

Romans 15.14-33

Ministry FAQ's

Romans: DOCTRINAL TREATISE wrapped up IN A PERSONAL LETTER

1.10 "I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you."

Middle of Ch 1 through middle of Ch 15 > PREACHES THE PUREST GOSPEL BUT PAUL IS NOT FINISHED YET > Resumes personal tone of his letter
v. 14 "I myself am convinced, my brothers"

PERHAPS PAUL wonders whether Roman Christians have been OFFENDED "by the fact, contents, or tone of his letter" \ "Has he been presumptuous to address a church he did not found and has never visited? Has he given the impression that he regards their Christianity as defective and immature? Has he been too outspoken?" I HAVE FELT THOSE QUESTIONS MANY A SUNDAY NIGHT

APOSTLE OPENS HIS HEART > Reveals longing for BROTHERS in Rome AS WE LOOK OVER HIS SHOULDER > almost 2000 yrs later > Ministry 101

1 Dreams> What He Seeks 2 Deeds> How He Serves 3 Delight > Why He Serves

1. Dreams > What He Seeks

"the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea"
PAUL'S CONVICTION > Local Church > Dispensary for this Knowledge of God

a. Picture CHURCH PLANTER > Sees Excellence in the Church in Rome

v. 14 full of goodness, complete in knowledge & competent to instruct
Romans REPUTATION was known to Paul > and it WAS VERY GOOD

v. 14 People "FULL of GOODNESS" > kindness, charity, purity

WORK OF SAVING GRACE > Not NATURAL VIRTUE in Fallen Man
3.10,11 "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is...no one who seeks God."

GOODNESS > one Part of Holy Spirit's Fruit > EVIDENCE of God's Salvation
I see this in MANY @ ICF > Would this be Someone's Description OF YOU?
MAY GOD MAKE IT TRUE OF ALL > More and More > Day by Day

2) v. 14 “complete in knowledge” > Sound, practical understanding of the Faith
 CONNECTION > those who Think Christianly will Act Christianly

LETTER to Romans > for People who take their FAITH SERIOUSLY
 DEEP SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS and PROFOUND GOSPEL TRUTHS
 12.2 “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

3) v. 14 “competent to instruct one another” > teach, admonish, correct

BELIEVERS WHO GREW AND HELPED ONE ANOTHER TO GROW
 Church that DISPLAYED CHRIST and DECLARED CHRIST to Others

1.8 “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.”

JOHN NEVIUS > Pioneer M to Korea > went with his “3 Self Formula”
 CHURCH should BECOME > SELF Governing, Supporting, and Propagating
 GREAT SUCCESS of God’s Church in Korea > Rightness of Strategy

b. Priority > Paul knew His God-given part to play as Jesus Builds Church

When I FIRST BECAME a PASTOR > Sought Advice of OLDER PASTOR
 MINISTER’S ADVICE > “Define YOURSELF before everyone else does”

PAUL TELLS THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS HIS PRIORITY -
 v. 20 “It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not
 known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.”

SOMEONE Already laid Foundation in Rome > Church built w/out Paul – or Peter

Paul HAD SERVED as APOSTLE to the GENTILES for 20 Years
 To Corinthians: “Our hope is that... we can preach the gospel in the regions
 beyond you.”
 2 Corinth 10.15,16

v. 19 “So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed
 the gospel of Christ.”

Heroic
 BRIEF & MODEST description of 10 DIFFICULT YEARS > 3 Mission Journeys
 “all the way round” > PREACHING CIRCUIT > Jerusalem to Yugoslavia
 Circle of Evangelism around the EASTERN Mediterranean

Paul VISITED EVERY ROMAN PROVINCE btwn Jerusalem & Yugoslavia
Seized Divine Opportunity > Roman Roads, Protection, Unified Language

v. 23 “now there is no more place for me to work in these regions”

APRIL in Hawaii > “Jesus” film mailed to EVERY ADDRESS in Entire State
Half a Million ADDRESSES > \$ 1.7 million > paid for by 185 churches there
SATURATION Evangelism > trying to reach every person in the islands

Paul was not Saturation Evangelist > was STRATEGIC EVANGELIST
DID NOT speak with EVERY PERSON from Jerusalem to Illyricum
PLANTED CHURCHES in the Large and Influential Cities > HIS CALLING

NOT EVERYONE IS PAUL > but everyone needs Paul’s Comprehensive Vision
RESTLESS \ NOT CONTENT with Success > Eager for ALL TO KNOW HIM

London Missionary Society asked DAVID LIVINGSTONE where wanted to Go
“Anywhere, as long as it is forward!”
Livingstone in Africa saw: “Smoke of 1000 villages where X has not been named”

Whether we PIONEER new churches or PASTOR existing churches > DREAM:
“the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea”

EVERYONE WORKS TOGETHER > Paul was a TEAM PLAYER

Tertullian wrote to Unbeliever about the Church in Roman Empire in 200 AD:
“We are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place among you – cities,
islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, the very camp, tribes, companies, palace,
senate, forum – we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods”

Adolph Harnack > German Church Historian > explains how this happened:
“The most numerous and successful missionaries of the Christian religion were not
the regular teachers but Christians themselves, loyal and courageous...everyone
who seriously confessed the faith proved of service to its propaganda...the great
mission of Christianity was accomplished by means of informal missionaries”

c. Plans > Paul’s Dreams and Priorities directed his DAY TIMER

PAUL’S MISSION POLICY directed his Travel Plans

v. 22. “This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.”

NOW PAUL PLANS TO REACH WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN
PAUL PLANS THREE LONG JOURNEYS

- 1) v. 24 “Now, I am on my way to Jerusalem” > from Corinth where he wrote
BY SEA THAT WAS AT LEAST 800 miles
- 2) v. 23 Rome: “I have been longing for many years to see you, I plan to do so”
ABOUT 1,500 miles by SEA > 2500 kilometers
- 3) v. 28 “I will go to Spain and visit you on the way.”
From Rome to Spain > ANOTHER 700 mile Sea Voyage

3000 miles \ 5000 kilometers of HAZARDOUS & UNCERTAIN Travels

STOTT “We know from the OT that centuries before Christ seafaring Phoenicians from Tyre and Sidon had engaged in commerce with Spain...By the time of Caesar Augustus ‘the whole Iberian peninsula had been dominated by the Romans...with many flourishing colonies. Did Paul possibly look beyond Spain to the edges of the Empire, to Gaul and Germany, and even to Britain? Whether he reached and evangelized Spain we shall probably never know.”

GOD SUSTAINED PLAN v. 23 “I have been longing for many years to see you”
Like WILLIAM CAREY > Paul could PLOD > Persistent, Faithful, Obedient

PAUL’S PLANS FOR THE ROMAN BELIEVERS

v. 24 “I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.”

Letter to ROMANS > Paul’s Business Card > Important ID of Asian Businessman
YOU READ MY CARD? What do you think? Missionary Raising Support
v. 24 “have you assist me” > PAUL DOES NOT HESTIATE TO ASK HELP

NOT SURE of Paul’s AGE > Mature Older Man with Physical Aches and Pains
TO SPAIN > Not to Home for Retired Apostles on Gold Coast of Barcelona

PAUL’S EXAMPLE > Christians never retire from God’s Service
May CHANGE Job Titles > But NEVER CHANGE our Calling to Serve Him

2. Deeds > How He Serves

a. Prayer > Dreams for God can only be accomplished by God's Power

Ch 1 > Paul told Romans he was praying for them:

1.9 God...is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times

Now Paul asks Romans: v. 30 "I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me."

STRUGGLE > an Athlete GIVING HIS BEST IN COMPETITION

Jacob wrestled with God all night > Clung to Him with last ounce of Strength

"I will not let you go unless you bless me." Genesis 32.26

NEED NOT Fight w/ God \ Try to pry open the fingers of His Clenched Fist

GOD'S ARMS ARE OPEN TO US IN CHRIST

8.32 "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"

GOSPEL IS OUR INCENTIVE TO PRAY > to struggle in Prayer \ Col 4.12

Paul tells Colossians about Pastor: "Epaphras...He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured."

v. 31 "Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there"

PAUL'S WORST FEAR WERE REALIZED when he got to Jerusalem

Acts 21: The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple... While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar... When the rioters saw the...soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. vs. 27-33

v. 32 "so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed" > **PAUL TO ROME > GOVERNMENT TRANSPORT > PRISONER**

BUT WAS NOT DAUNTED FROM HIS CALLING > last word of Luke in Acts

"When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him... For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and

welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 28.16,30,31

Dwight Moody American Evangelist Exhausted > went to England for a Rest
 Did not want to preach > but was pressed to preach at church in north London
 “I had no power, no liberty, it seemed like pulling a heavy train up a steep grade”
 YET PASTOR INSISTED Moody must preach again that Night
 Sunday Night > DIFFERENT STORY > Preached with Liberty and Power
 Gave Invitation > 500 people stood \ Moody thought MISTAKE told to Sit Down
 Invited interested People Remain after Service > 500 people remained
 Moody to Pastor “Do you know these people?” \ Pastor “I have seen some of them”
 Moody “Are they believers?” \ Pastor “I do not think so”
 MOODY’S VACATION ENDED > preached for 2 years in British Isles
 THOUSANDS CAME TO FAITH IN CHRIST

REST OF THE STORY: Two sisters in N. London church > One an Invalid.
 After the morning service the healthy sister came home and reported Moody had
 been to their church. “Mr. Moody of Chicago? I have read about him in the
 newspapers and have prayed that he would come to London and our church. If I
 had known he would preach this morning I would have had no breakfast and only
 prayed. Now leave me alone so I can spend the rest of the day praying for his
 evening message”

b. Preaching v. 20 “It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel”

PAUL WAS FIRST AND FOREMOST A PREACHER

v. 16 “duty of proclaiming the gospel of God”

v. 19 “I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ”

“When I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to
 me if I do not preach the gospel!” 1 Corinthians 9.16

PAUL’S PREACHING WAS A BOLD REMINDER - v. 15 “I have written you
 quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again”

APOSTLES were FOUNDATIONAL to the Church > Often REMINDED

“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my
 gospel” 2 Timothy 2.8

4th grade teacher Mr. Woodenham > Big Paddle to dispense REMINDERS!!

APOSTOLIC CHURCH TODAY has a REMINDING MINISTRY

- 1) Fundamental Importance of Gospel > CENTER of all we Believe and Do
- 2) Failure to Remember because of the Deceptiveness of Sin in US

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE OLD NEWS THAT SOUNDS FOREVER NEW

JESUS: "Every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."
Matthew 13.52

v. 29 "I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ." > WATCH OUT ROMANS! Full Measure = Long Sermons

JOHN CALVIN'S commentary on verse 29: "If we seek *salvation* it is by the very name of Jesus. If we seek *gifts of the Spirit* they will be found in His anointing. If we seek *strength*, it lies in his dominion; if *purity*, in his conception; if *gentleness*, it appears in his birth...If we seek *redemption* it lies in his passion; if *acquittal* in his condemnation; if *remission of the curse*, in his cross; if *satisfaction*, in his sacrifice; if *purification* in his blood...if *newness of life*, in his resurrection; if *immortality* in the same...In short, since rich store of every kind of good abounds in him, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other."

Paul brought "full measure of the blessing of Christ" THRU PREACHING

SHORTER THE VISIT > the Longer the Sermon > Acts 20 in Troas (v. 7-11)
"Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed -He's alive!" Then he went upstairs again...After talking until daylight, he left..."

Eutychus FELL out Window > You'd a cussed too if you fell down 3 flights

c. Poor > Paul PREACHED and PRACTICED the Gospel

1 Thessalonians 1.5 our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction

PEOPLE OFTEN MUST SEE THE GOSPEL BEFORE THEY HEAR IT

v. 25 “I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there.”

Paul’s 1st mtg with Jerusalem Church leaders > recorded Galatians 2.9,10
 “James, Peter and John...gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship..
 They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, & they to the Jews. All they asked
 was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do

DIGNITY OF RECEIPIENTS in the service of the saints there.

v. 26. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor
 among the saints in Jerusalem.

BEEN GATHERING THIS COLLECTION FOR TWO YEARS

WHY SO MANY POOR IN JERUSALEM? > perhaps 2 Reasons:

1. Great Harvest of Believers in Jerusalem

PENTECOST > Acts 2.44 All the believers were together and had everything in
 common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

2. Great Famine in Empire

Acts 11.27 “Prophet...named Agabus... predicted that a severe famine would
 spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)
 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers
 living in Judea.”

DUTY v 27 they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spirit-
 ual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

Paul tells Gentiles of Debt to Jews 11.17 “you, though a wild olive shoot, have
 been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the
 olive root...”

PAUL SEES GENTILE OFFERING > Symbol of INDEBTEDNESS to Jews

SERIOUSNESS of Paul’s Obligation to DUTY > 2000 miles of precarious travel
 Paul is OUR EXAMPLE v. 1 “We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of
 the weak and not to please ourselves.”

DEMONSTRATION v. 28 “made sure that they have received this fruit”

Some see Offerings as LOOTING > for Paul is was FRUITING!

FRUIT DEMONSTRATES GROWING FAITH > Reality of Holy Spirit

DELIGHT v. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it

2 Corinthians 9. 7. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Must not be SAD Givers who RELUCTANTLY Give
Not MAD Givers who Give out of COMPULSION
But GLAD Givers who Give CHEERFULLY

3. Delight > Why He Serves

PAUL was – and still is – OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD even ATTACKED
SOME THINK Paul is Vain, Self Centered, Bragging > Groundless Charge

a. Praise v. 17 “I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

v. 18 “I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me” v. 15 “the grace God gave me”

PAUL: “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.”
1 Corinthians 3.6,7

IF CHRIST DOES THE WORK > THEN HE GETS TO THE GLORY

JOHN MURRAY “There is nothing of egoism in his glorying; it is glorying in God’s grace and when thus conditioned it cannot be too exuberant”

NOT PAUL’S WORK FOR GOD > BUT GOD’S WORK THROUGH PAUL

b. Power

vs. 18,19 leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done-- by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit.”

POWER > Great Virtue Today > Power Lunch, Power People, Power Neckties
POWER EVANGELISM done by POWER CHURCHES

PAUL > Surprised by application of SOME IN TODAY’S CHURCH

PAUL > Power seen most in WEAKNESS > Greatest Power seen in CROSS

2 Corinthians 12.12 “The things that mark an apostle--signs, wonders & miracles”
 SIGNS & WONDERS > Attest to Reality of ONCE FOR ALL SAVING WORK
 CONFIRM > “faith once for all entrusted to saints” COMPLETED SCRIPTURE

SHALL WE SAY God can NEVER do MIRACLES Today? CERTAINLY NOT
 He is Living, Powerful, Sovereign, and Wise

Do we see the manifestations of HIS MIGHTY POWER today?
 Lives Transformed \ Families Reunited \ Healings: with and without Medicine

EVERY CONVERSION is a Power Encounter > Spirit through the Word of God
 Thru GOD’S POWER > Sinners are RESCUED and REGENERATED

Unbelievers DEAD IN SIN > Salvation nothing less than RESURRECTION
 1.16 the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who
 believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

c. Priestly Duty

v. 16 “to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of
 proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering
 acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit”

OT > Temple with SACRIFICING PRIESTHOOD > separated tribe of Levi
 NT > Jesus High Priest GAVE ONCE FOR ALL > Sacrifice of Himself for Sin
 NOW REIGNS AND RULES AS INTERCESSOR AT GOD’S RIGHT HAND

N.T. ALL BELIEVERS > PRIESTS > Direct Access to God thru Risen Christ
 SACRIFICES 12.2 “offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to
 God--this is your spiritual act of worship”

DANGER – Applying OT ministry model to NT church
 Pastors are not Sacrificing Priests > Finished Work of Christ > Debt of Sin PAID
 Pastors not Separated by their Piety > they’re NO CLOSER to God: OBVIOUSLY!

UNFORTUNATELY > in last 2000 years > Church distorted by PRIESTCRAFT
 ROBERT HALDANE “The bread of the Lord’s table became the body of Christ in
 the literal sense; the table on which it lay became the altar; the teachers became the
 priests who offered the sacrifice of the mass; and the contributions of Christians

became offerings...the figurative sense has been, by gross imagination and the ploy of Satan, turned into a literal sense, to the utter subversion of truth”

PAUL’S PRIESTLY MINISTRY HAD NO HOCUS POCUS

v. 16 “the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God”

Paul describes his ministry as **PRIESTLY DUTY** \ 5 different phrases
 “minister” \ “priestly duty” \ “an offering” \ “acceptable to God” \ “sanctified”

SANCITIFIED BY HOLY SPIRIT > directed to Paul’s Jewish Critics
WHO CLAIMED UNCLEAN GENTILES COULD NEVER PLEASE GOD
 Nevertheless Paul: 1.7 To all in Rome who are loved by God & called to be saints

PRIESTLY DUTY // Mark 2 > 4 men broke hole in roof where Jesus was teaching
LOWERED A PARALYTIC DOWN ON A MAT FOR HIS HEALING TOUCH
 Different **DIRECTION**> Same Intention> Offering Helpless to God for His Help

Most **POPULAR** Bible Verse is **NOT IN Bible** “God helps them that help themselves” **TRUTH** > “God helps them that **CANNOT** help themselves”

WE ARE GOD’S PRIESTHOOD > must lift up the world to our Gracious King

IMAGE of Priesthood > **MAGNIFIES SERIOUSNESS** of Evangelistic Task
 Important Mandate of OT Sacrifices > **GOD WANTS the BEST**, no Junk Offering

HIS GOSPEL MINISTRY > demands nothing less than **OUR BEST**

PAUL’S IMAGE IS FULFILLMENT OF > Isaiah 66.18-21

GOD SAYS: “I...am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory...and I will send some of those who survive to the nations--to Tarshish (which was probably SPAIN), to the Libyans and Lydians... to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations. And they will bring all your brothers, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD...And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites," says the LORD.”

DIRECT CONNECTION between **WORSHIP** and **WITNESS** > John STOTT

“ It is when we worship God, glorying in His name, that we are driven to proclaim his name to the world. And when through our witness people are brought to Christ,

we then offer them to God. Further, they themselves join in his worship, until they go out and witness. They worship leads to witness, and witness to worship. It is a perpetual cycle.”

World is WAITING for TRANSFORMING POWER OF GOSPEL

16th Century > Geneva, Switzerland was a MORAL DISGRACE

Riots, Gambling, Drunkenness, Adultery, Vices, People danced Naked in Streets

CITY COUNCIL passed MANY LAWS to Restrain their Citizens > No Change

August 1536 > 27 yr. old , Skinny, Sickly FRENCHMAN arrived in Geneva

Influential Genevan William Farel terrorized Calvin to become Pastor of Church

Calvin had NO MONEY, NO WEAPONS > only the Word of God preached Daily

After 2 ½ years > Wild Genevans forced Calvin out of their City

BUT THINGS BECAME STEADILY WORSE > 3 yrs later Invited Calvin Back

Opened Scripture to place he left off and continued preaching w/out comment....

“As the Genevan people acquired knowledge of God’s Word and allowed it to influence their behavior, their city became a model city from which the gospel spread to the rest of Europe and the world. Geneva was cleaned up physically. Beggars were removed from the streets, but a hospital and poorhouse were provided for them, and they were well run. Education was offered to all classes of people, rich and poor, and new industries flourished. There has probably never been a better example of extensive moral and social reform than the transformation of Geneva under John Calvin, and it was accomplished almost entirely by the preaching of God’s Word.”

THAT IS WHY PAUL CAN CLOSE THIS SECTION SAYING

v. 33 “The God of peace be with you all. Amen.”