

“Sharing Christ”

by Greg Smith-Young (Elora-Bethany Pastoral Charge)
Last in a seven-part series about Discipleship Practices

Romans 10.9-17

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If you're reading this online, you can see the Scripture selections
[by clicking here.](#)

The “E” word.

Evangelism.

Evangelism is about sharing good news.

Here is some good news. In Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God has acted personally and decisively to set all things right, including in each one of us. That's good news! Worth sharing!

But! Too often, as it's been shared, it's not sounded good. It's felt more like we're being recruited. Dragged into a church. Squeezed to believe a list of things. Pestered. Judged.

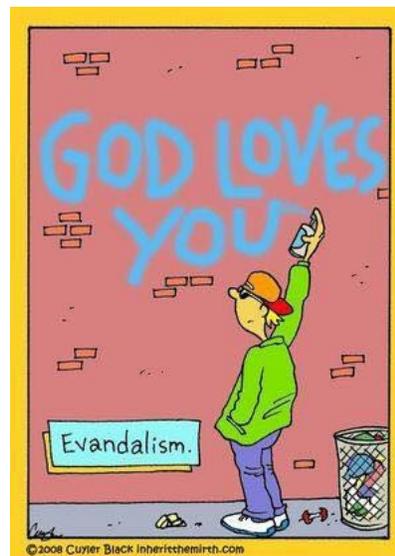
Too often, evangelism gets done with all the kindness of a ransom letter.

The “good” gets lost.

It does not build people up. It tears down.
Not “evangelism” but “e-vandalism.”



Church Mice.



However . . . still, there is this good news. If you're a mouse, the good news might be about “Cheeses.” For us, “Jesus.”

How do we share Jesus, and not be creepy?



Many people are open to spiritual things. Jesus continues to fascinate. Our world can sure use good news.

II

We are finishing up this series called *Bullseye*. A bullseye is a target. It gives you something to aim for.

When we follow Jesus, we want to become like him. He shows us how to truly live: how to be in love with God, how to act with love for others. Jesus shows us, his Spirit fills us, and we become more and more like him.

These 6 Bullseye practices are targets, core activities we aim for, to grow more like Jesus. (I got this idea from two United Church colleagues of mine, Jamie Holtom and Debbie Johnson. Their book is called *Bullseye: Aiming to Follow Jesus*.¹)

We've already looked at 5 practices:

Using Spiritual Practices,
Worshipping Together Weekly,
Discovering Authentic Community,
Service with Our Gifts,
and
Giving Generously.

Today, the last one:

Sharing Christ.

We could call it, "Having Beautiful Feet."

¹ Jamie Holtom and Debbie Johnson, *Bullseye: Aiming to Follow Jesus* (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 2015).

III

We just heard a bit from Paul's letter to Jesus' people in the great city, Rome. Throughout his letter, Paul has been realizing the enormous reach of God's salvation. It's not just for the particular people — Israel, Jews — though God's redemptive work has, until then, been focussed on them. It's for everyone. Anyone. All who trust in Jesus —that he is the Lord, that God raised him from the dead— share in what Jesus has done. Your family tree, your religious background, your past performance . . . they do not matter. Only Jesus.

It's like this: *"Everyone who calls, 'Help, God!' gets help."*²

Then Paul thinks about it some more.

How are they going to call for help, if they don't know who they can trust?

How will they know who to trust, if they have not heard of the One who shows God is trustworthy?

How will they hear about Jesus, if no one tells them?

How will someone tell them, if God has sent no one to tell?

Ah . . . but God has sent, and is sending, and will send. It's beautiful! Paul remembers a line from the prophet Isaiah: *How beautiful are the feet of those who announce the good news!*³

When a traveller comes with news, and it is good news, it is beautiful. Even their feet are beautiful!

God is sending them, *"grand processions of people telling all the good things of God!"*⁴

God is sending them.

God is sending . . . you.

God is sending you, to share Christ, beautifully.

² His translation of Romans 10:13 in *The Message*.

³ Isaiah 52:7.

⁴ This is how Peterson rendered Paul's quote of the Isaiah passage, in Romans 10:15b.

IV

Your feet are walking with Jesus.

When Jesus crouched to touch lepers, whom no one would touch for fear of catching it, and healed them, such that they could not keep the news to themselves . . . it was beautiful. You are walking with Jesus.

When Jesus met a woman so filled with pain and shame that no one wanted anything to do with her, and he talked with her, blessed her and saved her, such that she went to town telling . . . it was beautiful. You are walking with Jesus.

When Jesus caught up with Peter who, in Jesus' time of greatest danger, had denied even knowing him, and forgave Peter, such that he gave the rest of his life to telling people about Jesus . . . it was beautiful. You are walking with Jesus.

When Jesus spoke to Mary, who had come to the place where Jesus was dead and buried, and Jesus said her name, such that she became the first evangelist announcing "He is risen!" . . . it was beautiful. You are walking with Jesus.

How has Jesus crouched down beside you? Spoken to you? Blessed you? Saved you? Forgiven you? Become alive to you?

Now, you are walking with Jesus.

V

When someone you know needs to hear that they matter, not because of what anyone else thinks or how well they are doing, but because God made them, loves them, and delights in them . . . *How beautiful are the feet of whoever will tell them the good news!*

Your feet?

When someone you know is grieving, and needs to hear that Jesus has defeated death and given eternity, so there is hope for their loved one and for them . . . *How beautiful are the feet of whoever will tell them the good news!*

Your feet?

When someone you know has made an awful mess of things, and caused great harm, and is "guilty as sin," and can imagine no way forward, and needs to hear of God's "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saves a wretch" even one like them . . . *How beautiful are the feet of whoever will tell them the good news!*

How are they going to call for help, if they don't know they can trust God? How will they know they can trust God, if no one has told them about Jesus, who proves, guaranteed, what God is like? Who will tell them, unless someone has been sent?

God is sending . . . you, to share Christ, beautifully.

V

You will share Christ beautifully, if you are humble. I don't have it all figured out. I don't have all the answers. I am not all put together. But, I know who is putting me together. All we can offer, with open hands, is him.⁵

You will share Christ beautifully, if you are humble and have conviction. You are an expert about at least one thing. You know what difference Jesus is making in your life. One of the great stories of Jesus is when he gave sight to someone who had been blind his whole life. People started grilling this guy about Jesus. He said, "*All I know is that I was blind, and now I see. And Jesus did it.*" Do you believe what he is doing for you? That is your conviction.⁶

You will share Christ beautifully, if you are humble, have conviction, and trust God. Even if your trust is only as big as the smallest seed, God can do wonders? Do you trust God is real, Jesus is alive, and the Holy Spirit can breathe new life into anyone? Do you trust your child who has turned from God, is not lost to God and can turn back? Do you trust that Jesus brings healing, in ways often unimaginable? Do you trust that if you listen for God's leading, there will be a path to follow? Do you trust that Jesus really has defeated death, broken sin, and is saving the world? Do you trust that God is sending you to tell about this hope?⁷

You will share Christ beautifully, if you are humble, have conviction, trust God, and have good news to share.

I can think of no better news, than Jesus.

⁵ See Bullseye, 136.

⁶ Ibid, 139.

⁷ Ibid, 140f.