

Romans 10:8-17
Do you Have Beautiful Feet?

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9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

As we consider this passage of scripture from the Apostle Paul today, I will try to touch on all of it, but I want the application of this sermon to particularly focus on verse 15. Verse 15 after all is the origin of the sermon title, "Do you Have Beautiful Feet?"

What then is all this "beautiful feet" anyway? Some of you are perhaps thinking well in the ancient world they wore sandals, so perhaps Paul is talking about the need for preachers to have well pedicured feet? Well foot care is very important, but no that isn't what he is referring to.

In this section of Romans, Paul is quoting heavily from Old Testament Passages dealing with salvation through faith and the coming of the Messiah. In fact, whenever you see text in quotes in this passage you are looking at a quote from the Old Testament, the Beautiful Feet quote is from Isaiah 52:7

Isa 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

The image of course comes to us from an age that didn't have Cable TV, or telephones, or even a telegraph. Important news was carried by messengers. For instance, if a city went to war, the people would see the men march through the gates and gradually disappear over the horizon. Unlike us, they had no idea how the war was progressing or what the fate of their men was. And remember, it wasn't just their men the city would be worried about. Their own fate depended on the outcome of the battle. Because they knew that the next army that appeared over the horizon might not be their own men returning in victory. So they waited and fretted. It was not uncommon for a city in the ancient world, cut off from information to sue for peace or surrender outright, because they didn't know that their armies were actually fairing well. So accurate information was vital.

For instance, in 490 BC the men of Athens marched off to fight against a huge Persian army under Darius that had landed on the plane of Marathon, 25 miles from the city. Against all odds, the Greeks

won a great victory against the Persians, and Pheidippides reputedly the fastest man in the army was picked to run the news of the victory all 25 miles back to Athens. Now poor Pheidippides had been running back and forth all week, and had just taken part in the battle, and he undoubtedly needed to rest, but the news was so important that He ran all the way back to Athens and delivered the good news to the anxious people that they had won, and that Athens was saved. That of course is the origin of the 25 mile race we call a Marathon. Soon after he delivered his all-important message Pheidippides dropped dead.

Now I am sure that guards on the wall of Athens could probably tell that Pheidippides was bringing good news long before he got there just by the way he ran. He had beautiful feet that day. Those feet were probably dirty and smelly, but they were beautiful because they carried along a message of great importance.

That is what Isaiah was getting at, he was writing of events that had yet to happen, that someday God's anger and wrath with his people would be lifted, and that they would be delivered from their exile, their captivity in Babylon. But those of you who are familiar with chapters 52 and in particular chapter 53, that incredible chapter of the Suffering Servant, sometimes referred to as the "Gospel According to Isaiah" know that it also refers to the coming of the one who would deliver his people out of bondage to sin. Thus it refers to the time of the coming of Jesus the Messiah, Great David's Greater Son, who would be born in Bethlehem, and ultimately die on the Cross in Jerusalem, winning there the greatest victory ever in the hardest of all battles, and then rising again on the third day. That War with sin and darkness that only God incarnate could fight and win.

The winning of the victory was only part of the story of Marathon, once that had happened, the message needed to be carried to the waiting people. How else would they know what had happened? Had Pheidippides not made his run, the Athenians would have remained in the dark, fearful, and anxious.

Now that Christ has won the battle on our behalf "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" it is necessary that the good news of salvation be spread abroad, carried to those who are waiting in a state of darkness and fear. And that is why Christ commissioned the Church to go "***Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.***" Those commands were spoken not to angels, but to ordinary men by the risen Lord Jesus. They were rough and uneducated, but they had beautiful feet because they spread abroad that gospel of peace according to Christ's commands.

What is meant by the gospel of Peace? We hear so much of peace these days. Usually when peace is spoken of, it simply means the absence of war. Sometimes people speaking of peace mean peace between men. Peace on Earth. But the peace of the Gospel goes far deeper, it speaks of peace between man and God.

Please turn with me to Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

That message of peace should be good news.

What a wonderful message. But so many in the world don't take it that way.

For their to be peace between man and God effected by the death of Jesus what does that imply?

That man naturally is an enemy of God.

v.6 Christ died for the ungodly

v.8 while we were still sinners

v.10 we were enemies

Men don't want to hear about Sin

The Baby Jesus on Christmas, message everyone likes generally, babies are wonderful, the message of Christ Crucified is an offense.

In some senses Pheidippides had it easy, didn't shoot arrows at him as he ran to the city. Not so the messengers of Jesus:

“Dear God, Protect Me from Your Followers” - Bumpersticker

So, I want to challenge you.

1st Do you believe this message you have received?

Exposit 1st part - 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

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The Bible is NOT literature IT IS THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION! - ***John 20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.***

Can you imagine if you had a man trapped on a desert Island and he found a book entitled "how to build an ocean going boat using only native Polynesian materials" (no doubt written by the professor on Gilligans Island) and he went at it the way moderns treat the bible?

Can you imagine if they had treated Pheidippides message that way?

2nd – really is less like a Marathon than a Baton Race.

You receive that message, then pass it on

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

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17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We are coming to the beginning of a New Year

Are YOUR FEET BEAUTIFUL?

Brothers and Sisters Get RUNNING!