

FAITH PROMISE

Sermon series by Rev. Kevin Rector



Sermon 1 – Hearts and Mouths



*Christians are to speak
their faith into the world
around them.*

Romans 10:9-11 (NIV)

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.”

- I. Salvation is found by declaring with our mouth and believing in our hearts.
 - A. This verse is often used, rightly, to describe to someone how they can first become a Christian. It is a very clear and concise explanation of what happens at salvation.
 - B. We have faith in Christ in our hearts, and we have a profession of that faith coming out of our mouths.
- II. Salvation, however, is not something that is over and done. God continues to save us. Because of this, as Christians, we continue to believe in our heart that God raised Christ from the dead. Likewise, we continue to profess our faith with our mouths. Christianity is not a silent religion. We share our faith.

Biblical stories that could be referenced here include: The parable of the lamp under the bushel (Matthew 5:14-15; Mark 4:21-25; or Luke 8:16-18), Jesus sending his disciples (John 20:21-22), or the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

- III. So if we are saved by the ongoing declaration that “Jesus is Lord,” what does that mean in the 21st century?
 - A. The Lordship of Christ means that Christ is first, Christ is in charge and Christ is preeminent. We must submit everything to Christ.
 - B. But not only internally – we must speak this truth in our lives. We must openly declare to those around us that Jesus Christ is our Lord. There are many ways this can play out. Some examples are:
 - 1. Personal evangelism
 - 2. Participating in the worship of the church
 - 3. Being involved in the larger missionary efforts of the church
- IV. Historically the church does a good job of focusing on believing in our hearts, but we must not neglect the importance of continually speaking our faith into our world.
 - A. This is a great place to challenge your congregation to tell someone this week about Jesus our Lord.
 - B. If the series is in conjunction with a Faith Promise or capital campaign, this is a great way to highlight how all giving is done to promote the propagation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.



Sermon 2 – Active Remembering



We need to remember what God has done by partnering in what God wants to do.

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 (NIV)

11 Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. **12** Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, **13** and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, **14** then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. **15** He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. **16** He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. **17** You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” **18** But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

- I. Moses is speaking to the people. They are getting ready to go into the Promised Land. He’s giving them his final words before they go. He’s reminding them of where they came from and where they are going; where God has brought them from, and where God will take them. It’s a call to REMEMBER GOD.
- II. It’s human nature to take credit for our accomplishments and deflect blame for our failures. In this passage, Moses gives a timeless warning of wisdom to remember that everything we have is a gift from God. Verses 17-18 remind us that even the ability to work to produce wealth comes from God.
- III. When we forget God, we become prideful. Pride is self-focused. It’s a path to sin (v. 14; Philippians 2:3; Proverbs 16:18).
- IV. So, what is a practical way to remember God? We can participate in the work that God is currently doing and is going to do in the world.
 - A. The people that Moses was giving this message to were getting ready to go into the Promised Land. They had not yet taken hold of the promise.

This is a great place to provide “reminders of God’s work,” possibly a story of a person saved or baptized in the church that year. Another possibility would be a report from the mission field or a story from Compassionate Ministries or Engage eMagazine.

- V. As we remember how God has worked, it is exciting to know we have the great privilege of joining in the work God is doing. As we act and give, we are effectively “remembering forward.” Our memories of God moving and working in our lives fuel us to follow His great plans to where He is taking us.

This is a great place for a call to action – perhaps a pledge drive if done during a faith promise or capital campaign.



Sermon 3 – Everyone Everywhere: Do We See Them?



It is God's desire that all people come to salvation. Is that also our desire?

Romans 10:12-13 (NIV)

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.”

- I. One of the earliest debates in the Christian church was if a person had to become a Jew before becoming a Christian. We see this played out in Acts 15. But it is not concluded there – the debate continued. The book of Galatians is in large part a refutation of the idea that Gentiles needed to become Jews before they could become Christians. At the heart of the debate was this question: does God accept everyone or must “they” become “us” before God will save them? Essentially, does God love “them” as they are?
- II. God desires that everyone be saved (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:3-4). Christ made atonement for the whole world (John 3:17). In this passage, Paul leaves no doubt– salvation is for “them,” not just for “us”. There is, in fact, no such thing as “us” and “them.”
- III. But if we’re honest with ourselves, it’s often easier to keep someone different and distant than to view that person as similar and close. While there is no difference to God, we still have cultural, emotional, relational, and experiential differences that bias us against each other. So what shall we do?
- IV. We should choose to be as Christ. Matthew 5:46-48 defines this well. It’s not just about loving “our own people.” Godly perfection is found in loving those who are not like us so that they may know Christ.

One conclusion to this sermon may be to simply look into our heart and ask God to show us if we truly love those who are not like us – if we really believe that in God’s eyes we are all the same.

Another option would be to call the church to move towards a commitment to an outreach ministry – perhaps compassionate ministries or some other ministry to the “other.”

A final option would be a call to renew our focus on giving to world missions. This would be especially useful for a Faith Promise Campaign.



Sermon 4 – Who is Going, Who Will We Send?



*The church is both the
one who is sent and the
one who is sending.*

If done properly, this final sermon is a culmination of the previous three weeks' themes and opens the door to a very robust response. The pastor should give considerable thought to what response opportunities are given after this sermon.

Romans 10:13-15 (NIV)

13 For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **14** How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? **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!”

- I. Last week we saw how God wishes everyone to be saved. We continue this week with how that affects us. Paul makes it clear that all have the ability to call on Christ and be saved (v. 13). He then asks us a set of four rhetorical questions designed to spur us to action. Someone must be sent to preach, so that nonbelievers can hear, believe, call on the Lord and be saved.
- II. As we saw in the first week of the series, all Christians are sent to share their faith. We are not all preachers in the sense of standing in a pulpit on Sunday, but we are all preachers in that all of us are proclaimers of the good news (1 Peter 3:15; Psalm 105:1; Isaiah 12:4; Luke 12:8).

This would be an excellent place for a brief explanation of the gospel.

- III. The church is always sending. We are the church. We are all part of one body (1 Corinthians 10:16-17 is particularly fitting if serving communion). As one body, we are all participants in this important sending work.
 - A. The church sends people locally. These are the local missionaries – the people right here in the congregation.
 - B. The church also sends people around the world – global missionaries.
 - C. This sending is always for a purpose – the making of Christlike disciples.
- IV. There are people all around us and all around the world who need to see beautiful feet (v. 15). They need to hear the good news of salvation. We need to answer the question of whether or now we are willing to send and whether or not we are willing to be sent (Matthew 9:37-38).

Possible ways to conclude the service:

- A commissioning service where you ask for people who are willing to be sent into their own local world as local missionaries for Christ.
- A Faith Promise Pledge drive to raise funds for world missionaries.
- Tie the two ideas together, noting how we can win the local mission field with our bodies and use our money to support the global mission work.

