

Devotions Friday 11 March 2022

Romans 10: 8 - 13

8 But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,' that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9 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. 10 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. 11 As Scripture says, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

As much as Lent is about letting go of things that are bad for us and taking up practises that are good for us, let us not forget that we are saved by grace and grace alone. Whether you give up anything for lent, whether you give to the poor, whether you pray three times a day or once in a while or whether you read your Bible every day or once in a while, whether you are the most righteous and upstanding citizen or a low-life criminal, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and you believe with your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. It's that simple. You are saved because of the grace of God, not because of anything you do or don't do. I'm still hoping you do the other things but not because you think it will save you but again out of gratitude because you have already been saved. Today just soak it in, you are saved by grace. You don't have to do anything, you don't have to earn it, you don't have to be good enough. Because of what Jesus did for you on the cross, you are saved.

For those of you who are worried about loved ones who do not yet claim "Jesus is Lord". This text also gives some consolation. There is still hope and there is still time. They may only come to claim this with their last breaths but they will still be saved. One of my favourite stories out of Luke is in chapter 23 when Jesus is hanging on the cross and one of the criminals hanging next to him says "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" and Jesus answers him "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." These words of forgiveness and acceptance spoken by Jesus to a dying criminal give me great hope and great joy. If I cling to Jesus as my saviour, there is nothing that can separate me from him and the same rings true of every person no what they've done in their lives or when they discover the truth.

Prayer

Gracious God

In a world that seems to judge us on what we've achieved, what we look like and what we own, we thank you that you love and accept us just as we are. We thank you that you know every part of us, everything we hide from the world and ourselves and still you chose to die for us. We will never truly understand your grace for us but we thank you for this immense blessing.

We pray for those who have not yet come to know you and have not yet accepted you as their Lord and Saviour. We pray that our lives may be a witness to them of your love and acceptance and as we journey with them may they come to know you and all you have done for them. We pray especially for our loved ones who have not yet owned you as their Lord that their hearts will be open to your Spirit and they will hear your never ceasing call to them and give their lives to you. May they come to know the freedom that comes with knowing that you are truly loved and accepted.

In Jesus name,

Amen.

Rev KS Brown