

Parson to Person
ROMANS 15 PART 9B

“Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written: ‘To whom He was not announced, they shall see; and those who have not heard shall understand.’ For this reason, I also have been much hindered from coming to you. But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great

desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while. But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you” (Romans 15:14–32 NKJV).

Paul had a passion for the Gentiles—that they might hear, understand, and “obey” God’s command to believe

the Gospel. This was and is the command given to all men today—obey the Gospel. John wrote, *“And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ”* (1 John 3:23 NKJV). Therefore, Paul’s expression, *“to make the Gentiles obedient,”* is both fitting and necessary (vs. 18). God commands that we believe! To rebel against His command is fatal. Moreover, this was a fundamental motivating force behind Paul’s missionary journeys. His love for the Lord and for those he was sent to serve provided sufficient motivation—even when “going” would mean great suffering and loss (see 2 Corinthians 4–5).

As we can see here in the text, Paul made mention of the fact that he did not labor among those who had been otherwise served or had already heard the gospel. He wrote, *“I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation.”* This clearly aided in the methodology Paul employed. The same can be said for some of today’s missionaries. (I can’t help but think of Brian and Rachel Rich who are presently serving an unreached tribe in Brazil.)

By the time Paul wrote the Romans, they were *“filled with all knowledge,”* but he nonetheless explained the

gospel more fully to them throughout his letter regarding the nature of man, man's knowledge of God, the inexcusable nature of any denial man might attempt at refusing to acknowledge Him, and specifics about God's righteous purposes and plans for mankind. (His focus was particularly on those who have or will respond to the gospel message—trusting Christ for salvation.) He explained the past, present, and future of God's accomplishments in and for Israel, and how we as Gentiles are blessed by God's dealing with them.

In the concluding remarks of his letter, Paul reminded the Romans that they (and we) are indebted to the Jews and that they (and we) should be mindful of the "*saints*" in Jerusalem and throughout Israel. He wrote that the believers from "*Macedonia and Achaia*" had made a "*certain contribution for the poor among the saints who [were] in Jerusalem*" and that "*[it] pleased them indeed, [for] they [were] their debtors.*" Moreover, he wrote that "*if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.*" This we can all learn from! For this reason, we prayerfully and financially support missions and missionaries to Israel. We also take groups (when possible) in order to educate believers about God's work

and His-story in Israel. In this way we support the Gospel message to those living in the land.

At the front end of this passage Paul told the Romans that they were *“able to admonish one another.”* But he also said, *“I have written more boldly to you on some points...that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”* This was his way of reinforcing what they needed in order to keep maturing in the faith so that they may be able to minister to one another—a common theme for Paul.

Lastly, we see here in the text that Paul had planned to pay them a personal visit and be supported by them as he continued his work. However, as we know from history, Paul did indeed make his way to Rome but not as expected—he arrived there in chains.

His request for prayer—*“Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you”*—was answered. However, as is with our prayers, we

always submit our requests to God, trusting him for the outcome.

I love you all,
Pastor Paul