

Romans 1:1

Triumph in Adversity: Finding the High Road by Taking the Low Road

April 21, 2024

Rom 1:3,4 The “flesh” and the “Spirit” are the two realms in which the believer lives, and understanding the interaction between these two worlds is the key to walking the Christian life in the appropriate manner.

v. 7 “peace from God” = peace with God – justification
= peace of God – sanctification
= all from God’s grace

v. 1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus. . .
“bond-servant” = doulos = “slave” i.e. property
 (“servant” = diakonos; pais = an “obedient agent”)

Deut 15:12-17 the “bond-slave” concept: voluntary giving of oneself to the property of another

OT bondslaves: Mary – **Luke 1:46ff** and Simeon – **Luke 2:28ff**

NT bondslaves: Early church (**Acts 4:29**), James (**James 1:1**), Peter (**2 Peter 1:1**). Jude (**Jude 1**)

2 Cor 4:5 The Apostle Paul also became bond-servant to those whom he ministered, *a slave to his fellow believers*.

Rom 12:1 Our reasonable response to God is to give our bodies to Him as His property; this is the discipleship commitment; it is voluntary, but it is total.

Paul told the Romans what his plans were. Compare his expectations with what actually happened:

Romans 15:24 whenever I go to Spain—for I hope to see you in passing. . .

Acts 28:16 When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him. . .

Romans 15:31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea. . .

Acts 21:32 . . . and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

Romans 15:31 . . . and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

Acts 24:27 But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned.

Romans 15:32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

Acts 28:30 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him,

See **Eph 6:19,20** Despite his adversity, Paul was completely reconciled to God’s plan for his life, and his attitude toward service to God, where he was, under his current circumstances, did not change one bit.

Lessons for us:

- A slave is not greater than his Master (John 13:16).
- Jesus made Himself a slave for our sakes (Phil 2:7).
- Our reasonable response is to make ourselves bond-slaves to God.
- Then, we become His responsibility.
- When adversity strikes, we know that it is His direct will for us.
- Living life reconciled to adversity enables us to keep our eyes on our goal for being here: to be ambassadors of the reconciliation to God that is to be found in Jesus Christ.