

LEC 2025

Pre-Conference Devotions



Devotion 1 Introduction

A Life-Giving Chain

"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? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" - Romans 10:14-15

Have you ever stopped to think about how you came to know Jesus? It wasn't because of anything you did, but because of what **God did for you**. It was He who orchestrated a beautiful, divine chain to bring the Gospel to your ears and draw you to Himself. The Apostle Paul lays out this process, showing us how intricately God has designed the spread of His message.

This passage is a powerful reminder that our faith isn't by our own efforts. It begins with God **sending** a person to preach His good news. It is through that spoken Word that He creates a place for us to **hear** and gives us the gift of **belief**, which then allows us to **call on the Lord**.

Over the next four devotions, we will walk through each link of this beautiful, life-giving chain. We'll explore the power of the preached Word as God's means of grace, the divine action of the Holy Spirit, the significance of our vocations as a way He works through us, and the profound beauty that comes from being a part of God's plan. Today, let's give thanks that God, in His grace, connected each of us to this chain and has called us to be a part of it.

Reflection Question:

- As you read this passage, which part of the chain—sent, preach, hear, or believe—resonates with you the most, and why?
- Think about the different people God used to bring the Gospel to you. In a simple prayer, thank Him for them and for His gracious work in their lives and in yours.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for weaving each of us into Your plan of salvation. Thank you for the people You sent to us, who faithfully spoke Your Word so that we could hear and believe. Prepare our hearts to receive more of Your truth as we study this passage. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Scripture Reflection:

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God will stand forever."

Isaiah 40:8

Hymn Reflection:

["The Church's One Foundation" - Lutheran Service Book #644](#)

Devotion 2 First-Second Chain

The Means of Grace

"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?" - Romans 10:14a

Paul's logic here is simple yet profound. He lays out a clear, step-by-step path to salvation that begins with hearing and ends with calling on the name of the Lord. The most critical link in this chain is belief. We can't call on someone we don't believe in, and we can't believe in someone we don't know.

In these two questions, Paul reveals a critical theological truth: faith does not originate within us. It is a gift created in us by the Holy Spirit. He works through what are called the **Means of Grace**—God's Word and the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). This is His gift and light in the darkness!

This is a beautiful and freeing truth. You cannot talk or reason someone into faith. Faith is not a human decision but a divine act. The role of the Christian is simply to be a conduit for the Spirit to work. When you share the **Gospel**—the Good News of Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins—you are providing the Word that the Holy Spirit uses to work faith. When a person is baptized, the means of Grace through which God is creating faith are applied. How gracious is our God to provide this living Word that we speak, and then work through it to save all who receive this gift.

Reflection Question:

- How does the understanding that faith is a gift created by God's Word change the way you share the Gospel with others?

Prayer:

Lord, we thank You that You have given us faith as a gift through Your Word and Sacraments. Help us to faithfully share this life-giving Word with others, trusting that You will work through it to bring others to believe and call on Your name. Amen.

Scripture Reflection:

"So faith comes by hearing and hearing through the Word of Christ." Romans 10:17

Hymn Reflection:

["How Firm a Foundation" - Lutheran Service Book #728](#)

Devotion 3 Third Chain

The Urgent Need to Preach and Proclaim

"And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" - Romans 10:14b

Paul's question reminds us of a foundational truth of our faith: the Holy Spirit works through a specific means to create faith in our hearts. He uses the spoken and written Word. Apart from this Word, there can be no hearing of the Gospel, and therefore no faith.

This verse speaks of two important vocations. First, there is the specific, public office of the **Holy Ministry**. God has called and ordained men to preach His Word and administer His Sacraments for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith in His Church. Second, there is the **priesthood of all believers**. God has given every Christian the vocation to proclaim His Word in our daily lives. This is not about being a professional public speaker, but speaking Christ to the people God has placed in our lives. Without this witness, the Good News cannot be heard.

God has chosen you to be that messenger to communicate His love and message of salvation and He has promised that His Word will not return to Him empty (Isaiah 55:11). The person you know who is searching for hope, the friend wrestling with a difficult season, or the family member who is far from God—they need to hear the Good News. They can't believe in someone they haven't heard about, and they can't hear without someone speaking to them. Your role is not to create faith, but by the power of the Holy Spirit to faithfully speak the Truth that gives life. Whose life can you faithfully speak the Good News into today?

Reflection Question:

- How does your specific vocation give you a unique opportunity to share God's Word with others?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending us Your Word to create and sustain faith. Equip us in our unique vocations to proclaim Your truth. Use our voices to share the Good News of Jesus with those who need to hear it most. In His precious name, Amen.

Scripture Reflection:

"Your testimonies are my heritage forever; for they are the joy of my heart."

Psalm 119:111

Hymn Reflection:

["God's Word Is Our Great Heritage" - Lutheran Service Book #582](#)

Devotion 4 Fourth Chain

The Call to Vocation

"And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?" - Romans 10:15a

At first glance, this verse seems to be about pastors and missionaries—those specially called and set apart for public ministry. While this is certainly true, we also understand through the doctrine of vocation that all Christians are sent. In His grace, God has placed each of us in different "stations" of life: as a spouse, a parent, a child, an employee, a friend, a neighbor, or a citizen. In each of these roles, God calls us to live out our faith and serve our neighbor.

Your everyday life is not just a series of mundane tasks; it is your mission field. In our Lutheran understanding of vocation, God "sends" us into the world each day. He places us in various roles—as parents, children, spouses, employees, and neighbors. He gives us the unique opportunity to live out our faith in those specific places to speak the Good News in the ordinary spaces of our lives.

This is a great comfort. Your authority to share the Gospel comes from the fact that God has placed you where you are. He is the one who empowers your witness, and He promises that His Word, when faithfully spoken, will accomplish the purpose for which He sent it. Today, consider how God has sent you. What unique opportunities do you have to be His messenger?

Reflection Question:

Think about the different vocations you have. In what ways can you be a more faithful witness to Christ within each of them?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending us into the world to be Your hands and feet. Give us the courage to speak Your Truth in our vocations, and to share the hope that we have in Christ. Strengthen us to be faithful messengers of Your love. Amen.

Scripture Reflection:

"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." Colossians 2:6-7

Hymn Reflection:

["Take My Life and Let It Be" - Lutheran Service Book #783](#)

Devotion 5 The Result

The Beauty of the Gospel

"As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" - Romans 10:15b

Paul's final quote from Isaiah 52 provides a glorious image of what it means to be a witness for Christ. The beauty is not in our actions or our abilities, but in the message we bring. The feet are "beautiful" because of the **Good News** they carry—the Gospel that our sins are forgiven, that death has been defeated, and that eternal life is ours through Christ Jesus.

This verse encourages us to see our work of **evangelism** and **witnessing** as a blessed task. We are bringing a message of peace, a message of salvation, to a world that is in desperate need of it. Our feet may be weary from the daily grind of our vocations, but they are made beautiful by the Truth we are proclaiming. Our joy comes not from our own success but from being a part of God's work of bringing His grace to others because the greatest blessing Christianity gives is salvation through the righteousness of Christ.

Reflection Question:

- How can you actively look for opportunities to share the Good News of Christ's forgiveness in your daily life?

Prayer:

Oh Lord, thank you for the glorious Gospel that we get to share. Help us to see the beauty in our own task of being a witness. Strengthen us to go wherever you send us, knowing that every step we take for the sake of the Gospel is a beautiful one. Amen.

Scripture Reflection:

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16

Hymn Reflection:

["Spread the Reign of God the Lord" - Lutheran Service Book #830](#)