

Gospel in action

Romans 10:14-17

David Yeh, 8 Oct 2017

At the end of the previous sermon I briefly mentioned these verses, today I would like to elaborate it a bit more.

Within two verses we see four questions of "how". This passage is conducted in a reverse order, that for us to see the result, there must be a previous action for it to have the outcome.

E.g. Because of the mortgage, we have to be careful how we spend our money and sometimes my son would ask interesting questions like, can we go to England for holiday, can we go on a cruise ship? We would say "we can't afford it now but one day you can go there yourself if you have enough money, to have enough money you need to have a good job, to have a good job you need to have a good qualification, to have good qualification you need to work hard and have good result, to have good result you need to spend less time on your device." Why do I say all those things? Because one result link with another. To have the end result it we need to go back right to the beginning of the equation, the starting point.

Here it talks about if we want to see other people able to have that relationship with God, then we need to look all the way to the beginning of the process.

This passage also has 4 verbs, which are the five stages of results, "call", "believe", "heard", "preaching", and "sent."

1. People are in need of the gospel v14a

V14a How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?

People often are in distress, they are in hopeless situations, and hardships and difficulties would come suddenly when they are unprepared. It could be the relationship with their spouse, their boy-friend or girl-friend, parents with children, colleague, neighbour, school mate.

They might have financial difficulties, physical or health problems, visa application problems or things that they hoped for that are not coming through.

People don't know where to turn for help. How can they call out to God for help if they don't have the opportunity to believe in the God of creation, who can help them? How can they turn to God from their eternal suffering in Hell and eternal fire if they don't have opportunity to believe what Jesus has done for them? That he took their sin on himself to pay their penalty of their sin?

People in the world are desperate for the gospel, they need miracle in their life!

2. We are the messengers of the gospel v14b

V14b And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

If people are to have opportunity to believe on God and what he can do for them, someone needs to tell them. We have experienced all the goodness of God, his love to fill that emptiness, the emptiness that exists since the beginning of human history at the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned against God and lost that relationship and love of God.

They need to hear his forgiveness of our sin, those shameful sins that we wish no one would know about, the guilt that we have been carrying for so long could be lifted up from them.

They need to hear His acceptance, we don't need to work, for God accepts us because we have been adopted by God to become sons and daughters of God.

They need to experience His power, that he is able to heal physically, mentally and emotionally.

When I say they need to hear the gospel, I don't mean the "4 Spiritual Laws" or "Bridge" Yes, they need to understand what God has done for our sin and eternal life but they need to hear and see who God is through our life. We are the message.

When there is a good deal at "The Warehouse" or some shops, we would be eager to share. Or when something good has happened to us, we want others to know about it. But why do we struggle to share the gospel? Is it because fear of rejection? Fear of don't know how to answer their questions?

E.g. On Tuesday night in the Young Adult's Group, someone brought out this question. Then one of the girl said, "Whenever I thank God for my salvation, I am so thankful for the person that shared the gospel to me." This really hit me. Why? Because she would often go out to the street and share the gospel. That joy of salvation is continually burning in her life, because someone told her about Christ, she was able to be saved. That gratitude drives her to share the gospel so that the lost may experience the joy of salvation.

I wonder if we have lost that joy of salvation, I wonder if Satan has taken the desire to share the gospel from us. I wonder if we are so busy with our own problems, so busy chasing our desires that we don't have room in our heart to feel the need of the people or the joy of the gospel. Pray that God will rekindle that joy and love being children of God.

3. We have been sent to share the message of the gospel v15

¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

We might think, "well sharing the gospel is not my responsibility, it is pastor's responsibility, that is what they are for." Well no, that is not our sole responsibility, our responsibility is to teach and equip you to go out to make disciples. We already have been sent by Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) ¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

This passage in Matthew 28 is not just for the pastors or evangelists when God calls them to be one, but for all of us.

E.g. Mexico earthquake. That say you were in that situation, when you saw the building collapsing on the people and you heard people crying for their life, you wouldn't just stand there and think, I am not a fireman or rescue volunteer, I will just stand there wait for the professional people to come, while people are dying. No! Regardless of whether you are a trained fireman or rescue volunteer or not, regardless you are able to move the rubble or not, you would rush to the rubble and try to rescue the people.

In the same way people are crying for help, let us go and save them.

Anyone who has been saved and experienced God's salvation is already equipped enough to share the gospel. You have your testimony to share, the witness of power of the gospel.

V15b "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Feet are for moving, they are tools for action, to carry the message. How lovely are those who brings the good news to the other people. Good news in action is not just word but giving and helping other people's needs. Gospel in action shows the love of God to those in need. Jesus didn't just preach the gospel, he lived in it. He healed the sick, he forgave the sin of the tax collectors, who were like the traitors of that day because they collected money from his own people and give to the Roman government, the occupier. Jesus restored the human value of Mary the prostitute, and the woman that had blood issue problem. Jesus fed the 5000 hungry men (10,000 plus people).

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? **To act justly** and **to love** mercy and **to** walk humbly with your God.

So let us give our effort, our time, our money to take the gospel to those in need.

4. Don't be discouraged if people reject the Gospel v16

¹⁶But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

With all our effort, time, money to convince the person we are sharing with, V16 says not everyone will accept the good news, people may trample on our effort and our love. There will be people who don't accept the gospel because they lack understanding, lack faith or because of their hard heart. They might not appreciate what we have done for them. Don't be discouraged just keep on trying but with sensitivity. I think we can recall how we reacted when we heard the gospel for the first time. Just because we are rejected we should not give up.

Conclusion

As verse 17 says "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message," so for someone to hear the message, someone needs to tell that message, and not just any old message but message of life. Message that will set them free from the guilt of sin, from the bondage of sin and regret, so people won't have to keep on sinning and feel regret for what they done, The message that will set them free from bondage of bad habits and negative way of thinking. Where do the faith of non-believers come from? From God and us, you and me, who have the message. The message of gospel is in Jesus's word.

Second part says, "and the message is heard through the word about Christ." So it is not how well we can persuade the person or how well we can argue, because argument is not able to win the person to Christ, but the message of gospel is in Christ, gospel is CHRIST!

When they meet Christ in their problem, in their life, every argument will be silenced, every hard heart will be melted, every pride will crumble before him. How can they see Jesus? You and me, through you and me. Just like Jesus said when we see Him we see God the Father, so when people see us they could see Jesus. Message is not only carried by word but true message is carried by action.

The example that I used about my son, if he wants to enjoy those trips, he would need to do something about his life, right? When? NOW. He would need to start now to get the end result. WE NEED TO GO NOW to share the gospel so that people can be free from their current suffering and eternal death. You are the messenger and we need to step out and act on it and live in it.