

Romans 10:8-15
“How Beautiful Are the Feet”
Sunday August 13th, 2017



Notice the beautiful feet on the cover of the bulletin and on the screen? These are my “Sweetpea’s” feet after her first pedicure. You see her mom, Amy, and my wife, Deede, went for some female bonding at a mani/pedi place and the manager asked again and again and again if Sweetpea wanted some nail polish on her toes.

Well about the 5th time he asked, her mom said yes. She thought it all was going to be free, because they were paying and tipping, but when they went to check out he said that will be 5 bucks for the child. Hmmm...

Well the next day we went to their home on our way home from church and Sweetpea was sitting in her highchair eating a banana with those beautiful manicured feet swinging back and forth and the first thing out of her mouth when she saw Deede was, “I wuv you.”

Indeed, “**how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!**”

The “Good News”, what is the good news in our reading for today? It is God saying to us “**I love you so much I provided a way for you to live with me forever.**” The way it is put there is “**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.**” What good news!

You know, today, as we recited the Apostles Creed we did all this. We confessed with our mouth’s that Jesus was “Our Lord.” And I do believe that in our hearts we believe that God raised him from the dead; so today as we participated in this worship service through the simple

declaration of our Confession of faith; we one day will receive the full impact of the promise made here: **“we are justified before God and we are saved.”** My friends, that is good news, that is great News!!!

Now let’s talk a bit about good news we have heard in life and those who have brought it to us. What is the best good news you have ever heard.

Think a moment. In a moment I am going to have you share. No better way to worship God than sharing with one another how God has blessed you with good news.

Here’s mine. It was over 33 years ago, but I remember my wife Deede popping in on me as I was in the midst of a youth Bible Study. She had been to the Dr. to see if she was pregnant. I asked, “Well?” because she wasn’t saying anything just grinning from ear to ear. Her reply was, “Do you want to see pictures?” My eyes about popped out of my head as she handed me these grainy black and white pictures of what, I, at first, thought was an alien. But no, it was my daughter Sarah.

Take a moment now and share with one another your favorite memory of receiving good news. Whose feet brought you that Good News?

SHARE GOOD NEWS WITH ONE ANOTHER

Good memories, great memories of not only the good news we received, but most often the person who brought it. The question God asks us in this passage is, **“Are you the person who is sent with the good news of Jesus Christ?”** I have always preached this passage in reverse starting with the beautiful feet, the person who brings the good news, and then work back to the beginning.

You might notice it ends in verses 14 and 15 with 4 questions and a statement. This is to put emphasis on being sent and the Sender. **“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?

And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?"

The Sender of course is the Holy Spirit. It is God in Jesus Christ. We heard a few weeks ago about the "Great Commission" and Jesus sending us out to make disciples in word and in deed. This is another way of saying that. The emphasis here is on the Holy Spirit within us. In Verse 8 it says, "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the message concerning the faith that we proclaim."

We all know the message. We all know of the love of God that was lived out in Jesus in word and in deed. We know that message, not just because we have heard it in church and in Sunday school, but because the Holy Spirit is within us guiding us in how we live and love others.

And when necessary the Holy Spirit gives us, or reminds us, of the words we need to say, and in many situations words are not what matter, and are of little use. Works of service and love are what people need to see and experience. These are the sermon they need to see.

In my Moravian Text devotional this week there was a prayer that speaks of the intimacy of God, the Holy Spirit within us. Please join me in praying this,

"Lord, you do not leave us to ourselves. You are nearer to us than the beating heart. At work and at rest, still us to notice the rhythm of your love in each quiet breath. Amen."

As verse 10 says, "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." All this is a gift and work of the Holy Spirit, who as the prayer says, is "nearer to us than the beating heart." The Holy Spirit enables us to believe in the depths of our being in Jesus Christ and our belief compels us to speak. As Dr. Barclay says, "Christianity is belief plus confession; it involves witness before others. Not only God, but also our fellow men and women, must know what side we are on." Barclay, Romans p. 164

You probably hear very clearly here the call to preach the good news? **“And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?”** And probably feel very unqualified to do so, but you know I believe the most effective form of preaching is simply witnessing, telling another person why your faith or the practice of your faith in any way is important to you.

God will lead you to People of Peace who will accept you, serve you and listen to you. You don't need to worry about that happening, but you need a mindset of being sent, that God is sending you into the world after every worship service to witness in some way or other to POP you meet.

And you don't need to worry about what you need to say the Bible is clear that in the moment the Holy Spirit will give us the words to say, but we also need to be very much aware that the Holy Spirit will, often times, more importantly, guide us in what to do.

On Friday, my mom told me she witnessed to one of the residents of her nursing home by comforting her. This woman is very afraid of storms and you all probably heard of the terrible storm they had in East Tucson. My mom simply comforted her with the words from the Upper Room devotional she had read that day and with her presence with her. My mom, even in her limited capacity was able to bring the Good News through comfort in the face of fear.

As St. Francis said about preaching, **“Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary, use words.”** The message is at its basis simple, “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.” Or **“God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life.”** Simple message, often at times very complicated to live out, but the Holy Spirit is always present to teach us, guide us and empower us.

Isaiah 55:11 says, **“So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”** In the last several months I

have come across this verse in many places and situations. It is God getting my attention as to something that is very important.

Every Sunday when we walk into this sanctuary our worship experience is beamed up for anyone anywhere in the world to experience. It is Live Streamed through an arrangement that took an engineer (Bill Daniels) to put into place, but eventually a teenager will be able to run.

Our original thought was to just use it for our home bound members, our winter visitors and those on vacation, but then it hit me, as I said a few Sunday's ago, that we could use this to set up Satellite worship sites to bring the Good News to other places through our worship.

In all my years as a Pastor this is the best received mission that I have proposed. I am amazed at the positive response and activity that has already occurred here at the local church level and even at the Conference level.

We believe God has led us to start in San Manuel. It is a community of about 3500 of which about 78% do not have a church home, and there is no United Methodist fellowship there, though, we have some members who live in the community.

Now some might think pick another place where more people are practicing Christians and we can then better start something, but here we believe is where God is sending us. And besides, have you heard the story about the optimist and pessimist shoe salesmen?

They were both sent by their respective companies to a remote community. The pessimist soon called his company and said, "I'm coming home. No one in this community wears any shoes." The optimist called home and said, "Send me every sample you have, no one in this community wears shoes and I'm going to make a killing."

Now we as Vista Church will send some people out. There will be those sent to share the good news of God's love by being friendly and

welcoming. Most of us will remain here and just be our friendly, loving selves and people will see that on the Live Stream and join in from afar. We will be the senders and the supporters. Most of us, our job, will be to just keep on doing what we are doing inviting others in and including them in our fellowship.

Faith compels us to speak, to act, to love. **Good News is always more fun when it is shared.** It will be the Holy Spirit who empowers, directs, convicts and converts. In the parts of the world where the Church is making the most disciples every new church that is started begins with the question, “When we are up and running to whom can we bring the Good News. When can we start a new Church?”

And indeed the results will be up to God. We will need to pray fervently that Satan does not interfere. And if we succeed this next year in bringing a fellowship into being then “Praise God”. And if not, “Praise God” for our faithfulness, but I believe Isaiah 55:11, **“So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”**

I believe one day people in the surrounding communities will say of us, “You have beautiful feet!!!”



What is God saying to you and what are you going to do?

In Jesus' Name, Amen.