

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

What It Means To Be Free In Christ

Discussion Guide
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Volume VII: Living For Jesus, Growing in Grace

Sermon Title: *To Be Determined* by Paul Martin
Romans 15

Introduction: having concluded his major points of the Gospel exposition, Paul turns to basic matters of explaining his reason for writing, his mission and ministry, and his future expectations, including his visit to Rome. Quite a few subtle points and insights into everyday Christian living as Christ followers may be gleaned from these verses:

Sermon Outline

I. What Characterizes the Romans Believers? (v.14)

- A. They are full of goodness—the kind intent of God toward one another
- B. They are full of all knowledge—they have wisdom and understanding from the Lord via the indwelling Holy Spirit
- C. They are capable of admonishing one another—(to admonish Gk: noutheteo, to exhort and to give instruction)

II. Paul's Calling and Mission (vv 15-16)

A priest of the Gospel of God to make an offering of the Gentile through evangelism

III. Paul' Boast in Christ:

A fully invested life has paid richly in Kingdom Dividends (vv 17-21)

- A. He has effectively evangelized the Gentiles, establishing church in many cities, by the power of the Gospel attested by signs and wonders.
- B. He has covered the territory from Jerusalem to Illyricum
- C. His focus has been to preach where Christ has not been named

IV. Now Rome Lies on His Path to Spain (vv 22-33)

- A. First to Jerusalem
- B. Pray for me against the enemy
- C. I will come to you and find refreshment in your company

Conclusion: God has a master plan for our lives. It is debateable whether or not every move we make is a precise part of that plan. We are in a battle...sometimes we get wrong "intel," sometimes we ignore God's warnings with all good intent, sometimes we get tunnel vision, sometimes His plan leads through the fire and the deep waters. Our only goal is simply to be His without reserve and to trust Him completely. It was Paul himself who said, "Don't waste time playing 'What if?'" Well, actually he said, "This one thing I do: Forgetting those things which lie behind, and looking to those things which are before me, I press on toward the mark of the call of God in Christ Jesus."

And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. ¹⁵ But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷ Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸ For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, ¹⁹ in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Romans 15: 14-19 (NASB)

Discussion Questions

1) Have there been people in your Christian life who are like the Apostle Paul was to the believers in the church at Rome? What was it that they did which proved so vital to the growth of your faith in Christ?

2) What was it that made Paul so confident in verse 14 that the saints in the church at Rome were so filled with goodness and knowledge that they were able to admonish one another? Why do you think that Paul would feel the need to write an encouraging word at this point (vv. 14-15)?

3) Looking back on this series of sermons which have lasted for over a year, what are some of the major points that the Apostle Paul has made in his letter to the church in Rome? Is there a verse or passage of Scripture that seems to sum it all up for you?

20 And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation; 21 but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND."

22 For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; 23 but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you 24 whenever I go to Spain-- for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while-- 25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. 28 Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

Romans 15: 20-29 (NASB)

4) Paul's ambition was to preach the Gospel to those who had never heard of Christ (v. 20). Looking over your schedule and priorities this past month, how would you define your ambition in life? Is it what you would want it to be? What does it say with respect to your values? Concern for the kingdom of God?

5) Do you think Paul should have personally gone to Jerusalem? What do you think when your life has outcomes similar to Paul's in this case?

6.) Where do you sense God's calling upon you with respect to furthering His kingdom? Intercessory prayer? Helping the poor? Sharing your faith with unbelievers you know? Other things?

³⁰ Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, ³¹ that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; ³² so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company. ³³ Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Romans 15: 30-33 (NASB)

Some of the questions for this Study Guide were borrowed from the *Serendipity Bible: New International Version*; Zondervan Publishing; Grand Rapids, Michigan.

NOTES:

Prayer Requests:

- Continue to pray that God will send an eligible buyer for our property who will be agreeable to our terms.
- Pray for the Building Construction Team of Melody Ahrens, Rob Baughman, Charla Bolind, Rita Burnap, Dale Johnson, Barb Kepler, Ashley Oberhuber, and Dick Wright.

The Mission of the Small Groups Ministry

We are a church of connected small groups that meet purposefully on a regular basis to equip one another for ministry, to love and build up one another in Christ, to know Him intimately, and to reach out to a lost and dying world in obedience to the Great Commission.

