



Romans 10:8-18

MIXTURE OF GOOD NEWS

If it's good news we tell everyone don't we? Something special and exciting

A new baby

A new job

An exciting new thing we've come across

SHARE BUTTONS

What do we do when we come across something exciting? We share it. We tell our friends etc. On the modern social networking we press the share button and send the information. One of my later items came because somebody saw it and sent it to me and a load of other people by email.

GOOD NEWS

We have no problem telling people Good News – except one piece of Good News – the Good news of Jesus Christ!

The Gospel VIDEO and GOSPEL

If we find an idea in the Bible difficult, we dress it up in a fancy word that allows us to avoid the real idea. In Britain we decided to call good news the gospel – actually its derived from the German Gut Speil (good news). So good news became mysterious, religious, Christian – rather than being just good news.

Now we all love and celebrate the bringers or takers of good news. If we have good news, it's great to spread it. Unless you're a Christian. In Greek, the word for good news is euangelion. And from it we get this word for the bringing of good news:

VIDEO and EVANGELISM

When we're pretty good at sharing good news with others, why are we so bad at telling to Good News of Jesus Christ.

WHY DO WE KEEP GOOD NEWS A SECRET

Afraid to tell people in case they laugh or make a fool of me

Apologetic about it in case we offend

Don't want to confuse people

BUT

We've forgotten how good Good News is

FELIXSTOWE FERRY

Let's say I'm walking down at Felixstowe Ferry and I see children playing in the Deben. I decide not to warn them that the currents are treacherous and they should come out straight away! What am I going to tell the Coroner at their inquest? I was afraid they would laugh? I was afraid that I'd make a fool of myself saying that it is dangerous to bathe there? I was afraid I'd frighten and upset them? I was afraid I'd put them off swimming ever again? Get real!

And what's worse is that although there are some people out there that are anti-Christian, there are far more – the majority who show Christians no ill-will, want us to promote our values even if they don't hold them and don't mind us speaking about our faith as long as they feel we're not ramming it down their throat. Part of our problem is that many Christians have the stupid idea that speaking about Jesus is about pushing something on people that they don't want – poppycock!

I call this BAD SALESMAN SYNDROME

We all fear that to tell Good News we must sink to the level of a bad salesman. You've all come across salesmen and women and we all have experience of bad salesmen or saleswomen – who use fear, control, gimmicks and strange antics to get our business. We all try to avoid them. And if we are sold something bad, do we go back? No.

Who are the best sales staff. The ones that take an interest in us. The ones that listen to what we want. The ones that make sensible suggestions about what we need. The ones that don't make us feel a fool when we don't know what we are talking about but empower our knowledge. The ones that realistically tell us about their product and its advantages. The one that leaves us satisfied and going back. The object of most sales companies is guaranteeing return business.

Ladies and Gentlemen, meet the ideal evangelist. Not just the ideal evangelist but the sorts of people I believe God wants us to be as His witnesses. Where did we ever get the idea that sharing Good News is a bad thing? In sales terms, the greatest product, idea that has ever come into this world is Jesus Christ and we treat it like bad double glazing, bad life assurance. It's the best news that anyone can EVER have, better than a new baby, better than a new car, a new job, a win on the lottery, a nice house by the seaside, a happy family, good health, a nice holiday or whatever.

So what is so good about the good news and why should we tell other people.

FOUR ESSENTIALS ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS IT REALLY IS SIMPLE

The beauty of the Christian faith is this – it's simple – in fact so simple that anyone can understand it. It is crystallised by verse 9 of Romans 10 *9 If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved* How do people get to know God? God saves all those who are prepared to follow Jesus That's the simplicity of the Christian faith. It's not through works, doing religious things, or good living that people come into a relationship with God – it's just by accepting Jesus into their life! *9 If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved.* There are two aspects to this verse. The first is confession. Confess that Jesus is Lord. A statement – that you are no longer going to do things as you have done, but follow Jesus – place the control of your life in His hands. Actually the Greek word kurios (Lord) was also used for the name of God in the Greek version of the Old Testament. We acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and our God. However, there is another aspect of this verse 9 – look again.

God's rescue only happens if you believe He can and will rescue you. *and believe that God raised him from death.* It isn't just saying "Jesus is Lord" in the way that Muslims confess their faith. Saying the words alone won't help – you've got to believe them. Saying "Jesus is Lord" and coming to Church and the rest of it doesn't help. It's not an insurance policy for heaven just in case the Bible is true. Becoming a Christian isn't just saying the words, but believing that it is true. That's why Paul uses the words *and believe that God raised him from death.* If God has power over death then it means He understands the whole mystery of life and death. Jesus died to rescue us and the fact that He is alive means He can.

Simple yet profound. *10 For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved. 11 The scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."* All we have to do is believe and follow, trust and obey. What an amazing message. God has made it that easy for every man and every woman. *"Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved."*

BUT

PEOPLE NEED TO HEAR ABOUT IT. Good News is only good news if people hear about it. Everyone who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Great promise but people need to have the opportunity. Which brings us to the next point:

SOMEONE NEEDS TO TELL THEM. One of the other odd ideas people have about the Christian faith is that somehow they believe it is God's job to make sure people know about the Christian faith. If it isn't then it's someone else's. Worse, I know of many evangelical believers that have a problem with evangelism. They think it's passe. Well, if no-one is speaking about Jesus, then how are people to hear about Him? The problem with evangelism is not God and it's not the message. It's the way we deliver it. This is a video clip that inspired someone this week, so much so that he sent it to me.

BLIND MAN This video isn't a Christian product – I was produced by a marketing firm. The message was the same, the truth was the same, but the delivery was slightly different. In every generation we have to make sure the word of God is packaged in a way that is relevant and dynamic to the modern generation. We don't dilute truth, but we do deliver it in a way that it speaks to people in our modern society that meets them where they are and addresses their spiritual needs where they are. The reason why much evangelism doesn't connect with people in our society is that we're trying to answer questions people aren't asking in ways they don't understand. - and when we find it doesn't work we give up.

The truth is that there are plenty of Churches in this country that are growing dynamic fellowships. Some aren't far from here. It's not impossible, it's just a matter of allowing the God of possibilities to stretch our imagination. I've always found two ingredients in these growing churches, one is the priority of communicating with people in a contemporary and relevant way and the second is a firm grounding in the word of God.

Let's get to my last point

GOD SENDS SOMEONE How do people get to hear – someone speaks to them. Someone who's been sent. God's chosen method of delivery of the Good News is that people do it. What people. All of us. True there are those called to be evangelists, but we are all witnesses. We are all commissioned to share our faith. In fact, each one of us will have contact with people who don't know Jesus – yet – and we are possibly the only one. God is highly unlikely to send an angel to them. He doesn't have to, He has you. Yet we pray for folks that they will come to church, or respond to something they have seen that's Christian or a visit to church. God doesn't have to because they've got something better – you. We never speak about our faith and hope that our example will suffice. There are loads of very moral unbelievers out there. What makes us distinctive is that we walk the walk *and* talk the talk.

WE ARE CALLED TO SPEAK GOOD NEWS – and that means each one of us. There really isn't an alternative to presenting the message to people. The only thing that needs to stretch us is finding a way to make the Good News connect with them.

If we believe that the Good News is brilliant, then we'll find a way; no probs.

GOOD NEWS

And God blesses us for bringing the message. It really concerns me when we so readily accept our ageing church and the black hole of under 50s. I have a problem with the notion of some that we must pray for more Christians to come and help us. But why should God do that for us? Why He send us other Christians to come and help us when there are thousands of people living all around the church who would do nicely. It's just that they aren't Christians yet! We are called to reach them and more than equipped to do so. So lets go get them – just like that. It's our calling and it's a blessed calling. Here's another verse we read:

14 But how can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed? 15 And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out? As the scripture says, "How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!"

Do we want to know blessing as a church? Then here's the verse "How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!"

If we genuinely want to see change in our fellowship. If we want to see a growing church that will serve this community for another 200 years, then we need to take the Good News seriously. Because it's life transforming. It changed us, now it must change others. Let's pray the God will burden us to do that.

*Preached by Mark Reid
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Slides Referred to in text above

How shall they hear?

good TV prog
new baby
interesting article
new job
good fortune
an amazing incident

How shall they hear?

Share
Share
rebuzzthis
Tweet

How shall they hear?

Gospel

How shall they hear?

Good News

How shall they hear?

Evangelism

How shall they hear?

Why keep Good News secret?
afraid people will laugh!
afraid to offend people
afraid make a fool of myself
afraid I'll put people off

How shall they hear?

Why keep Good News secret?
afraid people will laugh!
afraid to offend people
afraid make a fool of myself
afraid I'll put people off
Forgotten how good the Good News actually is!

How shall they hear?

How shall they hear?

Bad Salesman Syndrome

How shall they hear?

Four essentials about the Good News
It really is simple

How shall they hear?

Four essentials about the Good News
It really is simple
If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from death, dead, you will be saved

How shall they hear?

Four essentials about the Good News
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people need to hear about it

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Four essentials about the Good News
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How shall they hear?

Four essentials about the Good News
It really is simple BUT
people need to hear about it
someone needs to tell them
God sends someone

How shall they hear?

And that means each one of us

