

A BIBLICAL MINISTRY

ROMANS 15:15-33

Text:

Introduction:

In these few verses, as Paul is in the midst of the farewell portion of his letter, he takes time to lay out the function of ministry.

Often we forget the why of ministry. We work on refining the “hows” of ministry, yet neglect and sometimes forget why we are doing ministry. Paul, in his closing remarks wants to remind us of the “whys” of ministry.

1. PURPOSE 1 – PRODUCE AN ACCEPTABLE OFFERING TO GOD (VS. 15-16)

Romans 15:15-16

¹⁵ Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, ¹⁶ That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Having never been to Rome, and not being totally familiar with the Roman Christians, Paul felt it necessary to explain why he had written to them. He says in verse 15 that in spite of their spiritual level, “Nevertheless...I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort...”

He wrote to them in an authoritative manner, and with firmness, because he was confident of his office as “...minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles...” This was a ministry that God had confirmed “through mighty signs and wonders.” These unusual graces had enabled Paul to preach throughout much of the then known world.

- A. His Mandate (vs. 15) – grace that is given to me of God
- B. His Manifest (vs. 16) – the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles
- C. His Message (vs. 16) – the Gospel
- D. His Mission (vs. 16) – that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable

2. PURPOSE 2 – TO SERVE GOD AND PROCLAIMED WHAT CHRIST HAS ACCOMPLISHED (vs. 17-22)

Romans 15:17-22

¹⁷ I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. ¹⁸ For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, ¹⁹ Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. ²⁰ Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: ²¹ But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. ²² For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

As Christians we are to be vessels fit for the Masters use, which will bring honor and glory to Him.

If anyone could boast to a group of Christians who had never met Paul, the Romans Christians, Paul could have without debate. Paul realized though it was the Lord that had made possible all the results.

In churches we see all types of vessels.

A. Fancy Vessels

1. Those with all the talent

Many of these vessels are full of themselves.

2. Those with wealth

They try to buy influence.

B. Empty Vessels

1. May look good

2. Have no substance (Hypocrites)

C. Broken Vessels

Psalms 31:12

¹² I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

1. Empty because of damage

D. Moldable Vessels

Jeremiah 18:2-6

² Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. ³ Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. ⁴ And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. ⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁶ O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

1. Willing to do as God says
2. Willing to go where God sends
3. Willing to give all to God

3. PURPOSE 3 – BIBLICAL MISSIONS (VS. 23-29)

Romans 15:23-29

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.

- A. Training believers to grow
- B. Recognizing those called to go
 1. Missions priorities

The unreached, more than their supporters

4. PURPOSE 4 – CORPORATE PRAYER (VS. 30-33)

Romans 15:30-33

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.