

Sermon Notes on “What We Learn From Paul’s Ministry” (Part 2) Romans 15:22-29

- Paul continues his epilogue (closing remarks from 15:14-16:27) by discussing his future plans regarding his desire to visit Rome, Jerusalem and Spain.
- **In verses 22-29**, we learn three lessons from Paul future ministry plans:

1. **Let your plans involve some family support** (15:22-24)

- Paul’s desires reveal how he included his spiritual family in his plans.
 - a. Check your family “*longing*” (v 23: “*for I hope to see you I passing...since I have had for many years a longing to come to you*”): What kind of longing has God put in your heart for ministry that you would have the time, opportunity and capability to pursue?
 - b. Check your family like-mindedness (v. 24b: “*and to be helped on my way there by you*”): Paul was always working in conjunction with other people and invited their help in the form of financial assistance, pray and even a possible willingness to join him on his trip to Spain.
 - c. Check your family love (v 24c: “*when I have first enjoyed your company for a while*”): The word “*enjoyed*” highlights Paul’s anticipation of experiencing satisfying fellowship with the Roman believers. Do you find any satisfaction hanging out with fellow believers?

2. **Let your plans involve some ministry strategy** (15:25-28)

- Paul spent a lot of time and energy collecting an offering from Gentile churches for the purpose of helping poor Jewish saints in Jerusalem (he wrote two chapters on it to the Corinthians – 2 Cor 8-9).
- Paul characterized this offering as a way to “*serve the saints*” (v. 25)
- Why was this offering a strategic work and big deal to Paul?
 - Paul viewed this offering as a way to grow unity and ministry between the Jews and Gentiles
 - Paul wanted to help the church to live out the unity that God provided in the gospel (Gal. 3:28)
 - This offering showed the power of the gospel to motivate Gentiles believers to minister to the needs of poor Jewish saints This offering also

fulfilled a commitment Paul made to John and Peter to remember the poor (Gal. 2:10)

- In the explanation of this contribution strategy, Paul teaches us three things about giving:
 1. Giving is a duty (v. 27): It's a responsibility to share material things with those who have shared with us spiritual things. The Gentiles were "*indebted*" to the Jews (Rom. 11:17-18)
 2. Giving is a delight (v. 26-27): Two times Paul mentions the Gentiles were "*pleased*" to share in this offering
 3. Giving is a dividend (v. 26): Paul calls this offering a "*contribution*" which is the word for fellowship or sharing together and Paul knows that giving to needy saints builds a bond of fellowship between believers.

3. **Let your plans involve some expectant Sovereignty** (15:29)

- Paul expresses a confidence ("*I know*") in "the blessing of Christ" that would be experienced by all.
- How does this relate to an expectant Sovereignty?
 - Paul unexpectedly travelled to Rome as a prisoner via a shipwreck (Acts 27)
 - When he arrived, some mean-spirited believers in Rome preached Christ out of envy and strife causing Paul distress while imprisoned (Phil 1:15, 17)
 - Paul was confidently expecting "the blessings of Christ" to be mutually shared in Rome because he understood He was in good Sovereign hands no matter how that blessing would be personally and practically worked out (Prov. 16:9; Rom. 8:28)
 - Our plans may not work out as we intend, but God's plan will always be for our good and His glory.