

ROMANS 15:14-21

*In the rest of Chapter 15, Paul will now state his reason for writing to the Roman believers and his great desire to visit them. This Chapter also contains one of the great missionary passages, where Paul lays out some of the basic doctrine which made him the greatest of all missionaries.

Romans 15:14 - And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

1. Even though Paul has never met these Roman Christian believers, he is confident that they were special because of all the doctrinal truths Paul had already shared with them.
2. Paul, in this verse 14, mentions three of their strengths and congratulates them on their own accomplishments at Rome.

First: They were "full of goodness". This was a practical goodness manifested in them by giving help to others and bearing the burdens of the weaker brother.

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Second: They were "filled with all knowledge". This is the knowledge they had gained by learning and grasping the truths of the Scriptures. They had listened and believed in Paul's teaching of the mystery gospel.

Romans 1:15 - So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Third: They were "able also to admonish one another". This means the believers in Rome had a number of gifted, talented, and qualified brethren equipped to stir up the saints about having responsibility of battling for the truth of God.

Colossians 1:28 - Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

3. These Roman believers were doing this on their own, without Paul's presence. Warning is critical, but also is edification. That is why Paul loved the Roman believers so much.

*They had the ability to caution one another and were competent to counsel other believers. Psalm 1:1 starts off saying "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly..." Believers are to be able to help other believers simply by using the Scriptures in the proper way.

Colossians 3:16 - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Romans 15:15 - Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

1. In spite of Paul's confidence in the Roman believers' spiritual progress even though they had never met Paul, he does not hesitate to remind them of his dispensational teachings that were given to them - proclaiming the grace message given to him from the Lord.
2. Paul has the right to instruct them because of his past in Christ.

Galatians 2:7, 9 - But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision was unto Peter; Gal. 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

3. The word "Grace" is mentioned in the complete Bible just over 150 times.
 - a. Guess how many times Paul uses the word "Grace" in all of his epistles? The answer is _____. Paul always begins and ends with this word in all of his letters.
 - b. Paul is the best example of grace given to someone and that is why he uses it, because of the grace God had given him.

Romans 15:16 - That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

1. Paul was appointed by God to be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Paul wanted his ministry to be an offering to God that would be pleasing to Him.

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.
2. In order to accomplish that, the Holy Spirit had to be involved in setting the believers apart from the world, flesh, and the devil.
3. The term "gospel of God" is a general term Paul uses here to show that all mankind are acceptable to God by Christ's DBR grace gospel.

Romans 15:17-18 - I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. Rom. 15:18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

1. To understand these verses we see that if Paul engages in boasting - it is not in his own person that he glories, but in Jesus Christ. It is not in his own accomplishments, but what God has done through him.
2. A humble servant of Christ does not engage in what they have done by boasting about it. But, they are conscious of the fact that God is using them to accomplish His purposes.

1 Corinthians 1:29-31 - That no flesh should glory in his presence. 1Cor. 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 1Cor. 1:31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.
3. Paul was not a boastful man and he also practiced what he preached. Paul backed up his teaching with how he lived his life. What Paul did say gave him credibility for listeners to believe and follow the Pauline truths given to him from God.
4. The Lord was using him to win over the Gentiles to obedience by the message he was preaching; and yes, by some of the miracles he performed - as we see stated in the next verse (19).

Romans 15:19 - Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

1. Since the Word had not been written or completed yet, God gave Paul (as an Apostle) some super divine abilities to prove his credibility as being from God.
2. Paul used these miraculous abilities to not only get his Jewish brethren's attention, but also to confirm his ministry to the Gentiles - to show he was legitimately from God.

*For almost 2000 years, God had used signs and wonders to Israel of His working in their midst.

Mark 16:17-18, 20 - And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; Mark 16:18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

3. Paul's complete dependence on God resulted in his spiritual power wherever he went and they saw results. From Jerusalem to Asia Minor and into northern Greece, his preaching had great demonstrations of the Spirit that souls were being saved.
4. In Acts, even after Israel's rejection of Christ and the Kingdom offer of the 12, God continued using signs and wonders to Israel. One reason why He did this was to confirm that Paul's new Body message was from God and they could have a saving relationship with the Lord.

Acts 13:38-39 - Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

5. That term "by the power of the Spirit" means it was God Who produced the signs and wonders. Paul gives honor to the Holy Spirit's power working in and through him.
6. As this is happening, the Jewish Messianic signs and wonders that had greatly influenced the people progressively fade away. More of the Word is being completed and less miracles are needed to confirm Paul's new God-given message.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10 - Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. 1Cor. 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 1Cor. 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

7. With the setting aside of the sign people (Israel), it is then that we see the unveiling of the Mystery Truth to the Body Church in Paul's prison epistles.

Romans 15:20 - Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

1. Paul's motive and goal was to go preach the gospel in virgin territories to those who had never had the opportunity to hear about the Grace Gospel in Christ. This was Paul's basic objective and concern.

2 Corinthians 10:16 - To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

2. We see that Paul was not to build upon another preacher's foundation. There was no doubt that Paul found, in some cases, foundations that were in error - so why build on them? Some foundations were misaligned in light of God's Word for today - the Mystery Program.
3. There were some who proclaimed Christ, but wanted to teach opposite doctrine to stir up trouble for Paul - mixing law and works into their message.

*Most of these were by the Judaizers who were laying destructive foundations opposite Paul's new gospel foundation.

Galatians 1:6 - I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

4. Paul, to void conflict if possible, desired to go where they had never heard of the Body Grace Gospel of Christ.

Titus 3:9 - But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

<p><u>Romans 15:21</u> - But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.</p>

1. Paul here quotes the last part of Isaiah 52:15 and it becomes Paul's missionary motto - to help show from the O.T. Scriptures his marching orders and to proclaim and bring the message Christ had given to him to those in ignorance.
2. Paul wanted to reach these Gentiles who had never previously heard this new grace gospel. He wanted them to understand and receive this new true faith in Christ.

Romans 15:16 - That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

3. The meaning in this verse 21 is that spiritual insight and understanding comes as the result of preaching the Gospel of God's Grace.

**Next week, Paul shows us his great desire to go to Rome and meet these Roman believers that he has been writing to.