

BEING SENT OUT

September 28, 2014

In his letter to the Roman brethren, Paul explained, “For ’WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.’ 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? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!’” (Rom. 10:13-15).

Paul asked four questions regarding the salvation of mankind. However, he prefaced those four questions by emphatically stating that any person desiring salvation can find it if they will only “call on the name of the Lord.” The saving grace of God is offered to all people because God wants all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). When one follows the Gospel plan of salvation, they are, in fact, calling upon the name of the Lord. Saul of Tarsus is a perfect example of that. After Ananias taught Paul the Gospel he asked, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Saul called on the name of the Lord when he obeyed the commandment to be immersed in water for the forgiveness of his sins, just like those on the Day of Pentecost did (Acts 2:37-41).

Paul then continued his instruction by asking, “How will Israel, or any other person, call upon the name of the Lord for salvation if they do not believe in the One that brought it?” Salvation can only come with obedience to the Gospel, so it was and is paramount that all people hear about the great sacrifice of Jesus. Paul then asked, “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” In that statement, he is making a direct reference to the commandment that Christ left with the apostles prior to His ascension back to heaven. He said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*” Amen” (Mt. 28:19-20, emphasis added).

If any person is going to hear the voice of Christ, someone is going to have to speak or preach on His behalf! Paul told the Thessalonians that Jesus “called you by our gospel” (2 Thess. 2:14). He also said, “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17), therefore the Gospel must be preached. That is why he asked, “And how shall they hear without a preacher?” Like Paul, we must be heralds of the glorious message of Christ without adding to it or taking away from it (Rev. 22:18-19). In one of his earliest letters, Paul warned, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:6-9). It has eternal consequences when one teaches or believes a doctrine that does not originate in God!

Finally, Paul asked, “And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” It is essential to the entire world that congregations of the Lord’s people everywhere send forth those who will preach the unadulterated Word of God to all that will hear. Paul understood that and our own elders here at Cordova understand that also!

In two days, I will be leaving Cordova and will travel to Indonesia, the Lord willing, to work alongside Barry Hatcher in the school of preaching in Sumatra. This is a great and important work that the elders of our congregation oversee, and that we all support. It is an honor to be able to go preach to people that do not know Christ and to teach in the school, helping to train Gospel preachers! Please pray for me, as I travel and work in another part of the world, and keep my family in your prayers, as well, while I am gone. Each member of the Cordova church of Christ should feel proud to be a part of such a wonderful work. Be encouraged by knowing that you have “sent” one to preach “glad tidings of good things!” Thank you all and may God continue to bless us!