

The Gospel for Everyone Everywhere

Romans 10: 10 – 13

Luke 9: 23 “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

- What does it look like to deny yourself and take up your cross?
 - What does it look like for me to live the life that Jesus has called me to live?

Ephesians 5: 1 – 2 be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

- To deny yourself and take up your cross is to walk in the same love with which Christ loved us—a sacrificial, seeking love that puts God’s will and the needs of others ahead of you.
- Now, let’s think of how important love is, based on Jesus’ summary of what obedience to the law looks like.

Matthew 22: 37 – 39 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

- Think what has to happen for you to love God with all your heart, or your neighbor as yourself. You have to deny yourself by putting them first, ahead of yourself. That is what you do when you love someone.
 - Guys, do you know why so many of our wives sometimes feel unloved? It is because too often we have a whole list of stuff we put in front of our wives, and they get the message that we love our job, our sports, our toys, maybe even our kids more than them. We may mouth the words “I love you,” although many of us don’t even do that as often as we should, do we?
- But whether it is for Christ, or for our wives, love isn’t just words.

1 John 3: 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

- Where would we be, if Christ only mouthed the words I love you, but there were no deeds to go with it? As you think about that, remember what Jesus implored each of us to do.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

- A life of love is what each of us are called to—that love starts in our homes.
 - ♦ When I got married, the pastor, looked me in the eye during the ceremony and in front of all the gathered guests and my bride said to me, “Jeff, if there is no love in your home it will be your fault.”
 - ♦ Those words have haunted me for 45 years, because like most homes there have been times when the flame of love seemed to be flickering pretty badly. Why did he say such a thing to me?

Ephesians 5: 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

- ♦ Love fills the church because Christ first loved us.
- ♦ Our homes will be filled with love when we love our wives as Christ loved the church.

- ♦ How did Christ love the church? Paul tells us in Ephesians 5: 25, he gave himself up for her. So, what does this mean? For a husband, the key to loving his wife well is to give himself up—to deny himself—to die to himself and his desires, to serve the one he pledged his love to. That is what it takes to love your wife well.
- ♦ Now, think what was happening in the Neikirk home when the flame of love began to flicker. Rather than loving my wife, I fell back in love with myself, so rather than denying myself, I denied her wants.
 - Now, I tell you all that, because marriage is so important and so under attack these days, and the best way for us to fight back against the attack isn't through legislation, it is to have marriages that are the envy of the world around us. Our marriages should be the envy of the world. People should look and say I want what they have.
- But the main reason I am telling you this is to make us think about what it really takes for all of us to live a life of love just as Christ did. If, dying to myself, which by the way is a hard and difficult struggle every day that I often don't seem to win, is what it takes for a man to love his wife well, can we not also extend that same idea to see how each of us should go about living life in such a way that we are loving God well and loving our neighbors well?
 - Loving God well, starts in the same way that loving my wife well starts. It is to deny myself and lay down my self-will to do the will of God. This is the life Christ calls us to as Christians.

John 14: 15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

- ♦ There is the test for whether or not we love Jesus. Are we laying down our will to do his will by keeping his commandments.
- And if we are loving Jesus well, then we will also be loving our neighbor well. Why? What was Jesus' commandment to us

John 13: 34 – 35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

- ♦ Do you realize that if you simply just live out that new commandment, you will also be living out all of the 10 Commandments.
- ♦ The simple act of loving others well, will mean that we are protecting life, honoring marriage, protecting the property of others, speaking truth in love, and being content with what God has blessed us with.
- ♦ And if, in love for others, we are doing all of those things, then based on Jesus' words, “If you love me, you will obey my commands,” we will also be loving God with all our heart, soul and strength.”
- Loving others as Christ has loved us means that we will be denying ourselves, and taking up our cross, to die to ourselves, following Jesus.
 - ♦ Loving others as Christ has loved us will mean that we are:

Ephesians 5: 2 walking in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

- ♦ How did Jesus love us? It wasn't with just words. It wasn't with a box of chocolates. It was by taking up the cross and giving up his life for the sake of those he loved.

Romans 10: 9 – 10 if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

- What is it that will make a mouth profess that Jesus is Lord? It is a heart enflamed with love for Christ. What enflames our hearts with love for Christ? It is believing that God raised Jesus from the dead.
- Believing that God raised Jesus from the dead is not just a bare theological belief. If that statement is properly understood, it becomes a heart enflaming belief.
 - Why? Because of all that is contained in that statement that God raised Jesus from the dead.
 - Why did God do that? Before we answer that, let's first think about why did Jesus die?
 - ♦ Well, of course people know the answer to that, and they will rattle it right off. Jesus died for our sins. At least on the surface that statement is true enough, but just looking at it on the surface won't enflame your heart with love to profess that Jesus is Lord.
 - ♦ No, for that to happen, you have to think of Jesus' death as a particular atonement for you. "He died for my sins. My lust, my selfishness, my greed, my hatred, my anger, my laziness." You have to see and believe that, at the cross, Jesus didn't just pay a generic debt for sin that we all owe. No, he paid a very specific debt. Your debt.
 - ♦ At the cross, all your sin, all your failings, all your shame were placed on Jesus, and because Jesus bore them for you, all God's wrath for you was poured out on Jesus. The debt you owed God the Father was completely paid for by God the Son.
 - ♦ But the cross means even more than Jesus paying off an unpayable debt for you. As Jesus took all your sin upon himself, he gave to you all of his perfect obedience, his perfect righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5: 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- ♦ So, think of what happened at the cross. All the poverty of your sin fell upon Jesus, and all the riches of his righteousness fell upon you. Jesus was cut off, forsaken, by the Father because he bore your sin, and you were brought in, loved, adopted by the Father, not just because your sin is forgiven, but because you are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
- But how do you know that is what really happened for you at the cross? How do you know the sin debt is paid? How do you know that because Jesus suffered all the Father's wrath, there is no wrath left for you to face? How do you know the Christ's righteousness has become your righteousness?

Romans 4: 24 – 25 Jesus our Lord, ²⁵who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

- Christ's resurrection is the proof that everything I just told you is true for you. If God were not pleased with what Christ did for you at the cross, Jesus would still be rotting in the grave.

- The resurrection is proof that your debt was paid. It is proof that you are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. It is your adoption certificate—the judge’s decree that you have been adopted into the family of God.
- If you truly believe that God has done all of that for you through Christ at the cross, then how can your heart not be enflamed with a love for Christ that causes you to profess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and then follows Jesus as Lord by walking in love.
 - Think of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 6: 1 – 3 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ²Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

- What realization did Isaiah come to as he viewed this vision of a holy God?

Isaiah 6: 5 And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

- ♦ In Old Testament Hebrew, woe is the language of a curse. In the flash of the moment, Isaiah came to the awful conclusion that because of his sin, he was cursed. Seeing who he was before a holy God, didn’t just make him tremble. It didn’t just make his knees knock. It made him feel lost, completely undone. As you read this you can almost sense Isaiah withering under the blazing gaze of a holy God.
- ♦ Do you have a sense of yourself and your sinfulness like that? Honestly if you don’t then you really don’t understand the holiness of God and offensiveness of your sin to that holy God, and because of that you will never really understand what Jesus endured for you at the cross. You cannot appreciate the depths of God’s grace without first appreciating the depths of your sin.

- But rather than leaving Isaiah lost and undone, what does God do?

Isaiah 6: 6 – 7 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

- In a severe mercy, God made a way for Isaiah’s sin to be atoned for, for Isaiah to be made whole. God did the same for you through Christ at the cross. Jesus endured the white-hot wrath of God for you so that you could be cleansed and made whole.
- Now, how did Isaiah respond to God’s atoning love?

Isaiah 6: 8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

- ♦ I will go and profess with my mouth the message that you have entrusted to me.
- If that was Isaiah’s response after God cleansed his sin, how much more should it be our response in view of what Christ did for us at the cross? How can we not also say along with Isaiah, “Here I am send me?”

Romans 10: 11 – 15 For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” ¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

- Because of where they are in the book of Romans, these words should jump off of the page at us.
 - In Romans 9, Paul took us on a deep dive into the doctrine of election. Showing us how God worked in the lives of Abraham, who was chosen out of a pagan background. Isaac, who was chosen by God rather than his brother Ishmael, and then Jacob, who was chosen by God rather than his twin brother, Esau.
 - Once Paul established the fact that everything hinges on God’s choice not man’s, Paul concludes by saying:

Romans 9: 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

- Now hearing Paul’s defense of election may cause us to draw the conclusion that we don’t really need to go anywhere and profess our faith in Jesus as Lord, because God is going to save whomever He will, apart from any effort we might make.
 - There are people in our reformed camp who wrongly think that way. William Carey is known as the father of modern missions. In his early adult life, Carey was a cobbler. On his own he studied Scripture and became a pastor. It was while serving as a pastor that Carey became convinced of the need for missions.

Is not the commission of our Lord still binding upon us? Can we not do more than now we are doing? William Carey

- But not everyone was as convinced as Carey. At one meeting as Carey spoke on the need for missionaries to go to India, and older gentlemen stood to argue against it saying to Carey, “Young man sit down! When God pleases to save the heathens, he will do it with out your aid or mine.”
- As we read what Paul writes about election, in Romans 9, that might be the conclusion we are tempted to draw. And what a convenient conclusion. Since God shows mercy to whomever He wills, and hardens whomever He wills, there is no need to deny ourselves, no need to confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord. We can just gather up in our holy huddle, talk about how wonderful it is that we are saved and then sit back and wait for Jesus to come again.
 - But there is just one problem with that thinking. Jesus’ words in:

John 14: 15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

- And what was the commandment he gave us?

John 13: 34 love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

- How did Jesus love us?

Luke 19: 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

- If as Paul wrote in Ephesians 5: 1- 2, “We are imitators of God walking in love as Christ has loved us,” then shouldn’t we be doing the same thing?



- I think this is why Paul, after giving such a strong defense of God's election in Romans 9, writes what he writes here in chapter 10.
- Yes, the doctrine of election is true. It is how God works. But the free offer of the Gospel to all men everywhere is the means that God has appointed to make the Gospel known to those who are his elect.

1. The same Lord is Lord of all

- In Romans 10: 11 – 12 as he quotes from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah:

Romans 10: 11 - 12 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all

- Everyone, with no distinctions being made. Paul is telling us the Gospel is for everyone. Jew and Greek, rich and poor, powerful and marginalized, royalty and heathens. The Gospel needs to be made known to all.
- That doesn't really sound like election, does it? It sounds like a free for all. But what Paul is doing is showing us the universal call of the Gospel to all who will believe. It is right in line with:

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

- And just in case we were to miss the point of what Paul is saying here in Romans 10, he makes it again in verse 13, as he quotes the prophet Joel's words (Joel 2: 32)

Romans 10: 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

- That sure sounds like it is up to man to make a choice to call on the name of the Lord in order to be saved. And yes, that is exactly what Paul is saying.
- Paul is stretching our minds.
- On one hand, teaching us the doctrine of election that "God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden" (Romans 9:18). But on the other hand, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Showing the universal offer of the gospel.
- How do we reconcile those two seemingly contradictory thoughts. I think Charles Spurgeon put it best, when he said, "On earth's side of heaven's gates the sign reads "whosoever will," but on heaven's side of the gates it reads "elect from the foundation of the world."
- Those two thoughts are what Scripture teaches and they are not at all contradictory or mutually exclusive. Whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Everyone is allowed to call on the name of the Lord. God doesn't say to anyone "You can't call on me." Everyone may do it, but no one can do it, unless God elects them to be a recipient of His mercy and love.
- Don't ever let anyone tell you that your reformed theology means you don't have to profess your faith. As Paul already showed us, the professing of our faith, is essential to what it means to be saved and by Christ's appointment it is essential to reaching the elect who are presently unsaved.

Acts 1: 8 "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- The Holy Spirit came with power on the disciples at the Day of Pentecost, ten days after Jesus spoke those words. But the outpouring of the Holy Spirit wasn't just on the

disciples. Listen to Peter's words on the Day of Pentecost as he quotes from the prophet Joel.

Acts 2: 17 And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh

- The gift of the Holy Spirit isn't just for a certain few. It is for all who will call on the name of the Lord.
 - When you become a Christian, you receive the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is given not just to intercede for you, not just to comfort you, but to empower you to go and be witnesses, to go and profess your faith to everyone, everywhere, because "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Romans 10: 14 – 15 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent?

- Rather than stifling us in our evangelistic efforts, the doctrine of election should empower us and embolden us. The doctrine of election means that we are not responsible for the results. We are just called to be faithful and go and be witnesses to the world around us.

God is not looking for men of great faith, He is looking for common men to trust His great faithfulness. Hudson Taylor

- We live in what you would call a target rich environment. It is estimated that there are 2.5 billion Christians in the world today. That's seems like a lot, but there are 8 billion people in the world. As Jesus said:

John 4: 35 Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

- The harvest is ready. Where will all the resources come from to bring it in?

2. Bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

Romans 10: 12 bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

- That's how the harvest will come in. God will bestow His riches.
 - God is not just sovereign in who He shows mercy to, He is sovereign in dispensing the means of how His mercy is made known, and everyone who has received God's mercy is now equipped to be a conduit of His mercy to everyone, everywhere.
 - This is why God has bestowed the riches of His grace upon each of us. God has not saved us so that we can live the hakuna matata, no worries, lifestyle for the remainder of our days. God has saved us and bestowed the riches of His grace upon us, so that we are equipped to be a people who proclaim the good news of the Gospel to all men everywhere.
- As Christians, think what we have. We have the Gospel, the love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit filling our lives. We have called on God and he has bestowed His riches upon us. It is an inexhaustible supply.

Philippians 4: 19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

- Paul really believed that, and that allowed him to live his life—denying himself, taking up his cross and following Jesus. Listen to how he described his ministry.

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering

- Now think what that meant. A drink offering was an offering that was poured out on the ground before God. When it was poured out in that way it was gone. It was used up. It was done. That's how Paul described his own gospel ministry.
 - Often times we don't think that way, do we? We want to conserve ourselves for the long haul. To parcel ourselves out in little pieces. We don't want to give too much of ourselves away or we fear we will be gone.
 - It is good for us that Jesus didn't think about offering himself for us the way we often think of offering ourselves to him, isn't it?

Luke 22:20 And Jesus took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

- Paul willingly offered himself as a drink offering to Jesus, because at the cross he saw how Jesus had done that for him.
 - As I thought of how Paul described his life being poured out as a drink offering, I thought of a story from the days of Elisha.
 - The land was in time of distress and there was a widow woman who was in particular distress. Creditors were about to come and take everything from her leaving her destitute.
 - Elisha asked her "What do you have in the house?" And the woman produced a small flask of oil.

2 Kings 4: 3 -7 Then Elisha said, "Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not too few. 4 Then go in and shut the door behind yourself and your sons and pour into all these vessels. And when one is full, set it aside." 5 So she went from him and shut the door behind herself and her sons. And as she poured they brought the vessels to her. 6 When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another." Then the oil stopped flowing. 7 She came and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on the rest."

- The only reason the oil stopped flowing out is because there were no more containers to hold it.
- That is, I think, so symbolic of the riches that God bestows on all those who call on Him. The resources of His grace and love and power are limitless. So He can pour them into our lives as fast as we pour them out into the lives of others.

Romans 10: 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

- Oh, that God would grant to each of us a heart that is enflamed with love for Christ, that will fill us with a passion to go and proclaim His Gospel everywhere and to all men so that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

"Would that God would make hell so real to us that we cannot rest; heaven so real that we must have men there, Christ so real that our supreme motive and aim shall be to make the Man of Sorrows the Man of Joy by the conversion to him of many. Hudson Taylor