

The Footsteps of Faith Series
Lesson #24 “Now may the God of peace be with you all”
Romans 15:14-33

Scripture: Romans 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Introduction:

I really like it when Sam shouts out “*preach the word brother*” before I began preaching. I would like to take a moment to explain why because if your not a preacher or haven’t preached in public, this shout out might seem like a pep-rally or accolade.

But, when I hear this “*preach the word*” I am reminded of the fact that I have a responsibility before God to His people. God has made a calling in my life and since I have the deepest desire to please Him I appreciate the reminder to preach His truths.

Also, when I hear this “*preach the word*” I am reminded of Paul’s admonition to Timothy to “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.” (2 Timothy 2:4).

Then, I am also reminded that God’s word is where the power of godliness lies and not in my own philosophies or cute little stories. Romans 1:16 says “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*”

Each week I get a slice of humility served nice and fresh. You see each week I stand up here and open up God’s word and we talk about His ideas and what He desires from us and how to get there.

And each week I realize that I am incapable. I couldn’t come up with this type of thinking on my own. Week after week I feel short of the task. I am ever grateful for opportunity, but realize that it is only through His power that I am able to do what I do. Ephesians 3:20 “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,”

Transitional Statement:

Church you don’t have to be an Apostle for God to do great things through you. You simply have to surrender your heart to Him, denying yourself and be willing to take the steps of faith that He will lay before you.

Lesson:

I. Paul's confidence in the Roman Church

Romans 15:14

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

A. "I myself"

1. Strongly emphatic in the Greek
2. This is Paul's way of strongly expressing his view of the Roman Church.

B. In this letter Paul has pointed out many opportunities for spiritual growth, but he has also has pointed out potential spiritual weaknesses and problems.

1. I have to wonder how the Romans Church, hearing this letter for the first time, felt about the Apostle Paul and what he was saying to them.
2. So I tried to place myself in their shoes when this letter was read.

a. If I was one of the stronger in faith....I welcomed any opportunity for insight and growth in matters concerning righteousness.

-I would be challenged to a deeper faith.

-I would be resolved to seek God's desire more in my life.

b. But, if I was weaker in faith....I might ask, why does this Paul think we are deficient in our Christianity.

-Who is Paul anyway

-And what makes him think that he has the keys to the kingdom.

C. But Paul wasn't judging them or being critical after all he said in chapter 1:8 that their faith was well known.

D. Here He states clearly that he is convinced:

1. They are full of goodness (Motives are pure)
2. Filled with all knowledge (Completeness in Christ)
3. Able to admonish on another (Competent in instructing each other and correcting difficulties).

NOTE: Convinced is a Perfect Tense Verb pointing to the continued state of confidence

II. The Roman letter was meant to be a reminder

Romans 15:15a

15 But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again,

- A. Paul says that his words have been bold (Daring in the Greek)
 - 1. And God's word is bold in and of itself.
 - 2. Because it challenges the very core of humanity...
 - a. You see, God's word isn't human in nature....it's spiritual !
 - b. And our quest is the application of the spiritual in our human lives
- B. So Paul says, what ever boldness or extreme confidence that I have in God's word is toward one end.
 - 1. To serve as a reminder to you
 - a. i.e. So you won't get so busy with life
 - b. Boggled down by the weight of the world
 - b. So that you won't forget what is really important
 - 2. I forget things all the time.
 - a. I have a day planner sitting on my desk to remind me of all the important things I don't want to forget
 - b. And I usually forget things anyway.
 - c. Do you know the feeling?
 - 3. Throughout the scriptures God is constantly adding reminders to our lives to keep us on the right path.
 - a. In the Old Covenant, He had the Israelites to set up a stone monument called "Ebenezer" to remind them of how God had helped them fight and gain victory over the Philistines. 1 Samuel 7:12
 - b. We partake of the Lord's supper each week as a reminder of where our salvation comes from. 1 Corinthians 11:24-25
 - c. And to the Ephesian Church who had left their first love, Jesus tells them first of all to remember from where they have fallen from. Revelation 2:5
- C. We need to be in God's word daily so we don't forget where we are in this life.

III. Paul wanted the Gentiles to make their lives an acceptable offering to God.

Romans 15:15b-16

because of the grace that was given me from God, 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

- A. God had assigned Paul to be a minister to the Gentiles
 - 1. Acts 22:21 & Gal. 2:9
 - 2. So they were part of Paul's responsibility to God according to God's grace.

- B. Paul took this assignment from God very seriously
 - 1. Honing in on the good news of Jesus Christ
 - 2. Paul exercised great love to the Gentiles and wanted them to succeed spiritually
 - a. Consider the great lengths to which Paul went to preach the gospel to the Gentiles....His actions came from heart felt compassion and a deep desire to please God.

- C. So that,
 - 1. *"my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."*
 - 2. The Greek gives us a challenger here.
 - a. Because the Greek doesn't have the word "my"
 - 3. It seems here that Paul is saying that he preaches the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles so they can understand how to make the offering of their lives acceptable and pleasing to God.

IV. Therefore, when God is exalted His power works within us.

Romans 15:17-19

17 Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. 18 For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

- A. First of all boasting means to speak with exaggerated pride, in relation to the human experience.
 - 1. God directs us away from boasting about ourselves or our position in life.
 - 2. James 4:16 *"But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.*

B. But Paul says,...look, I have found reason for boasting...in heavenly things.

1. In Christ:

- a. I find a justified pride in God.
- b. I know who God is and that he is perfect
- c. My heart is overwhelmed with joy as I look to God.
- b. And I try to get others to look and see what I see !

2. But Outside of Christ:

- a. There is no reason for boasting
- b. There is no reason for joy
- c. There is no hope
- c. And there is nothing, to take pride in, that has any lasting value

C. Paul further adds that his boasting is in things pertaining to God.

1. Church, the only boasting that has value is in things pertaining to God.

2. We have permission and are encouraged by scripture to lift God high in our lives.

D. Paul adds emphasis here by saying:

1. I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me

a. Paul acknowledges that on his own he is nothing.

b. And anything that he has become is because of Christ in him.

2. Humility of Spirit is a requirement for effective kingdom business.

a. Personal pride and arrogance harm the Lord's work

E. The amazing results of this kind of humility are seen in:

1. The obedience of Gentiles by word and deed

2. The power of signs and wonders

3. And the power of the Spirit

* God works through the humble

F. So that.

1. From Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum

2. I have fully preached the gospel

3. If arrogance got in the way Paul would not have poured out my whole life and would not have been able to accomplish all this .

V. Paul's Apostolic mission was foundation work.

Romans 15:20-22

20 And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation; 21 but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND." 22 For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you;

- A. The word “aspire” here means to strive
 - 1. Paul's directive from God includes a striving in preaching the gospel
 - 2. To which Paul was diligent to the task.
- B. But, here it says that he strives to preach where Christ hasn't already been named.
 - 1. That is Paul as an Apostle was a foundation man Eph 3:20
 - 2. It was his responsibility as an Apostle to lay the groundwork and provide a foundation for the church to grow upon.
- D. The Roman Church already had foundational material as was evident by their well known faith 1:8
 - 1. That is why he is just now getting around to the idea of visiting Rome

VI. Paul reveals his plans for visiting Rome.

Romans 15:23-24

23 but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you 24 whenever I go to Spain — for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while —

- A. At this time Paul had laid the foundation in most of the regions
 - 1. He feels more able to shift from foundational work to church building
 - 2. To encouragement
 - 3. To a building up of the saints.
- B. And considering his longing to visit the brethren in Rome
 - 1. Romans 1:9-12

“For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.”
- C. He mentions that we want to stop for a brief visit on his way to Spain.
 - 1. To enjoy your company for a while.
 - 2. To let them help him on his way.....in his missionary function

VII. Paul's present mission

Romans 15:25-29

25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. 28 Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

A. First Paul wants to make clear the fact that he is a servant.

1. This is not just a trifle statement, because he fully understands that Jesus didn't come to be served but to serve (Matthew 20:28)...and Paul wants it clearly understood that he too is a servant humbly washing the feet of the brethren so-to-speak. (John 13)

B. And currently he is delivering a contribution made by the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the poor brethren in Jerusalem.

1. To which he says that they were pleased to make this contribution.

C. And Paul adds that they were not only pleased but they recognized their obligation in helping each other.

VIII. Finally, Paul request their prayers

Romans 15:30-33

30 Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, 31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; 32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

A. Paul senses problems in Judea

1. And rightfully so !

B. Paul strongly desires his service to be acceptable to the Jerusalem saints.

C. And He wants his trip to Rome to be one of joy

Conclusion:

**God accomplished a great work through the Apostle Paul
God can accomplish a great work through you also.....if your willing !
Have you opened your heart to the possibilities of God?
How about taking a leap of faith today?**

So today I take this opportunity to say to you church.....preach the word!