

Beautiful Messengers

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[0 : 00] If you've got a Bible, you can turn to the New Testament book of Romans, Romans chapter 10, where we're going to be this morning. Romans 10, and we're going to read from verses 5 through 15.

The Apostle Paul writes to the ancient church in the city of Rome, and he says, Moses writes about this, sorry, he writes this about the righteousness that is by the law.

And the person who does these things will live by them. But the righteousness that is by faith says, do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven. That is to bring Christ down. Or who will descend into the deep.

That is to bring Christ up from the dead. But what does it say? The word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your hearts. That is the message concerning faith that we proclaim.

If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 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.

[1 : 27] As scripture says, Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile. The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. 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? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.

This is the word of the Lord. Let's pray. Let's ask for God's help as we study. Father, won't you feed us this morning? Won't you open our eyes and our hearts to see what is in the scriptures and your word?

The truth that we need, the nourishment that we need. We are grateful for this blessing. You place in our hands the words of the creator God in scripture.

[2 : 35] Meet with us this morning, we pray, and change us by your spirit. For Christ's sake. Amen. Amen. Now friends, as I mentioned in the announcement part of the sermon, not the sermon, the service, we start this Life in Crisis series in a week's time, in the evening, and people are doing a bunch of different things to get ready for it.

And what I thought I would do on Sundays, this week and next week, is just help us think theologically about a couple of things that would be really important in us being effective in this series, in really using this series to serve the broader community around us.

Now this series, Life in Crisis, we've called it an outreach series. And what I mean by that is we want people, it's outreach because we want people who have not engaged with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to hear it and to engage with it.

That's what we mean by outreach. As Christians, we want people who are not Christians to encounter Jesus. And so I want to spend this morning preparing you to be messengers, helping you think through the message that we bring as Christians, why we bring it, and then what kind of messengers we should be as we bring it.

And I want to use that final quote. So in that passage that we just read from Romans, there's a final quote that the Apostle Paul mentions in verse 15. And that's going to be kind of our outline this morning.

[4 : 02] So Paul quotes from the Old Testament. He quotes from the book of Isaiah, Isaiah 52. And he says, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.

So the sort of messenger God wants us to be, or that you need to be, is a messenger who understands the good news and a messenger who has beautiful feet.

Okay? That second one might be harder for a bunch of people, but at least we can maybe get the first one down. You need to understand the good news and you need to have beautiful feet. Here we go. Here's the good news. To be a messenger, you obviously have to have a message worth telling, right?

Nobody wants to listen to something that's boring or dull or uninteresting. So we have to have a message that is worth telling. So look down at verse 8 there. Paul says, But what does it say? The word is near you. It is in your mouth. It is in your heart. That is the message concerning faith that we proclaim. 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.

[5 : 04] 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. Now this section of text, it kind of starts kind of weirdly there as we read that, but it comes within a longer section where Paul is trying to explain, particularly to Jewish Christians, so the church in Rome had a lot of Jewish Christians and a lot of Gentile Christians, and he's trying to help them get on with each other a little bit.

But this section, he's trying to explain specifically to Jewish Christians that salvation, righteousness, being declared right with God, comes by faith and not by obedience to Old Testament law.

And so in verse 8, he quotes Deuteronomy, the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, and he basically says, look, there was always actually going to be a message that you were saved by. Even Deuteronomy says that.

There was always going to be a message that you were saved by, and that's actually the message we're proclaiming right now. And then he outlines a summary of that message that's in verses 9 and 10. Confess and truly believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, that God raised Him from the dead.

Now that is a summary statement of the gospel. You could say more about the gospel, but that's a neat little summary of the gospel, the central message of the Christian faith. You see, the gospel is the good announcement of what God has done in this world through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[6 : 23] The original word that you'll find in the New Testament that's translated with the English word gospel literally means good news or good announcement or royal announcement.

Now, you would have heard me say this many, many times if you've been around Union Chapel for a while, but that makes Christianity somewhat unique because at its core is not a set of rules and regulations, not a set of moral principles or ethics, not a set of things that tell you this is what you must do to be saved, but at the core of Christianity rather is an announcement of what Jesus has already done, what Christ has already done.

And so you would have heard me say this as well, the gospel is not good advice or good instruction. It's good news, and there's a difference between those two things.

I wonder what your average secular person, who's not overly antagonistic towards the idea of church or Christians being around, but I wonder what your average secular person thinks about the role of the church in the modern society.

Like what do they think churches should be doing in society right now? Now, when I talk to people in the city, and I've been doing this now for a long time, having lived here, when I mention that I'm a pastor, often that'll either just make them really, really uncomfortable, or they'll start to have, they'll start to put some of their religious cards on the table, or their views of what they think about religion and the role of religion in society.

[7 : 56] And so I tend to hear sometimes what people think and feel about what the church should be doing in the city. And it normally boils down to something like this. They think churches should be caring for the poor in some way.

They think churches should provide some sort of moral framework for people to live good and upstanding lives. Like they should make people better. That's why you still get parents sometimes dropping kids off at Sunday school when they don't actually come to church.

It's like, well, I just gotta, my kid's misbehaving, I gotta sort them out, I'll take them to the pastor and see if he can do it. And then they think churches should provide spiritual solace or encouragement or comfort for people who are struggling with life.

So like have that sort of like counseling arm for people. So on the whole, I think churches should have this really sort of positive ethic of care and guidance for the community.

And I wanna say to all of those things, like amen, I think those are really good things churches should be doing. They should be crucial responses of the posture of a church and of Christians in a city towards non-Christians in the broader culture.

[8 : 56] We should care for the poor. We should provide spiritual solace. We should even model lives of integrity and show a moral backbone in the face of morality going haywire.

But I wanna say it's not enough. It's not enough. It's not enough because Christianity is not a religion that is primarily built upon a set of good instructions.

Like go out and love the world, care for the poor, comfort those who are struggling and live an exemplary life. It's not primarily built on a set of instructions to go do that sort of good stuff.

It's primarily built on good news, on a message. Christians are saved by a message about what God has done.

And Christians bring a message there. And that's what we do. We bring a message about what God has done. Now friends, I wanna tell you as a pastor, and I think you might find this as a Christian trying to think about how you might serve this city, I find this incredibly liberating, incredibly freeing, like taking a massive weight off of my shoulders.

[10 : 03] And here's why. I can't save the world. I can't change the world. If you're a keen observer of sort of local and international news, you will be bombarded with brokenness, brokenness of humanity, the sin of humanity, the corrupt systems we inhabit and participate in.

You've got a broken economy, you've got unemployment, you've got crime, you've got corruption, you've got highly, highly charged political and ideological polarization that's really, really, like there's a lot of vitriol going around that area right now.

That's all the stuff we're getting in the news. So when you open up and you read and then you've got just your personal encounters that you're having with people all the time. So you've got friends and family members who are getting sick.

You've got people struggling with mental illness. Maybe you're struggling with mental illness. You've got wayward children who are wrecking their lives. You've got job insecurity. You've got retrenchments. As a pastor, as you can imagine, I get sort of inundated by this at a personal level all the time.

Well, actually on a macro level and a micro level all the time. I can't save the world. And at one level that's heartbreaking. You can't save the world.

[11 : 18] And it's heartbreaking. So we might sit and think, well, as Christians, how can we really make a difference? How can we make a difference to any of this that's going on around us?

How can we ever be instruments of redemption? That's what we sing about and we pray about. God's great redemption plan. How can we be instruments of redemption in the lives of ordinary people suffering and struggling in our city?

How can we ever meaningfully speak about changing society for the better? We're drops in the ocean. Our church, it's great that we're partnering with organizations but we're a drop in the ocean of this conflicted, segregated, economically polarized city that is Cape Town.

How can we possibly think we're going to have any impact? We're swimming upstream and that stream doesn't really feel like a stream. It feels a little bit more like a tsunami coming the other way. Okay? And that's why I am so glad and I am so comforted that at the center of the Christian faith is not here's what you must do but rather here's what Christ has done.

Here's what Christ has done. Because this world left up to me, this world left up to you, left up to the human race to fix it means I think that we're all doomed. but if it's left up to Jesus, well then there's always hope.

[12 : 43] There is always hope. There is always hope in the face of that tsunami and there is always then impetus to do good even when you think your efforts are just going to be a drop.

Then I can give of myself and not sink into despair. I mean friends, listen, I really would love Union Chapel to be the most loving and caring and charitable church in the city.

I want us to be like the Chuck Norris of mercy and kindness. Like we must just hit it out of the park every time. But I know that even if we pull that off, if we produce a community of radically other person centered just human beings, there will still be thousands, millions of people in the city that we will fail.

There will be hungry mouths we don't feed, addictions we're not able to walk people out of, grief we will not be able to cancel away, death we won't be able to resurrect.

But if Jesus is resurrected, if Jesus is resurrected, if Jesus lived, died and came to life again, then we have something to give to those people in even the most hopeless of hopeless situations.
[14:07] You see, because now when I sit with that woman who's dying of some sort of debilitating cancer, where there is nothing that I can do, humanly speaking, to heal her, to relieve her suffering, I can still give her the message of Jesus.

And that is something significant. When I'm working with that guy in the street, who just relapses over and over and over and over again in addiction, where his life has become so ingrained in this particular way, that any hope of meaningful change seems to be impossible, I can still give him Jesus.

And that is significant. I mean, isn't that the whole point of the thief on the cross? I mean, his life is spent at that point, right? His life is spent, and his life is spent badly. It was a life of crime. It was a life of exploiting other people. It wasn't a good life that came to a nasty end. It was a bad life that came to a terrible end. There's nothing left there in that picture to redeem. Nothing to fix. Now he's there, nailed to a wooden cross with his life ebbing away in excruciating pain. You look at that situation, you go, he's beyond redemption, right?

[15:23] Nothing you can redeem in that situation. But Jesus can. The thief recognizes his brokenness, he recognizes his sin before the Messiah, and he turns to Jesus and he says, Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.

And Jesus himself, in excruciating pain at that point, looks at him and says, truly, I tell you today, you will be with me in paradise. Because of what Jesus has done in his life, death, and resurrection, I can tell and you can tell people, paradise is coming.

Paradise is coming. It really is. I can stand in the ruins of broken, depraved situations, broken and depraved lives, lives that look like they are beyond redemption, and we can say, paradise is coming.

And any religion or ideology that's primarily, and I say primarily, because doing things is important, but that is primarily about what you must do to make this world a better place, is a fool's errand. And it is actually incredibly cruel. Because it will never achieve what it sets out to achieve. We need something more than you must do. We need Jesus has done.

[16:47] Now friends, if you sit here this morning and you listen to that, and if you're not a Christian, if you're exploring the Christian faith, then can I encourage you like the Bible does, to repent, that is turn away from a life ignoring God.

Turn away from that and turn to Him. Confess with your mouth, like Paul says it, confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, believe in your heart, and you will be saved. That is the promise of Scripture.

You will be saved this morning. And no amount of pain or suffering or evil or sin or brokenness or no circumstance can take that away from you. Nothing. If you are not a believer, turn to Jesus. And you will know that paradise is coming. And if you are a believer this morning, please can I say, don't be ashamed of this message that we bear. Don't hide it.

Don't think, well, this is this kind of awkward thing, that I don't really let anyone know about. Don't be ashamed of this message that you have. There is nothing more loving that you can do in a broken world than share the message of eternal hope.

[17:57] Nothing more loving than you could do. It is certainly not the only loving thing that you can do or the only loving thing that you must do if you are a believer. But if Christ is raised from the dead, like Paul says, then there cannot be anything more loving that you can do than share the message of Christ with somebody.

So first, we need good news. We need to be clear on what this good news is, if we're going to be the type of messengers God wants. Secondly, though, here's the difficult one for some of you, the beautiful feet part. We've got to verse 11.

As Scripture says, Paul writes, anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame, for there is no difference between Jew and Gentile.

The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. 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? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.

[19 : 10] Friends, even if you think that what I just said in the first point is wonderful and you think this message of Jesus Christ is the greatest thing ever, sharing of faith is hard.

Sharing of faith is difficult. For a number of reasons. I know that. I know that Christians dread hearing sermons about what we call evangelism, the sharing of the gospel. part of the reason for that, and there are many reasons, but part of the reason is that we expect Christians to just be feet and not be beautiful feet.

Now here's what I mean by that. If we were to just rely on cold, hard logic, the case for evangelism, the case for sharing your faith would go something like this.

If Jesus died and rose again in history, and if believing in him secures an eternal future with him free from pain and suffering and sin, then logically if you are a Christian and you believe in those things, it is irrational to think that there is any task more important in this life than sharing the gospel.

Right? That's just a straight chain of logic there. I think my logic's sound. you can see the cold, hard logic. The problem is that none of us live our lives simply on cold, hard logic.

[20 : 35] The logic is incredibly important. It undergirds everything. We don't want to be just making up stuff and just feeling things, but we actually need more. And so God in his wisdom, he doesn't just give us the message of the gospel.

He makes us beautiful through the gospel so that we're not actually just robotic feet responding to information. We're a beautiful feet changed from the inside out by that beautiful information.

Now how do we become more beautiful? Well in verse 11 Paul says that anyone who believes in Jesus will never be put to shame. That is the gospel frees us from shame.

It frees us from the mess that we make of our lives. It frees us from failure. It frees us from sin. It frees us from dishonoring God and dishonoring others.

It makes us new people. It reworks us from the inside out, changing us, making us beautiful people.

The gospel takes all of our unhelpful habits, our fears, our destructive behavior and it causes us to re-evaluate and restructure all of those things in light of the love of Jesus Christ poured out for us.

[21 : 50] So I want to demonstrate this for you now and I want to apply it particularly to this area of evangelism and sharing your faith. None of this is original. I got this part now from Timothy Keller as he was trying to help pastors think through how they encourage a church to do evangelism.

So I'll give you this little exercise. I'm going to give you three reasons, among others, but three reasons why Christians don't evangelize, don't share their faith. Fear, pessimism, indifference.

Fear, pessimism, indifference. How does the gospel change us in those three areas and make us more beautiful? Beautiful messengers, beautiful feet. Think about the first one, fear.

We are usually nervous, fearful of speaking to people about the gospel, right? And there are sometimes good reasons to be fearful. Sometimes we don't want to needlessly offend people, we don't want to confuse, we maybe don't want to misrepresent the Christian faith, we don't want to insult the person, we fear that we're not maybe being sensitive enough in some circumstances, or maybe we're not being wise enough in some circumstances.

Now some of those are healthy fears. You don't want to be a jerk when you share the gospel, needless jerk. But often that's not the real fear that keeps us from sharing.

[23 : 13] Often what we actually fear is that we won't be liked if we share the gospel. So what we're actually afraid of is we're afraid of losing our reputation. We're afraid of sort of our personal value depreciating in the eyes of the person that we're speaking to.

That they might look at us and go, you're really one of those weird Christians? We're afraid of losing people's approval. But friends, remember what the gospel tells us.

The gospel tells us that because Jesus died in our place, because he gifted his perfect moral righteous record to us, because as Paul says, he clothed us with righteousness.

When God looks upon us, a Christian, he sees his son. And so he beams approval upon his child. Because of Jesus, God loves us and approves of us like he approves of his beloved son. The one person in this universe whose opinion truly matters, the creator God of this universe, and he looks upon you like a beloved son.

[24 : 34] Surely that's got a temper then how you deal with rejection from others in this life. If you are receiving that from God and experiencing that sense of approval from God, surely that's going to make you less anxious about the way other people are going to respond to you.

And surely that's going to make you a more beautiful person who's not driven by fear in your interactions with other people. But instead you draw, you're drawing on this wonderful resource that you have in the gospel of God's approval.

that knowledge that you have, of the full acceptance, the full approval of the creator God of the universe. Think, what a beautiful person you will become if you woke up every single morning filled with a sense of God's approval that you have in the gospel.

That fear, that anxiety that you have in your personal interactions with people, not just in evangelism, but all over the place, would be gone. gospel drives out fear.

Second one is pessimism. So another reason that Christians don't share their faith is because they're pessimistic about certain people ever responding positively to Christ and to believing the gospel.

[25 : 51] So we tend to be very pessimistic about who we think will or won't respond to an invitation to the Christian faith. There are some people that we like and we think, well, you know, that person would make a really great Christian.

They're so reasonable, measured, thoughtful, and civil. They're open-minded. They'd be a great person to share some religious discussion with. They'd be open to the gospel. Then there are other people we look at and we think, well, they'll never become a Christian, that person, because their lives are just too messed up or they're too argumentative or they're too stuck in their ways.

Now what you've done when you've done that is you've basically said, this person over here has the temperament to become a good Christian and this person over here, not so much.

But friends, let me remind you what the gospel is again. The gospel is you are saved by no grace. Not by your temperament. Anyone can become a Christian.

Anybody. When you look at someone and you think they'll never become a Christian, what are you saying about yourself? Are you saying that you had the right temperament to become a Christian? You were smart enough to figure out that Jesus was the right way and so that's why you went there.

[27 : 03] You were smart enough to figure out this truth, moral enough to discern a good thing when you saw it? No. You were saved by grace. Nothing you did, that's the gospel.

So how then can you possibly run the rule over other people's temperaments as to whether or not they would make good Christians? Were you just kind of like, were you just kind of better material for God to work with?

Like God is so lucky to have me. That's pride. The gospel strips us of our pride because it says you brought absolutely nothing to your own salvation.

Nothing. You came empty handed. It's like the hymn we sing Rock of Ages. Nothing in my hands I bring simply to thy cross I cling. You were saved by grace.

How then, if you were saved by grace, can you possibly be pessimistic about others coming to faith regardless of their temperaments? And then think about the beautiful person you'll become the more the gospel expels your self-righteous pride, your propensity towards judging other people's worthiness.

[28 : 22] The third thing is indifference. The third reason Christians don't share their faith is indifference. Indifference to the well-being of others.

And the gospel takes away indifference. Think about it this way. This might be a strange question, but do you enjoy your salvation? Do you enjoy your salvation? That is, do you enjoy the comfort, the hope, the peace, the security that the gospel brings you?

Knowing all sorts of wonderful truths about the gospel, that your sins are forgiven, knowing that you are accepted into God's family, knowing that you are treasured by God, and nobody can take that away from you. Do you enjoy your salvation?

If you enjoy your salvation, you say, I love all that stuff, I'm so grateful to have all that stuff, I'm enjoying my salvation, loving the presence of God, how then can you really be a loving friend and keep all of that stuff from your friend?

A loving colleague, a loving family member, and keep all of that stuff from your colleague or your family member. Isn't it selfish to keep it all to yourself? The definition of selfishness?

[29 : 31] You've got something you can give them, you love it, you're enjoying it, but you're not giving it to them. Is it not supremely unloving to keep that to yourself? Timothy Keller says this, he says, what kind of monsters are we that we can actually go through our lives and enjoy our salvation and have all kinds of people around us, and we see all the time and not even ache to talk to them about it?

That is nothing but a lack of love. Isn't it natural to take that which brings you joy, which brings you meaning and purpose, and share it with other people?

Isn't that what we naturally do with everything else? God? Now why don't we do it? How can we be so unloving in this instance? Think about those things, fear, pride, pessimism, all that stuff that we've spoken about, it makes us unloving, it makes us ugly on the inside.

But the gospel makes us beautiful on the inside, because the gospel says that when God should have been indifferent towards us.

In fact, more than indifferent, he should have actively rejected us. Instead, he reached out to us in sacrificial love. He took that which brought him the most eternal joy, his son Jesus Christ, and he offered him as a gift, a sacrificial gift.

[31 : 00] And so friends, that sacrificial gift has to make you beautiful. It has to shake you out of your indifference. When you think about people going out and sharing their faith and seeing large numbers of people come to faith, maybe you think of like Billy Graham and Billy Graham Crusades or something like that.

But when you think of that, maybe one of the areas you might think about is the original 12 disciples. Through those 12 sharing their faith, the face of the entire Eastern Mediterranean completely changed in just over 200 years.

Like whole societies, whole nations changed from 12 people. Those 12 had all the same problems we have today. Same problems, fear, pessimism, indifference.

At the very end of the Gospel of Luke, where do you find them before they encounter the resurrection? You find them all huddled together in the upper room, terrified, full of fear. They'd heard some rumors about the resurrection, but they're terrified.

In part, they're probably terrified because they actually have inside of them this deep-seated pessimism about the community that they're trying to reach with the Gospel. They have a deep-seated pessimism about the Jews around them ever coming to see Jesus as the Messiah.

[32 : 22] Because the idea of Jesus, a human Messiah, also being the divine Son of God, was diametrically opposed to first-century Jewish thought and religion. It was blasphemy.

Now that's going to make you pessimistic, right? About whether or not these people might respond positively to your message when you come and say, hey guys, Jesus is God. And just pick up a stone and stone you instead.

So they were fearful, they were pessimistic. And if things kind of stayed that way, I reckon the 12 probably would have just lapsed back into a very pedestrian indifference over time.

Once that sort of initial danger was gone, they would have gone back to their fishing nets, back to their rural villages, and possibly over time forgotten about those wild three years that they had with Jesus.

But in the midst of their fear, in the midst of their pessimism, and their presumably coming indifference, the resurrected Jesus comes into the room, into that room where they're all gathered.

[33 : 33] And the Bible tells us that he said this, he says, why are you troubled and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself.

Touch me and see. A ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have. And then the text goes on and it says this, when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

Now friends, imagine being there. Imagine them touching his feet. They would have sort of maybe run their finger up his foot to the base of his ankle where their finger would then sink into a hole.

A hole made by the 12 inch nail that had fastened his legs to the cross. They touched his feet. His scarred yet beautiful feet.

Feet that cried out to them, it is finished. Your redemption is won. You're forgiven. You're accepted and loved by God on high.

[34 : 40] they touched those beautiful feet. And do you know what happened to them? They became beautiful feet as a result.

The bringers of good news. Think about this, because they touched the beautiful feet of Jesus, you are sitting here this morning, 2,000 years later, trusting in Jesus.

there's a long line of beautiful feet, good newsmen that led to you being here this morning that goes all the way back to them. So my question for you is have you touched his feet?

Have you sensed the profound gift that we have in Jesus Christ? Have you sensed the sacrifice, the cost, the love that is given? Have you seen how it starts to rework you on the inside and make you

beautiful and change you?

Now take that and apply it to evangelism. Apply it to sharing your faith. Take it to your fears. Take it to your pessimism.

[35 : 51] Take it to your indifference. If we can do that as a church, if we can pray and rest on God's spirit to transform us through this gospel message, then we might see some incredible things happen here as people come and encounter the beautiful feet of Jesus himself.

Let's pray together. Our Father and our King, we want to thank you for Jesus this morning. We want to thank you for what he has done because we know our efforts fail. they fail miserably. Our efforts to redeem, our efforts to transform, our efforts to change, to make ourselves better people, to make this world a better place, they fail over and over again and so we thank you for Jesus who does not fail.

We thank you for Jesus who wins where we fail and we thank you for Jesus who gives us, gifts us his perfect righteous record so that when you look upon us, you see him and you beam love and approval upon us.

Father, help us to take hold of these truths by faith. I pray for any person who is sitting here this morning who has not believed these truths for themselves that they would repent of their sin and they would trust in Christ this morning.

[37 : 12] For the rest of us, Lord, make us beautiful and apply that specifically to the issue of evangelism in this coming week, the coming weeks actually as we do this series, that we might overcome fear and indifference and pessimism not because we're strong enough to overcome those things but because Christ has transformed us and made us beautiful feet.

Pray that we will see fruit as a result of that in the lives of other people becoming beautiful through the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us, we pray, for Christ's sake. Amen.