

Priest to the Gentiles

Romans 15:14-20
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Romans 15:1-13 – Wrapped up the doctrinal sections

- An appeal to unity
- Build up (edify) one another
- Be of one mind... glorify God

Romans 15:14-21 – continues personal testimony

- Bridge to desire to visit Rome
- Still plenty of doctrine here

v14...

¹⁴ Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Paul praised the Romans...

full of goodness – godly, like Christ

filled with all knowledge – showed they knew the source

able to admonish – mature, helping others grow

- confront, model victorious living

Implied other marks of maturity

- teaching, counseling, discipleship
- Faithful to Great Commission (making disciples)

Gift of rebuke

1 Timothy 5:20 – *As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.*

Paul's example Galatians 2

Church discipline process Matt 18:15-17, restoration gift of exhortation:

- encouraging, challenging spiritual growth

Discipleship – develop relationships – study together

- do not merely proclaim truth (prophets)

v15-16...

¹⁵ Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, ¹⁶ that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Why he praised them... *written more boldly to you*

– than he would have if not mature

- went deep on doctrine
- Why Romans is so important to us

Doctrine on Righteousness – 4 Ps – Paul's Portions...

Pitfall – we need it because of our sin (1-3)

Provided – God's grace justifies us by faith (4-5)

...demonstrated by being transformed from rebels (6-8)

Proven – when God saves Israel (9-11) yet future...

Practiced – when we apply it in our lives (12-16)

...practical stuff

Paul was able to be bold...

grace given to me – privilege to represent, speak for God

- Why? opportunity to please Him, rewards
- Rewards valid motivation? – lay-up treasure
 - Icing, cake: God glorified, gratitude

minister to the Gentiles – preached gospel, how to live

He preached the *gospel of God*

– good news of God's provision

Gentile Christians as an *offering* – what priests do

ministering the gospel of God...

– to minister in the manner of a priest

minister of Jesus Christ

– a public minister, a servant

Paul considered himself to be a "priest" to the Gentiles

Who are the priests today?

1 Peter 2:5 – *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

- Represent God to people & people to God
- OT priests type of Christ
- No earthly mediators needed today...
1 Timothy 2:5 – *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*

Gentile Christians as being *sanctified by the Holy Spirit...*

- set apart, reserved for God's use... born again
- purified, free from sin – past tense, God-tense
- God is at work: sanctification process

v17-19...

¹⁷ *Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.* ¹⁸ *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—* ¹⁹ *in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

Therefore – Because of his call to be a priest

- Paul answered his call
- successful as a faithful servant to Gentiles

reason to glory – as close Paul gets to pride

- pride should not characterize Christians

Paul wouldn't speak of anything Christ has not done

- Jesus had done great things among the Gentiles

the Gentiles were made to be obedient...

- The Holy Spirit prepped hearts, convicted them

Among the great things God had done...

mighty signs and wonders – tongues, visions, healing, raising the dead, and prophesying

- Sign gifts authenticated God's messengers...
2 Corinthians 12:12 – *Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.*
- authenticating miracles were rare
prophets authenticated by near-term prophecies
Moses & Joshua – establishing Israel as a nation
Elijah & Elisha – about to go into exile
Jesus & Apostles – redemption, established church

Do we have mighty signs & wonders today?

We still have miracles, but not authenticating

Canon of Scripture is closed

Not needed...

2 Corinthians 5:7 – *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

Characterizes Tribulation...

Matthew 24:24 – *false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect*

people seek after signs & wonders...

To get something for themselves – free lunch

John 6:26-27 – *Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you*

To confirm the truth of God; but truth has been proved

They do not believe the proven truth; hardened hearts

To excuse their unbelief

Simple faith is more pleasing to God than responding to a dazzling sensory experience...

John 20:29 – *Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*

How can we believe today that Jesus was resurrected from the dead?

Testimony of God's Word – proven to be true

2 Timothy 3:16 – *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*

- Consistent doctrine, no contradictions
- History confirmed by archeology
- Scientific accuracy
- Wisdom works
- Prophecy fulfilled

Since we have God's Word, we don't need signs & wonders do not identify those who speak for God...

2 John 10 – *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him*

Those who have the correct, biblical doctrine

Galatians 1:8 – *even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed*

There are a lot of false gospels, doctrines of demons

- Islamic Koran, Book of Mormon given by angels
- Universalism, human religions (salvation by works)
- Test the spirits – proper doctrine of Christ (1 Jn 4:1-3)

Growth of unbiblical teaching is evidence we are close to the end of the Church Age...

1 Timothy 4:1 – *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons*

Source of sings & wonders: *the power of the Spirit of God*

Jerusalem to Illyricum – province NW of Macedonia

- Visited more places on 3rd missionary journey

preached the gospel of Christ

- Messiah, Son of God, paid our sin penalty

fully preached... basic + more good news

- more than just saved by grace through faith
Acts 20:27 – *I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God*

People fall short of declaring the full counsel of God today

- Misrepresent God: love, but not holy and just
- Misrepresent God's justice: social justice
- Misrepresent God's plan: universalism
- Misrepresent God's Word: Bible man's search
- Allegorize Scripture: It doesn't mean what it says
- Water down the gospel: de-emphasize hell
- Excuse sin: compromise with the world
- Avoids Bible prophecy ~30% of Scripture
2 Peter 3:3-4 – *scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?"*
- Rev 22:18-19 curses those allegorizing (*adding to*) or ignoring (*taking away*) God's prophetic Word

More good news: Our Blessed Hope (Titus 2:13)

Near & dear to my heart

Missing a great opportunity

Christ Jesus... God... Spirit of God: Trinity (v16-19)

- Paul can't talk about God without recognizing His three Persons
- The triune Godhead is made up of 3 persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit; all are God

The doctrine of the Trinity does not mean the Godhead is composed of three separate gods (polytheism)...

- Scripture unequivocally affirms monotheism
Deuteronomy 6:4 – *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one*
Hebrew word means compound unity...
Genesis 2:24 – *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*
- Person: a center of self-consciousness
- Our Creator-God is one Being who is tri-personal

v20-21...

²⁰ *And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,* ²¹ *but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."*

not where Christ was named – pioneer, a true missionary

- gift of apostleship – a church planter

The question occurred to me:

If Paul wasn't interested in building on another's foundation, why was he interested in going to Rome? He actually did plant the church in Rome albeit remotely

- Chapter 16 greets several people he knew there

Is 52:15 – *those who have not heard shall understand*

- Messiah pouring out His Spirit on many nations
- Paul claimed this promise for his ministry

What applications or take-aways do you see?

- Spiritual maturity is important to work on
- We should be about relationship building, exhortation
- We are priests, we need to be more active in that role
- Faith is far superior to seeking signs & wonder
- We should proclaim the full counsel of God