

Title: Our Aim with God's Gospel

Text: Romans 15:15–21

Angie and I love watching "America's Got Talent," a show that showcases an incredible variety of talents from across the country and the world.

But I have to confess, those acts where knives are thrown at people make me squirm in my seat. I can hardly watch!

Why? Because they have one shot at hitting the target. A miss would be disastrous. It would be a big bloody mess!

So, what drives them to perform such acts? What compels them to do this? Is it the thrill, the fame, or simply the spectacle of it all?

While it's entertaining to watch, as followers of Christ, we're called to aim for a different kind of target. And the stakes are even higher.

Because we are people of Grace, we should have a special compulsion. We must be compelled to share his glory!

Main Idea: God's Grace Compels Christians to Reach the UnReached !

That's the essence of what Paul addresses in these verses: the profound transformation that occurs when you grasp the depth of God's grace, what you truly deserve, and the lavish grace He bestows upon you.

Now, as we delve into the heart of the sermon, we'll explore three essential actions that this understanding should compel you to undertake in reaching the lost for Christ.

1. Embrace the Purpose of Grace (vs. 15-16)

Paul, after commending the church at Rome for their competency in the scriptures and their ability to admonish one another, reminds them that he, too, needed to admonish them in some areas throughout this important letter.

Look at verse 15...

Romans 15:15 ESV

¹⁵ But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God

Paul spoke the truth in love to this church in Rome and the result was this letter that we have walked through over the past three years (8/30/20 was the first sermon in this series).

What was he bold about?

- The purpose of the church
- Sin - everybody falls in this category
- The Jewish Nation

Romans: Unashamed - Building the Church through the Gospel

- The Gentile people
- A new people - Christian.
- Faith – it has always been about faith
- The Great Love of God
- Walking in the flesh verses walking in the Spirit (7-8)
- Chapters 9-11 how God isn't finished with the nation of Israel.
- Living as a sacrifice to God
- Living in submission to the God ordained government.
- Living without passing judgment on one another - Christian liberty

These are the things Paul boldly reminded this church of.

What was Paul's motivation for reminding them?

Because God called him to the position of Apostle.

Romans 15:15 ESV

¹⁵ But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God...

Paul became an apostle for no other reason than God saved a wicked sinner and purposed to put him into the ministry for His good purposes.

Even Paul understood who he was and that is was only by God's grace he was now able to serve God with his life.

1 Corinthians 15:9–10 ESV

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

1 Timothy 1:12–14 ESV

¹² I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, ¹³ though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

This is Paul's point in verse 16

Romans 15:15–16 ESV

¹⁵ But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Paul was, by the grace of God, redeemed not just for his on personal benefit, but he became a...

δοῦλος Ἰησοῦ ἡ Χριστοῦ

Paul was a slave of Jesus. That sounds so terrible to our ears, but to Paul, it was the highest privilege.

After all, it's a rather binary thing, isn't it? You are already a slave to sin. but for those in Christ, we are slaves to him!

Romans 6:15–18 ESV

¹⁵ What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

Paul was a committed slave with a significant task to accomplish. One that was foretold in the Old Testament.

He uses the term “**priestly**” because he is, like in the Old Testament, viewing his role as a priest who makes an offering...

Look back at verse 16...

Romans 15:16 ESV

¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Isn't this an amazing statement from Paul?

He is saying that he, who is the Apostle to the Gentiles, is going to the Gentiles to retrieve some of them for salvation. Those that he has retrieved are his offering to our God!

Just as the priest gathered the sheep as an offering to God in the Jewish Old Testament sacrificial system, so Paul gathered the sheep (a saved people) for God in the New Testament Church.

This is why we can echo Paul's sentiment in [Romans 12:1](#)

Romans 12:1 ESV

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

God used Paul to reach people for Christ, who God made and, in turn, sanctified or made holy for His glory!

That's what he says here in the verse. God makes holy people through the power of His Holy Spirit so that God may receive glory upon glory.

Your salvation is about God's glory more than it is about your rescue. God saving you and making you holy should cause you to glorify Him.

And Paul recognized his priestly privilege in this amazing process.

God saved Paul so Paul would be a tool to reach others with God's glorious, good news.

And guess what, friends, you are not called to be an Apostle in the big "A" sense - But you are called to be an apostle in the little "a" sense. In this sense, you are a "sent one."

God's grace doesn't simply save us; God's grace makes us useful for His ministry!

You are not saved to sit; you are saved to serve.

There are two reasons you should be compelled to reach others with the gospel.

1. We get to be a part of rescuing people from eternal Hell.
2. We get to be a part of creating more worshipers.

"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't."

— **John Piper**

So, the question for you is what compels you? What drives you? What is your purpose for living here on this earth as a follower of Christ?

- Are you compelled to live out the American Dream?
- Are you driven to have a significant bank account and retire in ease and comfort?
- Is your purpose pleasure at all cost?

What is the purpose of God's grace in your life? Is it just for your salvation? Or is there something more?

There is something MUCH MORE! God's grace compelled Paul to reach people for Jesus.

That should be true of you as well.

God's grace should compel us to serve Him! Especially in reaching those in your life who are yet to be reached with the gospel.

Review - God's Grace Compels Christians to Reach the UnReached!

- Embrace the Purpose of Grace

2. Magnify Jesus, the Focus of Your Ministry (vs. 17-19)

It is very easy for those who are serving God faithfully to get their focus off and begin to think more highly about themselves than they ought. Thinking they are necessary for God to get His will accomplished.

Newsflash - you and I are not necessary for God to get His will accomplished.

However, He, because of His grace, chooses to use his children for their good and His glory!

So, we shouldn't magnify ourselves in God's work, but Jesus.

Take a look at verses 17-19...

Romans 15:17–19 ESV

¹⁷ In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. ¹⁸ For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;

Our ministry is not about us. Our ministry is a privilege given to us to represent Christ well and give Him glory.

Now, I want you to see that Paul is “proud of his work.” This is not the sinful pride that gets us into so much trouble. No, think of it this way, Paul is satisfied with the work he has accomplished on behalf of the Lord.

And please notice that even though he is proud of his work, he gives all the glory to God. Paul understands that anything of eternal value that He has accomplished was only possible because of God's power in him.

Ephesians 3:20 ESV

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us...

So, Paul is proud of his work In Christ!

It is in Christ that he is empowered to accomplish amazing, eternal things! And he did! Just read the New Testament!

Now is accomplishing amazing eternal things exclusively for Paul? The answer is a resounding NO!

You can and should work for the Lord and accomplish great things! You have been, as a follower of Jesus, entrusted with some amazing gifts. Those gifts are meant to be spent in serving the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Because of who He is!

Who is Christ?

Colossians 1:18 ESV

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

So, how do we not become a menace in the ministry? How do we serve God without becoming prideful and self-exulting?

Take a page from John the Baptist...

John 3:30 ESV

³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease."

Again, Paul makes it clear that this is ONLY accomplished by and through the power of God. Look at verse 19...

Romans 15:19 ESV

¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;

The Spirit of God worked through Paul with signs and wonders (thus authenticating his apostolic ministry) so that God's gospel went forth and accomplished what the book of Acts declared...

Acts 1:8 ESV

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Guess what you are in the ministry. And, by the way, if you are a Christian, you are in the ministry - or at least you should be..

But guess what you are...

A Magnifying glass. You know?

What does a magnifying glass do? It magnifies things to make them more visible.

When you want to read something that is too small, you grab a magnifying glass which make the letters appear larger so you can read!

That's what you do in relation to Jesus. You magnify Him! Your life is a magnifying glass that makes Jesus visible to the world.

You may be the only Christ someone ever sees!

If this axiom is true, what do people see when they look at you?

So, what can you do to magnify Jesus in the ministry He has entrusted to you? Many things, but here are three...

Daily Prayer: Pray daily with a focused on magnifying Jesus in your ministry and personal life.

Service with Love: Serve others with love, mirroring Jesus' compassion and humility.

Evaluate Motives: Regularly evaluate your motives in ministry. Is it genuinely about magnifying Jesus? Or are you magnifying self?

Review - God's Grace Compels Christians to Reach the UnReached!

- Embrace the Purpose of Grace

- Magnify Jesus, the Focus of Your Ministry

3. Pursue the Goal of the Gospel (vs. 20-21)

Michael Hyatt is the guru of goal setting. He is big into casting a vision for oneself and setting goals to accomplish this vision.

He has built a business on setting goals to accomplish a vision, whatever one's personal vision might be.

Do you think God has a vision? What are God's goals?

What is God's vision for His Church?

What was Paul's vision for the gospel? What do you think the goal of the gospel is?

Paul tells us his goal with the gospel. And I suspect his goal aligns with God's heart quite well.

Take a look at verses 20-21...

Romans 15:20–21 ESV

²⁰ and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, ²¹ but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

Paul's goal for communicating the gospel (his ministry) was to reach those who had never heard the precious message.

First of all, the sense of the word "ambition" is "aspiration." Paul has a particular aspiration with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

By the way, what is your aspiration with the precious news of the Gospel?

The word gospel, εὐαγγελίζεσθαι is a verb, and it means to convey or communicate the Gospel. Gospel means "good news."

Again, I ask you, what is your aspiration, your goal in conveying the good news that Jesus Christ, the creator of all that is...

Who left heaven to live a sinless life, thus qualifying Him as a perfect sacrifice for sin...

Who died as a substitute for you on the cruel cross...

Who was put to death by his own creation to rescue His creation from eternal death...

Then, after his death on the cross, which satisfied God's wrath against you...

He then rose from the dead, proving his power over not only his death but yours as well...

In other words, Jesus died for you, paying your sin debt to God, so you don't need to pay this debt in Hell for all eternity.

This is the gospel, my friends.

And so, I ask you again, what is your aspiration with this glorious, life-giving, freedom-inducing, good news?

Do you aspire to keep it to yourself or share it?

Do you aspire to know it well so you can communicate it well?

Do you aspire to make it part of your DNA so that you naturally praise God in front of others because you have not gotten over what God has done for you?

What is your goal, ambition, and aspiration with the precious Good News from God?

I know what Paul's was. The text is clear...

It was his ambition to preach the gospel...to convey the gospel to those who needed it most.

Before we go any further, I must be clear about something.

Paul says he **preaches** the gospel! He speaks it forth!

Paul doesn't say he lives his faith out in front of others in hopes that that will somehow transform someone's life into a follower of Jesus.

Yes, we need to be good examples. Yes, we need to offer a cup of cold water in the name of Christ.

But those actions do not save people. It may soften their heart for the gospel, but those action will not redeem a soul.

The gospel must be articulated.

Romans 10:17 ESV

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

You needed to hear the word of God - the gospel in order to be saved.

Romans 1:16 ESV

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Your friends and those in your circle need to hear it as well.

Paul's goal was to preach the gospel in places where Christ's name was not known. Paul was a church planter at heart. He desired to go to places where there was zero understanding of Christ.

As you think about this you might understand why Paul felt this way. He would have a clean slate to work from.

Unadulterated from aberrant views of Christ and Christianity. He could preach and teach pure doctrine that would help the new church flourish and grow in grace and truth.

Maybe there are some of you in our midst that God is calling to this kind of missionary endeavor. Maybe even right now, the Lord is pulling on you to consider going to a place where Christ is not even known.

According to David Platt - *Over 3 billion people in over 7,000 people groups are currently unreached by the Gospel. They are on a road that leads to an eternal hell without ever even hearing how they can go to heaven.*

The term "unreached" does not just mean that people are lost. Unreached means that people don't have access to the Gospel. It's not that they can hear or have heard the Gospel, and they choose not to believe it; it's that they can't even hear it because no one around them knows it. Here's a technical definition of the unreached:

Unreached peoples and places are those among whom Jesus is largely unknown and the church is relatively insufficient to make Jesus known in its broader population without outside help.

<https://radical.net/article/great-commission-statistics-concern/>

Is the Lord calling you to this kind of ministry? I truly hope there are some here who would give their lives so those in the unreached category could be reached with the precious Good News that they can be saved from the wrath of God.

Is God convicting you now? Don't ignore what He might be doing and desires to do through you.

But what about those of us who God isn't moving to move to the 10/40 window?

Well, even though we are in a church area, I will tell you that the gospel witness is abysmally low. Churches are more interested in nickels and noses, or to put it more crassly, butts in seats than reaching the lost.

For example - I hear of churches in our area that are playing secular rock music in a worship service to try and draw people in.

How can we use the unholy to make someone holy? Does God really need these kinds of gimmicks to bring conviction to a soul and bring them to a saving understanding of the gospel? Absolutely not!

By the way, this service is not geared toward the salvation of souls. It is designed for WORSHIP! You are here, as the gathered body of Christ, for one purpose - the deserved corporate WORSHIP of God!

When we leave this place, we enter the mission field with the aspiration, goal, and ambition to reach the lost for Christ.

and when we do reach the lost for Christ, what do we do with them? We bring them here, as new worshipers on Sunday to WORSHIP God!

Evangelism is about creating new WORSHIPERS so our God can receive more glory, honor, praise and WORSHIP!

Remember John Piper's quote?

"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't."

— John Piper

God has a mission for you and the life He has entrusted to you.

Imagine this - God desires to use you to make more people who will worship Him. Is there any greater calling that we can have as humans than to worship God?

And you and I get to help others become worshippers, which is the greatest activity they can do with their lives!

So, Evangelism is more than rescuing people from eternal wrath, as wonderful as this is.

It is far more.

It is actually given people the greatest of eternal purposes - Worship of the God who Created all that is.

1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV

³¹ So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

So, some of us are called to reach the unreached - this was Paul's ambition

Some of us are called to reach the circle God has placed us in.

All of us are to preach the gospel to all who have ears to hear.

I want to encourage you with something. While sharing the gospel should be your goal as a follower of Christ, it is not just **your** goal.

It's God's goal. He is the first and the best missionary. And he

Acts 1:8 ESV

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

It's God's goal to reach the world for Christ, and He will empower you and me to get it done.

He doesn't need you and me, but it is His will to use us to reach others.

So, this morning's big question is whether your aspirations for the Gospel align with God? Are your gospel goals the same as His?

[Acts 1:8](#) says you WILL be my witnesses. Not, you might be my witnesses.

The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. - C. S. Lewis

So, if you know what God's goal is with the gospel and that He empowers you to get it done, are you accomplishing the preaching or sharing of the gospel?

Are you speaking the truth about people's sin and their need for a savior? Do you have the same goal as God regarding the gospel? Are you compelled to reach the unreached or at least those in your circle of influence?

What can you do?

My Circle Training

1. Pray for one person to come to Christ.
2. Talk to them once per week about their life, interests, and so forth.
3. Purpose to share the gospel with them once per month

What might God do through you if you purposed to embrace your purpose of bringing people to Jesus?

Review - God's Grace Compels Christians to Reach the UnReached!

- Embrace the Purpose of Grace
- Magnify Jesus, the Focus of Your Ministry
- Pursue the Goal of the Gospel

Conclusion – Specific points of application...

Commit to Prayer - My friends, I can't stress enough how vital it is for each of us to engage in regular, intentional prayer for those who haven't heard the Gospel—both far away and right here in our own community. What I'd like you to consider doing is making a list. Yes, write down the names of individuals or groups that God places on your heart. Then, make it a part of your daily or weekly routine to intercede for them in prayer. Let's be hands-on about this; let's actively petition God on their behalf.

Prioritize Christ-Centered Ministry - I want to issue a challenge to each one of you. Take a moment to reflect on the ministries you're involved in, whether you are in leadership as an elder or deacon. Whether you are in the Men's or Women's ministry, Connection Group ministry, Youth Ministry, Children's ministry or even the kitchen ministry. Whatever ministry you are involved in here at ABC, ask yourself, 'Is what I'm doing magnifying Jesus? Is He the focus of my actions and decisions?' Let's make it our utmost priority to ensure that everything we do is driven by one ultimate goal: to exalt Christ in all things.

Set Gospel-Centered Goals - Let's not just talk about the Good News—let's be intentional about sharing it. I encourage each of you to set specific, measurable goals for spreading the gospel. Maybe that means you'll share Christ's love with five people this month. Perhaps you'll dedicate some time to learning how to share the gospel. Or maybe you'll commit to helping get people who visit our church into a Connection Group and a “Seeking God and Finding Him” Bible study? Whatever it is, let's make solid plans and commitments. Let's be proactive in pursuing the ultimate goal: to spread the saving message of the gospel.

Listen to the words of C.H. Spurgeon as he reminds us that while it is our aim to preach the gospel to all creatures, it was God's idea first! And He will give us the power to Hit His target consistently!

Now the minister has a power given him of God, to be considered both the father and the mother of those born to God, for the apostle said he travailed in birth for souls till Christ was formed in them. What can we do then? We can now appeal to the Spirit. I know I have preached the gospel, that I have preached it earnestly; I challenge my Master to honor his own promise. He has said it shall not return unto me void, and it shall not. It is in his hands, not mine. I cannot compel you, but thou O Spirit of God who hast the key of the heart, thou canst compel. - C.H. Spurgeon <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/compel-them-to-come-in/#flipbook/>

Are you compelled by God to reach people for God?

“Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you're not saved yourself, be sure of that!”

— *Charles Spurgeon*

Imagine what God could do with us if we appealed to the Spirit to use His Word through our mouths. The power of God working through us to accomplish his HOLY vision! Can you think of any greater purpose for you to spend the rest of your life?

Connection Group Reflection Questions

1. How has God's grace compelled you in your life and ministry? Share a personal experience or reflection on how grace has shaped your purpose as a Christian.
2. In your own ministry or service, how do you ensure that Jesus is at the center? Can you share practical steps or examples of how you magnify Jesus in your actions and leadership?
3. Reflect on your commitment to the gospel and reaching the unreached. What specific goals or actions can you set to further pursue the goal of the gospel in your life and church community?
4. Who are you praying for daily?
5. Who are you engaging with weekly?
6. Who are you sharing the gospel with monthly?

