Sunday 18thOctober, 2026

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

Psalm 91."*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.**2** I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'**3** Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.**4** He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.**5** You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,**6** nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.**7** A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.**8** You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked. **9** If you say, 'The Lord is my refuge,' and you make the Most High your dwelling,**10** no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.**11** For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;**12** they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone**13** You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.**14** 'Because he loves me,' says the Lord, 'I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.**15** He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.**16** With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.'"*

Let us pray. *Father we thank you for church this morning. Whether we are seated at home or in the building together, we thank you for the salvation we enjoy. Forgive us for the times this week when we have forgotten your goodness and greatness. We are sinful. We are selfish. We deserve to face the storm of your justice and wrath. Lord, we ask for your mercy and grace. We thank you that Christ bore the judgement we deserve, in his body, on the tree, but then three days later, rose from death, victorious, the risen, conquering king. We thank you for our forgiveness. We thank you for our assurance of salvation. We thank you that heaven is our home.Who else could rescue me from my failing? Who else would offer His only Son? Who else invites me to call Him Father Only a Holy God. Amen*

Song – Only a Holy God [Only A Holy God- City Alight - YouTube]

1. Who else commands all the hosts of heaven3. Who else could rescue me from my failingWho else could make every king bow downWho else would offer His only SonWho else can whisper and darkness tremblesWho else invites me to call Him FatherOnly a Holy GodOnly a Holy God

What other beauty demands such praisesOnly my Holy God!What other splendour outshines the sunWhat other majesty rules with justiceOnly a Holy God

Come and behold HimThe One and the OnlyCry out, sing holyForever a Holy GodCome and worship the Holy God

1. What other glory consumes like fireCome and behold HimWhat other power can raise the deadThe One and the OnlyWhat other name remains undefeatedCry out, sing holyForever a Holy GodOnly a Holy GodCome and worship the Holy God

Bible Reading –Romans 10:1-18(NIV)

30 "What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. 33 As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame." 10 Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3 Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.5 Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: "The person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'"

(that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 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."

Announcements

Focus for the month: God's word. This week why don't you read Psalm 119, in its entirety! It is all about the writers love for God's word. As you read it ask that you might have the same love, the same passion, the same desire to be in God's word and allow God's word to be in you.

Vanuatu Mission. Would you like a cross-cultural experience of mission? A chance to see how the gospel works in another country? Well, our January mission to Vanuatu might just be for you. For two weeks each year we take a small team over where we connect with two churches during some physical work, some kids and youth ministries, while building relationships between brothers and sisters in Christ. All in a safe and supportive environment. For more information speak to either Stephen or Cheryl by the end of October.

Help for our morning service. It is good to be a part of our weekly service, it is even better to be part of the team that puts together our weekly service! We are currently looking for new helpers for both the mixing desk, the computer operation during Church services, musicians, singers and kids talker. Also we need help for

someone to print out our weekly Church bulletin, a task that takes between 60-75 minutes each Friday or Saturday. If you would like to know more please see Stephen or one of the elders.

Next preaching programme – Swansea/Charlestown AM.

Romans 9-16 “In view of God’s mercy.”

25/10Romans 11God’s great mission

1/11Romans 12:1-8Your (whole) self!

8/11Romans 12:9-21Overcoming evil with good

Resource. Every year Hunter Gospel Ministries runs a Bible teaching workshop for both men and women Bible teachers. The aim is to get to grips with a book of the Bible, think through its theology and big issues and get an idea of how to teach it to their church or small group. This year the book is Isaiah and it will run by Kirk Patston from SMBC (and a previous minister of this Church!) It will be on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th November at Grace Evangelical. See Stephen for more details.

Church Administrator. The bulk of our administration has gone back to Stephen but he is committed to responding in a timely manner. Please keep sending your questions and requests to the admin@cpres.org email – what you have to say is extremely important to us.

Big Topics. We are hoping to provide a chance to get together and discuss some big topics. These will not be seminars but round table discussions where those who are interested will read (or watch) something in preparation, before meeting up to pool ideas. The first of these topics will be AI and Us and will be held at the Charlestown Church from 11:45-12:45 on Sunday 25th October. There will be some pre-reading to help stimulate this discussion so if you are interested in this please contact Stephen.

Operation Christmas Child. It’s time to bring you boxes back in, for today is the last day. If you have any questions, please speak to either Kathryn O’Callaghan or Grace Baker.

Save the Date: Christmas & Clay – Saturday 21 November, 2–4pm. Ladies, join us for afternoon tea, an evangelistic talk on the hope of Jesus' birth from guest speaker Jenny Martin, and clay ornament making. Who could you invite?

Meal Co-ordinator We are looking for someone who could co-ordinate (not always cook) meals for those whose circumstances have changed and need some practical short-term help. If you would like some more details, please see Elise.

Bulletin Printing Marilyn has printed the Sunday bulletin without any fuss for the last few years and we really appreciate her faithful service. Her circumstances have changed and she is unable to do this vital task. If you have a spare 60-90 minutes on a Friday or Saturday could you please see Stephen or Marilyn.

Song – I will sing the wondrous story[I will sing the wondrous story (music from Keswick, with lyrics) - Bing video]

1. I will sing the wondrous story2. I was lost but Jesus found meOf the Christ who died for meFound the sheep that went astrayHow He left His home in gloryWrapped his loving arms around meFor the cross of CalvaryDue me back into His way

Chorus:ChorusYes, I'll sing the wondrous story3. He will keep me till the riverOf the Christ who died for meRolls its waters at my feetSing it with the saints in gloryThen He'll bear me safely overGathered by the crystal seaWhere the loved ones I shall meet

Pastoral Prayer Points

Pray for Bhutan (Population 797,000. Christians 19,300). Life remains very challenging for Bhutan's tiny community of believers. For Christians in Bhutan who can only attend unregistered churches. Pray they can continue meeting.For believers in Bhutan who are converts from Buddhism as conversion can create great difficulties for them and their families

Pray for Vanuatu. Pray for the people of Ambae and Santo as they continue to deal with their grief over the deaths of 39 people on the MV Matui. Pray for plans to go to both these places as a mission team in January. Pray that we might work together as partners, supporting each other in our respective missions. Thank God for the positive impact this mission has had on all involved.

Pray for retirees. Pray for those who are ageing in our community, that they would know the Lord's sustaining grace and remember that their worth and identity are found not in their strength or independence, but in Christ. Pray that God would give them patience and courage as they face the limitations, losses and uncertainties that can come with ageing. Pray for families, friends and churches to care well for the elderly, honouring them with love and dignity, while encouraging them to continue using their wisdom, experience and gifts for the glory of God.

Pray that we as a Church can keep God's word at the centre of all we do. As that our reading of God's word would be not just be an intellectual exercise for us but something that is the basis of our spiritual formation. Pray that we might put into the practise all we are learning and that God would be glorified by the transformation of our minds and bodies.

Bible Reading – Romans 10:14-20 (NIV)

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!" 16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. 18 But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world." 19 Again I ask: Did Israel not understand? First, Moses says, "I will

make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding." 20 And Isaiah boldly says,"I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me." 21 But concerning Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people."

Sermon:The wind and the sails(Stephen T)

If you were here last week, you heard all about being saved from God's perspective. For Paul took God's sovereign power and applied it to our salvation. How God saves us by his amazing grace. Like ancient Israel he adopts his children, he promises them his ongoing presence and blessing, he elects them to be his own, he offers them his mercy and all of those things are now made available not just to the Jew but the Gentile. But of course, that raises some really important issues. Why does God choose one person and not another? Does that mean we are just puppets on a string and so ultimately get no say in the matter? Is that fair, is it just? Where is the integrity in that sort of a process, God?

Romans 9 left us looking upward. But Romans 10 changes the camera angle. English preacher, Christopher Ash uses a wonderful picture: "*in Romans 9 Paul is looking at the sun and its gravitational pull; in Romans 10 he turns the camera towards the planets*". For just as Romans 9 was all about God's sovereignty, Romans 10 is all about man's responsibility. These two seemingly contradictory truths are placed side by side by the apostle Paul. Held in creative tension. A puzzle that even the greatest minds have struggled to solve.

Slide 2

So, friends, don't expect me to solve it for you today. There are minds much greater than mine that have thrown their hands up in the air. American preacher Warren Wiersbe recalled a seminary professor saying, "*Try to explain election, and you may lose your mind; but explain it away and you may lose your soul.*" But maybe an illustration might help us not just understand these two vital truths but help us understand the passage before us as well.

Slide 3

Imagine a sailing boat. The sailor doesn't control the wind. He doesn't produce it, command it or determine its strength. But when he is in his sailing boat, he is responsible for what he does with the wind. He can row against it or he can raise his sails. And once the sails are raised, he can steer the boat. And that's what I believe is Romans 10 in a nutshell.

The first part of our passage is all about the Jews who try and ROW, ROW, ROW THEIR BOAT trying to get to their destination themselves. The next part is about Jews and Gentiles whose faith RAISE THE SAILS, to allow the wind the take them to their desired destination. And the last part of our passage encourages us to STEER THE SHIP in such a way that others can also get on board and so make use of the wind that God is also sending them.This sermon, entitled the wind and the sailor, is my attempt to understand what Paul is saying in Romans 9 & 10 so that we can see the truth of God's predestination and Man's free will are not competing truths but two truths we must hold together. So, let's begin the with

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1. **Row, row, row your boat – I can't get there by myself (Rom 9:30-10:4)**

*30 "What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, **have obtained it**, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, **have not attained their goal**. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works."*

If God is sovereign in election, then we are not to blame if he doesn't choose us? Right? Yeah, nah say Paul! It is still our fault if we are not saved. Exhibit A, the Jews. They were personally given the way of righteousness, the way to become right before a holy God & yet they didn't pursue it. Instead, they went down the wrong track, deciding to run after the law rather than to run after God. They put their trust in themselves & their own good works.

Slide 5

Yes, they had a zeal, a real zeal for the Lord but they were trying to row their own way to God. It wasn't that they didn't want a relationship with God, it wasn't that they didn't care about knowing God, it was just that they ignored what the law was trying to say to them and decided they would do things the Frank Sinatra way, their way, my way, not God's way.

Imagine a sailor who is desperately trying to reach the harbour. He's rowing hard, sweating profusely, putting all his effort into getting his boat to travel against the tide, against the strong headwind but he is getting nowhere, absolutely nowhere. And then someone on the shore shouts out: "Stop rowing! Raise your sails!" But the sailor thinks he knows better. That's Israel & that's plenty of Australians as well, who think that they can be good enough for God, by their works, by their service of others, even by their religious devotion, they can make themselves acceptable to God by rowing their boat. That's called works righteousness.

Slide 6

Whereas the Gentiles, choose another path. The path of faith. Trusting in what God said was the way of righteousness. They believed it, trusted it and found a real relationship with God. *33 "As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame."*

Slide 7

The stone, the rock that God placed along the way of our journey, can either be a stumbling stone or a stepping stone. Something that can cruel our chances if we are rowing our boat towards shore, for it can cause even our best actions to be shipwrecked. Or alternatively it can help shelter us from the storms of life, providing a safe spot for us to trust in while we are on this difficult and hazardous journey, which we call life.

Slide 8

10:1 “Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God, for the Israelites, is that they may be saved. 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3 Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. 4 Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”

You see the rock is Christ. He is the goal that the law was pointing towards, the fulfilment of the promises that it held within its grasp & the only person who could ultimately live the law in its entirety. So, if the Jew, or any person for that matter, grabbed hold of the rock of Jesus then he would deliver them to God’s heavenly harbour. But if they ignored Christ, he became the rock on which they stumbled upon and they would find their boat being torn to pieces as it smashes against the very thing that was there to help them.

Slide 9

Why aren’t some people saved? Is it because God didn’t choose them? Well, Romans 10 says it is because they don’t have faith, they didn’t trust in God’s offer of salvation. They are too busy rowing their way to being the best person they can possibly be. They are working so hard on their own good standing that they have failed to trust in the one that God has given them, Jesus, to achieve the outcome, they so desperately wanted. A right standing with the Lord.

Predestination according to the apostle Paul is not that God chooses some to be saved and God’s chooses others to be damned. No, it’s because God opens some hearts, it means Paul and others are praying passionately that God will open other people’s hearts as well. So that they will put aside their desire to trust in their own good works and put their faith in Jesus. For everyone has the choice, even now, to either row, row, row their boat or instead to

Slide 10

1. **Raise the Sails (verses 4-13)**

5 “Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.” But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down)” or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). What does it say? “The word is near you.”

Paul continues to contrast law, trying to get to God by what we do. And faith, trying to get to God by trusting in what Jesus has done for us. And he says that just as the law was close to all the Jews because God gave it to them at Mount Sinai and continued to keep it close to them throughout their history, so now it is that the word of Christ is also near to all as well.

There is no need to be a superhuman and scale the heights and get ourselves to heaven, because Christ who was in heaven has brought the good news of how one can get to heaven down with him to earth. Likewise,

there is no use to get onto flight centre and organise a trip to the world of the dead to show your devotion to the Lord by some sort of martyrdom. No, Christ has already been to the world of the dead and brought the good news of his death and his resurrection to new life back with him to us mere mortals.

Slide 11

This message is easily accessible as well as being equally accessible to both the Jews and the Gentiles. *11 "As Scripture says, "**Anyone** who believes in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him for, "**Everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved"*

It's available to anyone verse 11 and everyone, verse 13 since there is no difference between anyone in the human race and there is no favouritism. All you have to do is call on the name of the Lord. All you have to do is to believe in God's grace. All you have to do is to raise the sails and allow the winds of God's mercy to come and take you to the heavenly harbour.

Do you get it? That wind is not just available to those who are chosen. For this offer of grace is available to all. It is available to all, it is accessible to all, it is there for all to receive. So how do you take hold of that offer of grace, what does it mean to raise the sails to the wind that God is blowing in our direction?

Slide 12

"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 & are justified & it is with your mouth that you profess your faith & are saved."

It's not about what you do, it's about putting your faith in what Jesus has already done for you. And you do that by declaring in your mouth that "Jesus is Lord" and believing in your heart that God raised him from the dead.

Slide 13

It starts with a testimony "Jesus is Lord" In the OT the chorus that rang out from the pages of the Scripture was that "our God reigns". That God is Lord of all the earth and needs to rule the lives of all he has made. But when we come to the New Testament, we see that because Jesus humbled himself and took on the status of a man and became obedient to death, even death on a cross, Philippians 2 says "*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the father*."

Confessing Jesus is Lord is saying Jesus is my Lord. I am not going to try and find my own way to God. I'm not going to row my boat in an attempt to be good enough for God, for Jesus has already done that on my behalf.

So, all I need to do is trust in his death and resurrection to make me right with God and to place myself under his lordship, wanting nothing more in life but to do what he says and to please him in all my thoughts words and actions.

Now saying the words “Jesus is Lord” is not a mystical “open sesame” where the doors of heaven magically open before us. For example in the Muslim faith if you say the Shahada the words “*There is no god but Allah & Muhammad is the messenger of Allah*” you automatically become a Muslim. It doesn’t matter if you have a sword to your throat making you say it or your fingers crossed behind your back, it is the words themselves that get you over the line.

But Paul is saying here that there needs to be both an outward confession and an inward conviction. No one is saved just by uttering those three words. Those three words need to express the state of one’s heart. Our insides believe that Jesus is Lord because by coming back from the dead he defeated sin and death and Satan and that means both the inward and outward are now in perfect alignment. We are saying that Jesus is Lord because we have the overriding desire within us to live our lives as if Jesus is Lord.

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Which gives us a choice this morning, doesn’t it? We can keep rowing our boat and trusting in our own actions trying to prove ourselves good enough for God or we can raise the sails, confess that Jesus is Lord & believe in our hearts that Jesus is Lord and what happens is that the good ship SS Self catches the wind that God had already sent us and takes us to himself.

So, can I ask you is Jesus your Lord? Have you put your trust in Jesus’ death & resurrection? On the last day you can’t say, well God, you didn’t choose me, so it’s not my fault that I missed out on heaven. No, no, no. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The choice is yours. The responsibility to accept God’s grace is yours. And if you don’t do that there is no one to blame but yourself. The wind is blowing your way; the sails are ready to raise. Do it. Do it now. Say, Jesus is Lord with your lips & believe it with your heart.

Slide 15

1. **But don’t stop there, for the call now is to steer the ship (verses 14-21)**

Now here's where the sailing illustration gets really interesting. Because raising the sails doesn't mean from now you don’t have to anything, for the wind is blowing and the sailor still has a responsibility to steer the ship. It is not as if from now on they can sit back and do nothing. So, what do they do next? That’s what Paul wants to talk to us about now.

Slide 16

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!”

Slide 17

If the wind is blowing and everyone needs to stop rowing their boat and raise their sails to get to the heavenly harbour, then a number of things now need to happen. 1. People need to be sent2. Those sent need to preach3. Those they are preaching to need to hear 4. Once they hear they need to believe5. And to believe means calling on the name of the Lord.

God is sovereign but God has chosen to accomplish his sovereign purposes through the proclamation of the gospel. God doesn't say: “I've chosen my people, so don't worry about telling them.” He says: “Go and tell them.” Those who have put their trust in Jesus will want everyone around them to put their trust in Jesus. That is why Paul is praying to God for the Israelites to be saved (Romans 10:1) and that is why Paul is proclaiming the word of Christ to both Jew and Gentile (Romans 10:8).

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Let’s unpack this just a little then. Who sends the people out to preach? Well, we might think the Church, the community of God’s people and in a way that is true. But it is God who has sent Paul to preach. It was the risen Jesus who on the Damascus Road told him to go to the ends of the earth with the good news. And in the 2 Peter 3:9 we read these words, *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you**, not wanting anyone to perish,** but everyone to come to repentance."*

God is the one who is sending his people out to preach, to witness, to share the good news. Somone must do the communicating & that someone is you and me, those who have been saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus. You would think a sovereign God doesn’t need us to do anything but he wants us to share in his passion for the lost. And once that good news is shared, people need to hear it, believe it and answer God’s call to trust it.

The Christians responsibility is to share the good news. It is our friend, family &neighbours’ responsibility to hear and believe and answer God’s call to them. God’s sovereignty doesn’t stop us from taking our responsibilities seriously. Actually, it provides us with the safe space to do the hard things that God is calling us to do. Because in the words of Romans 8, nothing can separate us from the love of God, neither life or death, angels or demons, the present or the future, nor anything in all of creation. I don’t just row my boat or even just raise the sails, I steer the boat on the course, on the GPS direction, that God now gives me.

So where does that leave Israel? Did the Jews not get a fair deal? Paul will go into more detail about this in Romans 11 and it really is a passage you don’t want to miss for it is just so important when we come to what still has to happen before Jesus comes again. Does modern day Israel need to all come back to the Lord before the end? Don’t miss next week!

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Paul continues *16 “But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” 17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message & the message is heard through the word about Christ. But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”*

Yes, Israel did hear because the good news has gone to the ends of the earth. All people have had the chance to respond to the God who made them for a purpose. Well, did Israel not understand then? Verse 15, “*First, Moses says, “I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding*.” (that’s a quote directly from the book of Deuteronomy)

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20 And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” 21 But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.”

So yes, they heard, yes, they understood but they remained disobedient. They wanted to row their own boat, rather than raise their sails. They wanted to prove the goodness of their works rather than putting their faith in the work that Jesus did on the cross. They were made to be a light to the nations and to be salt to the earth but they kept their light under wraps and failed to pass the salt around. Even when God continued to hold his hands out to them. Even when the Lord had done everything possible to open the door of salvation to them, the vast majority of the Jews remained disobedient and obstinate.

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So, there we have it. God’s sovereignty and man’s Free Will, side by side in Romans 9 & 10. Together making the one picture. Helping us to understand a bit better the nature of our world. So, you can’t deny God’s sovereignty, that he elects and chooses those he wishes to save, based not on their own actions but on his mercy. And you can’t deny human responsibility - we must confess our faith. We must call upon the name of the Lord. It’s just that somehow, somehow, the whole story has to take in both sides of the truth.

Which is why the Presbyterian Church is often labeled a reformed, evangelical church. It’s reformed because like the leaders of the reformation it emphasizes what God does – his grace, his mercy, his sending Jesus in our place. But it is also evangelical because it wants the good news to go out far & wide. It tells people what you do next really matters. You need to repent & believe. You need to have faith in Jesus. Both are important. You don’t get the full picture unless you fully understand God’s sovereignty & man’s responsibility.

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But before we leave, can I ask you a question? Can you feel the wind blowing on your face this morning? Can you see the wind of the Spirit moving all around you. It’s the call of God on your life. He wants to introduce you to Jesus, whose death on the cross and his rising to life has given you and me a chance at eternal life. Have you heard that? Do you understand that? Can you feel what it means? If so, raise the sails. Confess with your mouth Jesus really is Lord. Believe it with your heart. Respond as if your life deepens upon it. Because it does.

And then get ready to steer the ship. For it is not a cruise ship, entertaining others and keeping them comfortable but it is more like it is a rescue boat, a search and rescue vessel on the lookout for those who have shipwrecked their faith by running aground on a rock of good works. And there are plenty out there in need. And God has heart for them. And so should we. So, remember, how beautiful are the feet that bring good news.

Song – No other name [No Other Name (Acoustic Song Leading Video) // Emu Music - YouTube]

1. There is no other name 2. There is no victory In heaven can be found But Jesus crucified Through whom we are redeemed No other cure for sin Through whom your grace abounds But that our Saviour died No other name can save No other hope we have But Jesus Christ our Lord But that he rose again **Chorus**: My joy in sorrow's tears 3. No other throne endures My strength to cast out fears No other song remains No other name but Jesus, Jesus But'Worthy is the Lamb My hope in darkest night Who was for sinners slain' My broken soul's delight When every knee shall bow No other name but Jesus, Jesus And tongue confess you are Lord, You are Lord

Closing.

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!" (Romans 10:14-15)