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PRESIDENT'S LETTER - October 2008
Romans 10:14-17

Dear Fellow Preachers:

Consider the mystery of God's salvation as revealed in Romans 9-11. God's chosen people, the descendants of Abraham, who were blessed by God with His promise of the Messiah, rejected Jesus, the promised Messiah, out of unbelief. God then brought the heathen Gentiles into the marriage feast of the King. The unbelief of Israel became the occasion for us Gentiles being saved. As Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. God would not allow the unbelief of Israel to frustrate His saving purpose.

This whole subject relates to faith. Think of this mystery. "What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; {31} but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. {32} Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. (Romans 9:30-32)"

God declares a person righteous based solely on faith in Jesus. The answer to the question of how a person is saved is very simple. "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Anyone (Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female) will be saved if they believe in Jesus as their Savior from sin. This runs contrary to our work-righteousness nature which wants to believe that we can do something to make ourselves better than others and acceptable to God.

Faith is the work of the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps us in the true faith. The key verse is verse 17, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)" The Holy Spirit works through the Gospel to create faith in the hearts of sinful people. Paul makes the obvious conclusion as he emphasizes the in the preaching of the Gospel. "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? (Romans 10:14-16)"

You have been called to proclaim that "Everyone who believes in Jesus will not be put to shame." The Holy Spirit has sent you out in Jesus' name to preach the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus. The world and the organized church devalues your high calling as preachers of the Word; however God assures you -

How Beautiful are Your Ugly Feet

Romans 10 emphasizes the value of your high calling. As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" These words are quoted from the Old Testament preacher Isaiah. Have you ever thought of feet as beautiful? I have always considered feet as necessary but sort of ugly. How beautiful were the feet of that messenger who ran 26 miles to bring the news to Athens of the victory at Marathon in ancient Greece in 490 B.C. The thought in Isaiah is that the feet of the messenger or herald are beautiful because of the message they bring. It is almost as if the Spirit were saying, "You as preachers are a sight for sore eyes."

Your feet are beautiful not because you are so charismatic or because you have such a powerful preaching style. Your feet are beautiful because they are bringing a message of good news. You have been sent to proclaim that there is free forgiveness of lost sinners through Jesus' life and death. Every Sunday you are welcomed by those who call on the name of the Lord in your congregations. Every week you are appreciated by those in the hospital or going through family problems because of the good news you bring. You have been sent out into the world to preach (herald) this Good News. You are important because you are a messenger of glad tidings of great joy. You have beautiful feet!

Sometimes, the lack of numerical success in our ministry causes us to devalue our ministry. Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" This does not make our ministry or the Word of God impotent. The unbelief of Israel and the world today simply highlights the miracle of God's grace. I marvel every Sunday that anyone listens. God promises that His Word will not return to Him void. It will accomplish His purposes. Treasure highly the power of the Gospel and the importance of your ministry. The holy Spirit affirms, (Romans 10:17) "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The unbelief of Israel was the reason the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles.

We are thankful today that God through the preaching of the Word has gathered Christians who believe in their hearts and confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord. These believers have provided for the preaching and teaching ministry so in our small way the good news is preached. We are also privileged to spread this good news to the ends of the earth through the Church of the Lutheran Confession. We support mission congregations here in North America and send out missionaries and mission helper teams to Africa and India. Also now Nepal and Burma are opening up for the preaching of the Gospel.

Let us continue to make sure that others hear the good news that makes us glad. How beautiful are your ugly feet!

How beautiful are their feet Who stand on Zion's hill;
Who bring salvation on their tongues And words of peace reveal!

The Lord makes bare His arm Through all the earth abroad.
Let every nation now behold Their Savior and their God.

Yours in Jesus' Service,



John Schierenbeck, CLC President

Please inform your members:

Although there have been ups and downs, Michael Schierenbeck has made overall progress in his recovery. Mike has returned home. He will still have to return to Rochester for appointments every other week until the end of October. While insurance covers a great deal of the medical costs, many out of pocket expenses are incurred. In addition to this, Mike and Sara have not been able to work for the past three months. If you are willing and able to help defray their expenses, you can send your contributions to

Farmers State Bank in care of Mike Schierenbeck Transplant Fund.
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