, ‘All authority has been given...Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and

make disciples of all the nations.’” That’s a commission to every single believer. How do you make disciples? Well, there’s only one way--you have to proclaim the gospel. So we’ve all been commissioned to do this. Every Christian, every one of us, has been sent by Christ to share the good news.

John Calvin was, unbeknownst to many contemporary people, a man who had a great missionary heart. Under his direction, many churches were planted across Europe. In a sermon on 2 Timothy, chapter 1, verses 8 and 9, Calvin said this. Listen to this; I love this:

If the gospel be not preached, Jesus Christ is, as it were, buried; therefore let us stand as witnesses and do Him this honor when we see all the world so far out of the way. Paul condemns our unthankfulness if we be so unfaithful to God as not to bear witness of His gospel seeing He has called us to it.

He has called us to it. Here’s how Charles Hodge puts it, “If God wills the end, he also wills the means; if He would have the nation saved, He would have the gospel preached to them.”

To make this point in Romans, chapter 10, Paul quotes from an Old Testament passage; notice what he writes in verse 15, “How will they preach unless they’re sent? Just as it is written, (This is from Isaiah 52:7.), HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS.”

Now, if I were to take you back to Isaiah, in context, Isaiah is describing the messengers who will travel throughout Israel during the millennium to spread the good news of the gospel and of the return of God’s redeemed to The Land. Paul takes that, and he adapts Isaiah’s wording, and he broadens the reference beyond the millennium to the preaching of the gospel during this age, and he says those who bring the gospel, have beautiful feet.

I don’t want a show of hands for how many of you think you have beautiful feet. It was particularly not true in the ancient world; because in the ancient world, the messengers, like the ones in this passage, would typically have traveled on foot; so by the time they arrived at their destination after a long journey, just to be frank, their feet would have been dirty and smelly. And yet their feet were beautiful! Why? Because to those who waited for the good news they



brought, they were beautiful. You understand this. If you're a Christian, that's how you feel about the preacher, or the friend, or the family member who brought you the good news; how beautiful they are to you. So Paul says here in this passage, God ordained the normal course by which people come to saving faith.

Now let me take his order and reverse it because here's the real chronological order, if you will, that these things unfold. Here's how it happens; this is the normal path, the normal course that faith takes. Number one, Christ sends out His preachers; He authorizes those who will represent Him. Certainly it was the apostles, certainly it's missionaries sent out by every gospel believing church, and it's all of us as His disciples. Christ sends out his preachers.

Number two, the preachers that He sends actually preach (*kerusso.*) the gospel, the good news.

Number three, people hear Christ in that gospel preached or proclaimed by His messengers; they hear Him.

Number four, many who hear Him in the gospel believe.

Number five, those who believe, who believe like Romans 10:9 and 10, who believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead; who confess Him as Lord, they believe, and therefore they call on the name of the Lord; they cry out in a prayer of repentance and faith like the tax collector saying, "God, be merciful to me the sinner."

And number six, those who call like that are saved. That's the normal course of saving faith.

Now, you remember I started by telling you that that's the message Paul has here, but he also wants us to live in light of the implications. So let me just stress this, the normal course of faith, that we just saw on these two verses, should serve in our lives as motives to two great ends.

Number one: personal evangelism, personal evangelism. Do you understand, do you really

understand, Christian, that Christ has commissioned and commanded and sent you to share the gospel with the people in your life?

Now, I know whenever I bring up evangelism in my own life and I know for many of you, we all feel a twinge of guilt because none of us feel adequate to that end, and none of us do that as much as we could or should. But let me just ask you the plain question, “Are you even trying?”

Martin Luther says:

We live on earth for no other purpose than to be helpful to others. Otherwise, it would be best for God to take away our breath and let us die as soon as we have begun to believe.”

Listen to this, “But He lets us live here in order that we may lead other people to believe, doing for them what he has done for us.”

Do you believe that? You understand, you're not here for your career; you're not even here ultimately for all the good things you enjoy in this life, although there's nothing wrong with enjoying those things. God left us here as ambassadors for Jesus Christ. How are you doing with your main job?

There's another implication. Not only should the normal course of faith serve as a motive for personal evangelism; but secondly, it should serve as a motivation for world missions, for world missions. You need to understand, I need to understand the reality that in the Great Commission, Christ has given each of us the responsibility for the world. Do you feel responsibility for the world? You should; and here in Romans 10, we discover why. Look at what he says again, “How (shall) they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how (shall) they hear without a preacher?” It is God's will that the gospel be preached everywhere to everyone. Let me say that again; it is God's will that the gospel be preached everywhere to everyone. So what are you doing to that end? What am I doing to that end?

Some people here should pray about and should talk with the elders about going to the nations as a missionary like William Carey did, who left his business, his career, to go reach others for Christ. Let me ask you, “Have you even considered that as a possibility?” Have you ever said to God, “If you want me to go and you were to make that clear that you've gifted me in that way,

the elders of the church affirm that's true, I'd be willing?" You ever even said that to God? Have you ever said that on behalf of your kids? Have you ever said, "God, you know, I'd really like my kids and grandkids nearby, but if you want to use them for the advancement of the cause of Jesus Christ, send them." Have you ever prayed that?

Others here need to be willing to use vacation time and resources to travel overseas, to use your skills to support our missionaries on a short-term basis. But all of us here, every Christian here, needs to understand that even if you don't go, you are still responsible to make sure others do and to support them when they do. That's your job; that's why you work! Remember, it's back to the main reason; we're here for the advancement of the cause of Jesus Christ. You work so that you can support your family, of course, so that you can enjoy the good things of life. Those are all outlined in Scripture. But the reason He's left you here is for the mission, for the mission.

So you need to pray, you need to pray like Jesus taught us in John 4, "Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into His field." Do you ever pray that? Pray for those who go from our church, those we support. Give to support this church so that we can continue to expand our outreach to the nations. Stay in touch with our missionaries to make sure they have what they need; let them know you're praying for them. You need to hold the rope for those who go. Every believer must actively support the international mission Christ has given to His church--that's me, that's you! Look again at verses 14 and 15,

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS."

May God help each one of us to embrace the mission.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for this powerful text. We thank you for walking us through the theology of the normal course of faith and how it works out in almost every life. And yet, Father, we thank you as well for the call that it is, for the motive that it is. Help us, O

God, to engage in the mission. Help us that you leave here to be truly involved in personal evangelism. And, Father, help all of us to embrace the worldwide mission of Jesus Christ?

Lord, I pray for this church that you would raise up people that you gift and that the elders of this church can affirm as gifted and equipped, and help them get prepared and support them and send them, and then, may we, as a church, truly support in our prayers, with our hearts, those who go on our behalf. Help us to see them as going on our behalf. And Father, I pray that you would help all of us to be fully, completely engaged both in evangelism and in missions.

And Lord, I pray for those who may be here this morning who haven't believed. Help them to see their personal responsibility. It's not for your lack of giving the truth to them. Help them to see it's their own disobedient and obstinate heart, and may they, even this morning, ~~eat~~, believe the message they have heard, and call upon the name of the Lord and be saved? May they, like the tax collector, leave this place justified, right with you because they have thrown themselves on your mercy in Jesus Christ? We pray it in Jesus's name, Amen.