

Of Faith And Grace – Romans 10:14-17; 11:5-6

Bible Study ~ 9/14/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

Last week we discussed how Christ is the source of righteousness. He must be received by faith and is available to all. This week we will see how we are saved by faith and grace. These are two powerful blessings for us to build our lives on. **First we see that...**

1. Faith Comes By Hearing 10:14-17

We begin with *vv. 14-15a*. We looked at *v. 13* last week. You must call upon the Lord in order to be saved. Paul then asks a series of questions. There is an implied conclusion to these questions. The implied conclusion is that you can't. You can't call on one you do not first believe in. You cannot believe in someone you don't know anything about, and you cannot hear unless someone proclaims and that person cannot proclaim unless they are sent to do so. These truths bring the gospel back around to the local church. It is the responsibility of the local church to train and equip believers to share the gospel and to send them back out into this world to build relationships and have a platform from which to declare Christ. Sent - ἀποστέλλω *apostellō send; send out. To dispatch – to send away towards a designated goal or purpose*. All believers have been sent by the Lord to share the gospel. The church is to be His training ground and launch pad. When we share the gospel there is great blessing. This is seen in the end of *v. 15*.

To us this saying loses some of its potency. If you were a messenger in that day, it meant you spent a lot of time on your feet. You walked, or at best, rode. Both of those activities would have been done with sandaled feet. When you wear sandals all the time your feet crack and grow rough. When you walk on dirt roads or ride sweating animals on dirt roads your feet get very gross. So in this metaphor, if you were someone who went around preaching the gospel your feet would be disgusting. And yet from the perspective of Christ, those are beautiful feet! Beautiful feet are not feet that are clean, lotioned, and fine smelling. Because clean feet mean they have not been used! Their owner has been neglecting the responsibility of sharing the gospel! When we share the gospel and it results in trials, scars, and hard times, that is beautiful to God! Those who share the gospel of Jesus Christ have beautiful feet. There is another subtler thing in this verse. We must understand that when we share the gospel we are sharing something that is awesome! Something that is a glad tiding of good things! It is good news! But sharing the gospel and having people hear it does not automatically bring salvation as seen in *v. 16*.

Not all have been obedient to the good news of the gospel. The quote from *Isaiah 53:1* suggests that their lack of obedience is due to unbelief. Whenever the gospel is preached, there are those who do not believe it. Report - ἀκοή *akoē Report; hearing. Speech heard – something heard that was spoken; often of proclamations or announcements*. This is an interesting word. Contained within this word is the idea of hearing it. They have listened to the report without actually hearing it. Remember that you have to hear to believe. Not just listen, hear. This is stressed in *v. 17*. Faith can only come by hearing. And hearing comes by the Word of God or Christ. Now, this word hearing is the same word as report in *v. 16*. Faith comes as the Word of God, the Gospel, is reported. As the gospel message is proclaimed, faith comes. This is accomplished through the sharing of the Word. As we have noted often before, you cannot share something you do not know. You must know the Word in order to be able to share it.

Here is the blessing. Someone with beautiful feet shared the gospel with you and me, and we believed. Now you and I have the privilege and responsibility of sharing that same gospel with others. Not all will believe. But we rejoice in the ones who do. Faith does not come through heritage, background, or effort. Faith comes by hearing. There is another aspect to salvation. **It comes...**

2. By Grace Not Works 11:5-6

Paul has just been talking about how the Lord has always left Himself a believing remnant in Israel. There are always some who are faithful to the truth and to the Lord. As there were in the days of Elijah,

even so there is now. Look at *v. 5*. Just like in Elijah's day, these are through the election of grace. In Elijah's day their faith was evidenced in their refusal to bow down to Baal. Here their faith is evident in their acceptance of Christ. "Paul is referring to the fact that those who *did* believe were God's choice to be *a remnant* belonging to Him within a largely unbelieving nation."¹ According to His Grace He chooses. To stress this point Paul continues in *v. 6*. There is a textual variant here. Some manuscripts end at grace, others continue with the longer reading such as the NKJV has here. Regardless, the meaning is clear. The election of grace means that works cannot have anything to do with it. If they did, it would no longer be grace. Works and grace are mutually exclusive! We are saved by grace. Election is a product of grace. It is not through works. It is not through activity or desire. By grace we are saved through faith! In His Grace God allows us to hear the gospel, when that hearing is met with faith, we believe and are saved. It has nothing to do with our works! If it was works, it couldn't be grace. Because it is grace, it cannot be works!

What a blessing to know that my salvation does not depend on my works! It does not depend on my ability to do or say the right thing. I am saved by grace through faith. No part of the Christian life depends on me and my ability to perform in my own strength.

CHALLENGE: Be someone with beautiful feet who relies, not on works, but on the matchless grace of God.

¹ Zane C. Hodges, *Romans: Deliverance from Wrath*, ed. Robert N. Wilkin (Corinth, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2013), 323.