

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2020

COMMITTED TO HIS MISSION

The lesson today concludes our seven-week series on A Life of Commitment. We have focused on Christ's commitment to us, our commitment to Christ, commitment to His Word, commitment to His Church, our commitment to pray, commitment to worship, and finally commitment to His Mission. The scripture for today is taken from Romans 10: 9-17.

Romans 10:9-10 (The Message) Say the welcoming word to God—"Jesus is my Master"—embracing, body and soul, God's work of doing in us what he did in raising Jesus from the dead. That's it. You're not "doing" anything; you're simply calling out to God, trusting him to do it for you. That's salvation. With your whole being you embrace God setting things right, and then you say it, right out loud: "God has set everything right between him and me!"

Paul's declaration here about the news of salvation stands out as one of the most important sentences in God's Word. He states the message so that anyone is able to understand it. Confessing Jesus as Lord means so much more than our acknowledgement of just the facts about Him. Hearers might acknowledge that Jesus existed and came to the world. They may even agree that Jesus was a teacher who taught God's ways and even that he performed miracles. They may even agree with some of the facts about his crucifixion and resurrection. But they reject His gift of salvation when they refuse to confess that He is Lord. When an individual receives Christ and makes a confession with his mouth, he puts into words what he has done. When we confess "Jesus is Lord," we acknowledge that we have given our lives totally to Him. Our confession implies that he has complete authority over us, we have surrendered our lives to Him, and we are ready to follow Him wherever He wants us to go. Confessing that Jesus is our Lord means far more than just acknowledge facts about Him. Those who refuse to confess mean reject the gift of salvation. A confession may take the shape of a prayer. Appropriate words may be hard to find to convey what has happened in our hearts. But with the words of our mouths and our hearts, we stake our claim with Christ and pledge our devotion to Him.

Romans 10:11-13 (The Message)

¹¹⁻¹³ Scripture reassures us, "No one who trusts God like this—heart and soul—will ever regret it." It's exactly the same no matter what a person's religious background may be: the same God for all of us, acting the same incredibly generous way to everyone who calls out for help. "Everyone who calls, 'Help, God!' gets help."

God's kingdom is not like a country club or a fraternity. In those groups, the people who seek Christ and call on Him receive admission to eternal life. The good news is not just for the people we like. The gospel is for both our friends and our enemies. It is given for people we would love to see become believers, as well as those people we may think don't deserve to be saved. On our own, we might insist that being right with God requires believers to keep some rules, give some money, honor our rituals, and live in hope those things will be enough to earn them a place in heaven. But our Lord Jesus rules over all creation. No person, family tribe, or nation can claim an exclusive relationship with Him based on family ties or national heritage. Paul declared that God made His gift of salvation available to ALL people EVERYWHERE. He doesn't make a distinction between individual

people or groups. Jews as well as Gentiles who place their faith in Christ are saved. In the next verses, we are reminded of the need for someone to share the gospel.

Romans 10:14-17 (The Message)

14-17 But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? And how is anyone going to tell them, unless someone is sent to do it? That's why Scripture exclaims, A sight to take your breath away! Grand processions of people telling all the good things of God! But not everybody is ready for this, ready to see and hear and act. Isaiah asked what we all ask at one time or another: "Does anyone care, God? Is anyone listening and believing a word of it?" The point is: Before you trust, you have to listen. But unless Christ's Word is preached, there's nothing to listen to.

Paul posed four questions for believers to consider, three of them in verse 14. How can they call for help? Calling on Him means turning to Him in complete surrender and sincere humility. Then confess Him as Lord. How can they believe? People can't entrust their lives to Christ until they have had an opportunity to hear the gospel. How can they hear without a preacher? Lost people can only hear the message of Christ when someone tells them. The final question is asked in verse 15. How can they preach unless they are sent? Believers must share the gospel everywhere they go. The word preacher does not mean just one who stands in a pulpit and surrendered to vocational Christian service. The Lord has commissioned all believers to serve as His proclaimers of the gospel. We are challenged by this question to seek opportunities to bring up His name in our conversation in our daily lives. In verse 16, Paul asked another question. Who will believe our message?? Why do some people reject the gift of salvation? Even when we are faithful to God's command to share the Word, we may be disappointed that so many refuse to obey it. In spite of a less than satisfactory response, we are directed to continue to tell everyone around the corner and around the world about Jesus. It is no excuse to quit the mission when nobody seems to be interested. We must not allow those issues to distract us from the command. We do our best work as followers of Christ when we keep our energy focused on the task given to us.

We are encouraged by the writers of our lesson today to do the following:

WRITE: Take time to write out your own testimony so that you will be prepared to share it with others when you are led to do so.

SHARE: Take time to share the gospel and pray that the Holy Spirit would give you opportunities to open doors. When that opportunity comes, simply share your story of how Jesus changed your life.

GO: Pray that you will be part of God's mission. For you, that may mean giving financially to missions. (Remember the upcoming Lottie Moon offering!!) For some, it may mean actively supporting a missionary with time, prayers, and support. Still other might heed the call to go yourselves. Pray that God will use you, and that you will have courage to answer His call. You can never make any greater or more fulfilling commitment than that of being fully committed to God and doing His work.

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