

## Pt 52 Romans 15:22-33 Paul's Hindered Itinerary

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Porchlight Baptist Church [www.pbcknox.com](http://www.pbcknox.com)

### Romans 15:22-33

- 22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.  
23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;  
24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.  
25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.  
26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.  
27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.  
28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.  
29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.  
30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;  
31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;  
32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.  
33 Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

We pick back up here in Romans 15 after Paul explained the reason he wrote so boldly to the believers in Rome. He wanted to make sure they knew where his heart was and the reason it was so important for him to be so forthright with them.

He now is going to relay to them his traveling plans, or as I titled the message, "**Paul's Hindered Itinerary.**"

### 22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

First, he wants to explain to them that he has desired to see them and has tried many times to do so but he was hindered from doing so. That word "**hindered**" means to be "**delayed, stalled, obstructed, or impeded.**" We usually look at being hindered as something bad, and many times it is; however, in Paul's case the reason he was hindered or delayed in coming to Rome was because he was being obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit and often times his plans the Holy Spirit's plans did not match up.

For example, we read this in **Acts 16:6-7** Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia (**frah-gee-uh**) and the region of Galatia (**gal-ah-tee'-ah**), and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia (**muh-see-uh**), they assayed to go into Bithynia (**bith-uh-nee-uh**): but the Spirit suffered them not.

In that case, we find that Paul attempted to go to several different regions, but the Holy Spirit would not allow it.

We may often find ourselves facing a similar situation. We have ideas, plans, and schemes of things we believe we should do but the Holy Spirit prompts us not to. The question is, do we obey the Spirit, or do we go ahead and do our own will? I'm afraid too many times we go ahead with our own will and disobey the Spirit.

I know I can personally say that I'm guilty of it. I've had things that I believe that I should do and know that I have the ability or the means to do them and I just strike off on my own and do them without even consulting the Lord. There's no telling how many things I have messed up because I wasn't obeying the Spirit.

I can also tell you from personal experience that in the times that I have been obedient to the Spirit and waited for his prompting, things have always worked out a lot better.

We all know how strong-willed Paul was, but we also see that he strongly followed the will of the Holy Spirit. In fact, Paul started out this letter to the Romans mentioning that very thing:

### Romans 1:8-15

- 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.  
9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;  
10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey **by the will of God to come unto you.**  
11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;  
12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.  
13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that **oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,)** that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.  
14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.  
15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul so desired to see these people but he desired more for it to be God's will that he do so.

Paul was also hindered from visiting Rome because of the great work he was doing and because of the many times he was imprisoned, or sick. In the 10-years he had been evangelizing, he rarely had a break and was often suffering from sickness.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

Paul explains his plans for the future. He believes that if everything goes as according to plan, it is time for him to move on from the area of Macedonia, Galatia, Corinth and surrounding countries and journey further into the unreached world, specifically Spain.

Spain was the furthest west region of the Roman Empire. It's the same place known as Tarshish in the Old Testament (the place where Jonah was spit out of the whale). Spain had become well known for its commerce and culture. Many people were going there because of the Roman roads that had been built. Paul knew it would be the perfect place to share the Gospel where no one had ever shared it before.

He tells the Romans that he will stop in Rome and see them on his way to Spain. But, first, Paul has something he has to do in Jerusalem. Look at it in our next verses:

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

So, Paul is first going to go to Jerusalem, which is really the main headquarters (if you will) of the New Testament church. It was where Christianity was founded after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. There were still many believers in Jerusalem, or as Paul calls them here "Saints."

Obviously, many of the members of the Church at Jerusalem were poor. Many had traveled there from other places and when they became believers, remained in Jerusalem where they were taken care of by other Church members. Paul is taking an offering to those people that had been collected from churches in Macedonia and Achaia.

Paul explains that these Gentile converts felt it was their duty to minister unto their less fortunate fellow believers.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Paul believes his journey to deliver the offering to the Church at Jerusalem is the only thing in his way from being able to continue his missionary journey and to stop off in Rome to visit with the believers there.

He still knows that it is according to the will of God, which is why he said what he did in verse 29 *And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

So, we see that Paul's intention was to do just as he said; take an offering to Jerusalem and then head towards Spain with a stop over in Rome to visit with them. Paul had no way of knowing at the time he wrote this letter to the Romans, that when he would go to Jerusalem, he would be arrested and held for 2-years because of a corrupt Governor named Felix, who was hoping to extort money from Paul. We read that in **Acts 24:24-27**

24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

26 He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

Interestingly enough, before Paul made it to Jerusalem with the offering, he was warned that he would be arrested there:

**Acts 21:8-14**

8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

Isn't it amazing how Paul was obedient to the Holy Spirit? Knowing he would be arrested when he got to Jerusalem, yet still willing to go and fulfill the purpose in which God had sent him.

I wonder how many of us today would do such a thing. Is our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ strong enough that we would be willing to face death for the cause of the Gospel? Paul's was.

The truth is none of us know what the future holds. With the state of the world in which we live in today, nothing would surprise me. If I saw in the news tomorrow that all Christians would be arrested and put on trial for their faith, I would not be shocked.

There are Christians all over this world that are actually faced with that reality. In some countries such as North Korea it is against the law to be a Christian. It wouldn't take a whole lot for this country to do the same. All it takes is the wrong people in charge.

Let's look at our last verse and we will be finished: **33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.**

Paul desired peace. Isn't that what we all want – peace?

The world cannot give you peace – not true peace. You won't find peace in alcohol, drugs, relationships, money, or a job. You may get some temporary satisfaction but not true peace. True peace can only come from One source, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's end this message by reading:

**Ephesians 2:11-22**

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, **having no hope**, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For **he is our peace**, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, **so making peace**;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and **preached peace to you** which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.