

## EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

### Message #4

### Romans 1:8-15

The Apostle Paul had a burning passion for something that he never lost sight of - the church of God. Of all of the churches that Paul wanted to minister in, of all of the Christian people that he wanted to influence and of all of the cities that he had a passion to visit, none were more primary than Rome.

The Apostle Paul came to faith around A.D. 35. By the time he writes Romans, he had been a believer for 22 or 23 years. For most of his Christian life, Paul had a burning passion to minister in Rome. William Barclay writes: "All his life Paul had been haunted by the thought of Rome."

**PAUL'S GREATEST DESIRE AND ASPIRATION IN LIFE WAS TO  
COMMUNICATE GOD'S WORD AND DOCTRINES TO THE CHURCH  
IN ROME.**

What a wonderful thing it is to have one's greatest desire and aspiration be the communication of God's Word and God's doctrines to God's people.

**SEGMENT #1** – Paul explains what he prays for the Romans. **1:8-10**

**Subject #1** - Paul thanked God for their faith. **1:8**

Paul's ability to thank God on behalf of the Romans was totally due to the Person and work of Jesus Christ. It is "through Jesus Christ" that people may have a relationship with God.

Now Paul thanked God because the faith of the Romans was being proclaimed all over the world. The phrase "throughout the whole world" grammatically and specifically refers to the Christian world, the Christian churches.

Today the church in Rome is not known for its faith, but its works. As Matthew Henry said, "The epistle to the Romans is not an epistle against the Romans."

What a wonderful testimony for a church to have that they believe God and have faith in Him and His Word. Notice what it is for which Paul thanks God, their faith! The only epistle in which Paul does not express gratitude is Galatians, where the people had departed from grace and faith and were focused on law and works.

Now faith is developed by hearing the Word of God. Romans 10:17

**Subject #2** - Paul asked God for a visit . **1:9-10**

**Verse 9** begins with a conjunction “ for ” which connects us to the preceding verse, giving us further explanation and insight into the prayer life of Paul.

There is no question that faithful ministers are drawn to other faithful people .

Paul was drawn to this church because the people in it were faithful . But notice carefully he truly believed that the determining factor as to whether he got to go to Rome was the will of God .

Just because God does not immediately answer our prayers, does not mean He will not eventually answer our prayers. If we are faithful people and pray, we can expect that God in His time will answer. Had Paul immediately gone to Rome, he would have missed an impacting ministry in Jerusalem. Therefore, God delayed Paul’s answer to his request.

**SEGMENT #2** – Paul explains why he wants to visit the Romans. **1:11-15**

**Reason #1** - Paul wanted to go to Rome for an imparting purpose.

The verb “impart” is one that means to give a share of something (Smith, p. 286). Paul wanted to share his gift with the Romans. He was an apostle and had a gift to be able to preach, teach and unlock God’s Word for people and he wanted to go to Rome to do that. He wanted to preach and teach God’s Word to the Romans and let them share in the spiritual gift God had given him.

J. Vernon McGee observed when a preacher no longer desires to preach and teach God’s Word, he should get out of the ministry (Volume 1, p. 649). Sometimes a minister will love promotions, administration, counseling, but when he no longer has his passion for the preaching and teaching of God’s Word, he needs to get out of the ministry.

**Reason #2** - Paul wanted to go to Rome for an establishment of purpose. **1:11b**

That word “establish” means to fix something in place, to set firmly and fastly (Smith, p. 418). The result of Paul using his gift in Rome would be that they would be firmly set in the faith system. They would be fixed and firmly established in their faith.

**Reason #3** - Paul wanted to go to Rome for an encouragement purpose. **1:12**

The context of this verse is profound - when faithful believers get together in the context of developing in the Word of God, great encouragement takes place in the life of the learner and the teacher . Mutual encouragement comes when people are being stabilized in their faith and in the understanding of the Word.

**Reason #4** - Paul wanted to go to Rome for a fruit-bearing purpose. **1:13**

Paul wanted to bear fruit in Rome. Jesus Christ, Himself, taught on the subject of being a “fruit-bearing” believer (John 15:1-11). In this context, Christ said several positive things would result for a fruit-bearing believer:

- 1) God fine tunes a fruit bearer so he can bear even more fruit. 15:2
- 2) God permits one close to Jesus Christ to bear much fruit. 15:5
- 3) God grants fruit bearers answers to their prayers. 15:7
- 4) A fruit bearer is one who glorifies God. 15:8
- 5) A fruit bearer has full joy. 15:11

**Reason #5** - Paul wanted to go to Rome for his obligation reason. **1:14**

Because of the tremendous gift God had given Paul, and the tremendous grasp of His Word, he felt obligated to go to Rome to use it. We are obligated to tell others about Jesus Christ.

**SEGMENT #3** – Paul explains why he hasn’t visited Rome. **1:13-15**

**Reason #1** - He had been prevented. **1:13**

Paul totally believed in the sovereignty of God in permitting or preventing him from ministering in certain places (i.e. 1 Corinthians 16:7). Satan was in the business of trying to prevent Paul from ministering, but God was always sovereign in every one of those situations.

**Reason #2** - He had other obligations. **1:14**

Paul actually owed people the doctrine of the gospel of God. Jesus Christ had personally given him the gospel and he owed it to others to tell them. Think of this, **at this point in time, Paul is the only man on earth who fully understands the doctrine of the gospel. Even though it has been in print for over 1900 years, the sad fact is, not too many understand it even today.**

Paul is writing to primarily a Gentile church and the four terms he uses they would easily relate to:

- 1) He was obligated to the Greeks - this refers to those of the Greek culture who spoke the Greek language.
- 2) He was obligated to the Barbarians - this refers to those who do not speak the Greek language, a foreigner.

- 3) He was obligated to the wise - those who were educated and cultured .
- 4) He was obligated to the unwise - those uneducated, uncultured and crude .

**Lessons:**

- 1) Paul had a passion to preach the gospel to people already saved. People who are saved do not automatically understand the intricacies of the gospel of God.
- 2) Once God grants us the ability to understand and grasp His truth, we are obligated to preach it to others.
- 3) God sovereignly opens doors for us to proclaim His Word - the good news that sinful man can be made right with a Holy God through faith in Jesus Christ.