

**Paul's Desire to Minister in Rome**  
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**Original: 11-15-98; Revised: 8-1-21**

**Text:** Romans 1:8-15

**Romans:** [Bibliography](#) or [Manuscripts and Greek Exegesis](#)

**UBS 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Paragraph Topic:** Paul's Desire to Visit Rome

**Central Idea of Message:** Christians are obligated to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**Introduction:** Paul had a definite gospel that was absolute in its claims and final in its form, and he was eager to preach it until Greeks and non-Greeks, wise men and fools, could no longer be located.

**I. Paul Thanked God for the Roman Christians and Their Faith**

(v. 8)

- A. Thanked God for the Roman Christians: "There are some people whose tongues are tuned to praise, and others whose tongues are tuned to criticize" (Barclay 18)
- B. Thanked God because their faith (trust and reliance) was being proclaimed "throughout the world" [hyperbole]
  - 1. To Paul, "faith was the basic Christian virtue" (cf. Harrison 17)
  - 2. **Our faith has widespread influence and our "non-faith" can have widespread influence too**
    - a) It is highly desirable to be famous for faith (cf. Henry 6:366)
    - b) What are people saying about your faith?
      - (1) Non-existent?
      - (2) Stagnant?
      - (3) Growing?
      - (4) One reason why we moved to different locations (Louisiana, Texas, Virginia) was to allow God to stretch our faith, and it worked!
  - 3. "The faith" as the recipients held it
    - a) Possessed an uncontaminated gospel
    - b) Lived a pristine faith
    - c) The faith they had was the original (Jude 3)
  - 4. What are people saying about our church?
    - a) Talking about the preacher?

- b) Talking about the programs?
  - c) Talking about the music?
  - d) Talking about the attendance?
  - e) Talking about the latest conference hosted?
  - f) Talking about the friendliness?
  - g) All of the above are important, but God also wants people talking about the church's faith
- C. Thanked God through Jesus Christ
- 1. The medium of access directly to the Father
  - 2. Man accesses God only through the agency of Christ
  - 3. This is one reason to pray "in the name of Jesus"
- II. **Paul Served God in His Spirit** (vv. 9-10)
- A. Served God in his spirit by preaching the gospel (v. 9)
- 1. Human spirit
    - a) That part of our person which gives us our God-consciousness (cf. Wuest 2:20)
    - b) The core of human personality (cf. Moody 166)
    - c) Primary point of contact with God (cf. Moody 166)
    - d) The agent of service to the Lord which should direct our body and our soul
  - 2. **λατρεύω** is not the work of a slave but the service of a priestly minister (cf. McBeth 36)
  - 3. **Can you call upon God as a witness of your service?**
- B. Served God in his spirit by praying tirelessly for the Roman Christians (v. 10)
- 1. Paul had a prayer list - a long one too!
  - 2. Prayed he would be able to get to Rome
  - 3. I suspect that there are people praying for us whom we will never know about
  - 4. Most of us are probably praying God's best for people who will never know we are praying for them
- III. **Paul Longed to Give and to Receive** (vv. 11-12)
- A. To give to them (v. 11)
- 1. To utilize his spiritual gift(s) in such a way so as to benefit them (apostle, prophet, teacher)
  - 2. To establish them in the faith
    - a) To deepen their commitment to Christ
    - b) To grow them in grace and knowledge
    - c) To encourage them in the faith
    - d) To assist them in developing their knowledge of various truths of God in order for them to

live more productive and victorious Christian lives

- (1) **Instruction in Christian doctrine (beliefs)**
- (2) **Instruction in Christian character (morals)**

3. **The very essence of Christian ministry is giving spiritual instruction, guidance, and encouragement to others so as to help them develop the tools to live loyally for Christ and pass the same tools on to others**

B. To receive from them (v. 12)

1. To be encouraged in the faith by them
  - a) Paul needed the encouragement that comes from Christian fellowship too (cf. Mickelsen 1185)
  - b) **Never underestimate the importance of regular fellowship with your church family and with other Christians!**
2. We receive from God in order that we might give to others
3. When we give, we also receive
4. When we serve to bolster the faith of another, we will see that our own faith will be bolstered too
5. Paul wished for "concurrent encouragement" (Thomas 56)

IV. **Paul Planned to Follow God's Will in Visiting Rome** (v. 13)

A. To go to Rome

1. Had been prevented by obedience to the Spirit while doing missionary work elsewhere (cf. Rom. 15:15-33)
2. We can force our way along
  - a) **We must be careful about taking spiritual matters, spiritual moves, and spiritual leadership into our own hands without first consulting the Lord**
  - b) Could be dangerous
    - (1) Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, died when they offered strange incense before the Lord (Num. 3:4)
      - (a) Used fire the Lord had not commanded (Lev. 10:1)
      - (b) Likely had executed their duties while intoxicated, which is why their deaths are mentioned in

connection with priestly prohibitions against wine and strong drink (Lev. 10:8-11)

- (2) **One can get out of step with God doctrinally or morally and be disqualified from special service, but never disqualified from salvation (cf. 1 Cor. 9:27)**
- (3) Be careful about running through God's red lights!
- (4) We must seek the Lord's will, not our own will, in all things (James 4:15)
- 3. Probably not God's will that he visit Rome yet, but he eventually got there - as a prisoner!
- B. To obtain some fruit from them
  - 1. As he had from other non-Jewish groups
  - 2. **Spiritual fruit is only produced as a result of spiritual labor**
- V. **Paul Was Obligated to Preach the Gospel to All People (v. 14)**
  - A. Antithetical parallelism is used to establish the all encompassing parameters of Paul's mission
    - 1. To the Greeks
      - a) Jews divided the world into two classes: Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles)
      - b) Greeks divided the world into two classes: Greeks and barbarians (Robertson 4:326)
    - 2. To the barbarians
      - a) Non-Greeks
      - b) Those not speaking Greek or participating in Greek culture
      - c) Uncultured [the backwoods "fellers"?)
    - 3. To the wise
      - a) The word suggests kind, good people
      - b) Note that wisdom does not save: they are already wise, or at least think they are!
      - c) Trained intellect
    - 4. To the foolish: untrained intellect
  - B. To the whole human race
    - 1. The gospel had been committed to Paul for others
    - 2. As long as there are Greeks, barbarians, wise ones, and fools, Christians are obligated to preach the gospel to the world because God loves the world (cf. John 3:16)!

3. Paul was in a hurry to carry out his duty, eager to visit Rome, and "It was not the eagerness of a sightseer, but the eagerness of a soul-winner" (Wiersbe, *Exposition*, 1:516), as in "happy hunting!"
4. **The world has given nothing to the Church for which it must pay; God has given the Church something for the world (cf. Morgan 10:230)**
5. Until we take this gospel and give it to the world, we are dishonestly in debt (cf. Morgan 10:230)

VI. **Paul Was Eager to Reach and to Preach** (v. 15)

- A. To preach the gospel to those in Rome
  1. But were they not already Christians?
  2. Why the eagerness to preach to them?
    - a) **To establish them further by discipleship**
    - b) **To be encouraged by their faith**
    - c) **To win more Roman citizens to Christ, regardless of ethnicity or status**
- B. To preach the gospel everywhere
  1. Whole world
  2. News of Christianity would go from Rome throughout the entire empire (cf. Moody 166)
  3. Paul intended to pay on his debt, carry out his duty of preaching the gospel everywhere, until all his resources were exhausted in death (cf. McBeth 40)
  4. **It is time to quit thinking about ourselves and get around to spending our lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus, the gospel, and others**

**Conclusion:** Paul had a definite gospel that was absolute in its claims and final in its form, and he was zealous to preach this gospel until Greeks and non-Greeks, wise men and fools, could no longer be located. **Why are we not as driven by this compelling gospel of Jesus Christ? Let's become renowned for our faith and the spread of our faith.**