

ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional
Study Guide*



Monday

Study: Romans 15:14-16, Galatians 2:11-14

Reading: Acts 10:1-11:18

Memory: Matthew 5:30

Romans 15:14-16

How did Paul describe the Roman believers (vs 14)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What encouragement did he express towards them because of this (vs 14a)?

****Spiritual growth is a process. Groups, as well as individuals, can make great strides in one area while they are greatly lacking in other areas. Being corrected by others for spiritual blind spots doesn't mean you are a terrible follower of Christ, but it is part of the whole experience of growth. Proverbs 9:9 says, "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning."*

Why did Paul say he had boldly written to them about some areas (vs 15)?

Why would it have taken boldness for Paul to write this?

What did Paul realize was the source of his boldness (vs 15b)?

****Paul was not writing to the Romans to condemn them or cause harm to them, but was writing to them because he had been given God's grace in the areas where they were weak and had already grown in them. He was not looking down on them, but coming along side of them to help them. Rebuking others for spiritual shortcomings is something that needs to be done at times, but it is something that takes great humility and boldness.*

How does verse 16 show that Paul was confident about his calling in life?

Why do you think Paul emphasized that he was called to the Gentiles (vs 16)?

****The book of Romans clearly points out the division that was happening between the Jews and Gentiles and how many Jews thought the Gentiles needed to act like Jews in order to be true believers. Paul spent a great deal of time explaining how both Jews and Gentiles needed Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.*

Galatians 2:11-14

What did Paul have to do to Peter (vs 11)?

Why did this have to take place (vs 12)?

****Peter (Cephas) had seen the vision from heaven where God clearly showed that there was to be no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the food that they ate (Acts 10:9-16). He had reported this to the other believers and was convinced of it. Yet, even the great apostle Peter gave into the peer pressure of other Jewish Christians in Antioch and thought that he should not be eating with the Gentiles.*

How did Paul describe the actions of Peter (vs 13)?

Who else fell into this trap (vs 13)?

What does this reveal about how easy it is for any believer to be persuaded by the opinions of others rather than the truth they know?

What did Paul do about what he had observed (vs 14)?

How did this take great boldness?

How do you know when it is time to be bold and time to be quiet?

Personal Application

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

Tuesday

Study: Romans 15:17-21, I Corinthians 3:5-10

Reading: Titus 1:1-16

Memory: Matthew 5:30

Romans 15:17-21

What did Paul say he was proud of (vs 17)?

How does this reveal that pride is a good thing at times?

****Proverbs 6:17 states that God hates a “proud look,” yet here Paul says he is proud of what God allowed him to accomplish. To understand this, you must realize that not all pride is the same. This is similar to the idea of jealousy. God describes Himself as a jealous God, yet He also says that jealousy is a sin. The difference between it being a good thing and a bad thing is the source. If the pride or jealousy is from a selfish, self-serving motive, then that is going to be sin. If it is for the good of others and glorifies God, then most of the time it is good. In this passage, Paul is not boasting in his accomplishments, but in what Jesus Christ accomplished through him. You must be careful about this. I have sat through many praise and testimony services where people “thanked God” then went on for several minutes to tell everyone how great they were.*

How does verse 18 reveal the humility of Paul?

How can you know if you are exalting Christ or yourself?

What had God given Paul the ability to do (vs 19)?

How did he express that this was not in his own strength (vs 19)?

What two cities does Paul mention in verse 19? Why?

Illyricum was a region that was west and north of Greece. Though it is not mentioned in Acts, it is probably the farthest west Paul had traveled. He was simply describing that vast area of ministry which God had allowed

him to travel to and share the Gospel.

What was Paul's desire in preaching the Gospel (vs 20)?

****Some people have taken this verse to mean that all missions should strive to reach those regions that have never heard the Gospel. While it is very true that there are places still that have not heard the Gospel and that God calls men and women to those places, ministry for God is not just going to reach the unreached groups. We will see in chapter 16 that God called some people to minister to the groups that were already reached, while God had given Paul the desire to reach out to unreached groups. Paul was not defining God's calling on everyone's life, just declaring how he had fulfilled God's call on his life.*

What vision from Isaiah 52:15 had God given Paul?

I Corinthians 3:5-10

What did Paul reveal about God's calling on different men (vs 5)?

Who was responsible for the spiritual fruit (vs 6)?

What does verse 7 make clear?

How will you be rewarded (vs 8)?

****You will not be rewarded by God for the amount of people that you lead to Christ, but you will be rewarded for obeying His calling on your life.*

What other illustration did Paul use to point out how we are all working together for God, though all have different callings (vs 9-10)?

What has to be the center of all that we do (vs 11)?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Wednesday

Study: Romans 15:22-27, I Corinthians 16:1-4

Reading: Acts 21:1-36

Memory: Matthew 5:30

Romans 15:22-27

What reason did Paul give for not visiting the Romans sooner (vs 22)?

****In the previous verses Paul had described how it was his desire to preach everywhere that the Gospel had not been preached.*

What do you think Paul meant in the beginning of verse 23?

****The letter to the Romans was probably written near the end of the third missionary journey from the city of Corinth. He had visited most of the main cities of the Roman Empire that were east of Rome. Paul was called to minister to large cities and in places where the Gospel was not preached. He felt he had accomplished this plan and wanted to move west on to the region of Spain, which was west of Rome.*

What was going to be Paul's purpose in visiting the church in Rome (vs 23-24)?

What does this reveal about the ministry Paul had been given by God?

****As you read yesterday, Paul did want to encourage the churches that were already established, but the ministry God had called him to was to reach out to new regions that didn't know the Gospel. He knew what God had called him to and did not intend to get sidetracked with the emotional attachments from Rome or any of the other churches.*

What was Paul's plan (vs 25-26)?

****The believers in Jerusalem had been going through a terrible time of persecution and Paul had taken a collection in many of the cities in Macedonia and Achaia to take back with him to Jerusalem to help the*

believers there. Paul did make it to Rome, but as a prisoner. Once he reached Jerusalem he was arrested in the temple. See Acts 21:27-36

What were the believers in Macedonia and Achaia pleased to do (vs 27)?

What did those believers realize about the importance of Jewish believers (vs 27)?

Why do you think Paul emphasized this?

****The book of Romans deals a lot with the Jew/Gentile relationship. Here is one of Paul's last attempts to remind the readers in Rome of the importance of both Jews and Gentiles and the need to work together to help each other.*

I Corinthians 16:1-4

What was Paul writing about in this passage (vs 1)?

What were they supposed to do on the first day of the week (vs 2)?

****It appears that the reason they were supposed to do this on the first day of the week was because that is the day they were meeting together as believers.*

What principle of giving is given here (vs 2)?

****They were to give in proportion to how God had prospered them that week.*

Why do you think that Paul wanted them to give a regular offering rather than just a one time offering when he came (vs 2)?

How was Paul wise by asking the believers to send men with the money they had collected (vs 3-4)?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Thursday

Study: Romans 15:28-33, James 2:13-17

Reading: Acts 20:17-38, II Samuel 5:17-25

Memory: Matthew 5:30

Romans 15:28-33

What did Paul express again about his plans (vs 28)?

What can you learn about plans from this passage?

****There are many people who think it is wrong to plan ahead and they just want to be directed by the Holy Spirit. Though this sounds good and spiritual, in my observation, most of the people who do this get very little accomplished because they often rely on their emotions. In this passage, you see that Paul made plans for the future. He had a vision of what God could accomplish through him and he took steps towards that vision. We do not know if he ever made it to Spain because God had other plans for him in Jerusalem. Proverbs 16:9 says, "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps." There are those on the other hand who make plans and go against God because they want their plan to be accomplished rather than His. I believe Scripture presents a proper balance between making plans and following God's daily leading.*

After Paul presented His plans to them, what did He state about God's plan (vs 29)?

****When Paul did visit the Romans, he wanted to share with them the blessings of Christ and he also knew that when he visited them it would be through the leading of Christ.*

What did Paul ask for the believers to do (vs 30)?

What two specific things did Paul want prayer for (vs 31)?

- 1.
- 2.

****Jerusalem was a hostile place for believers. Much of their persecution came from the religious leaders. These leaders hated Paul because he had once been one of them before he turned from their way and to the way of Christ.*

What did Paul once again reveal when he was making plans to visit the Romans (vs 32)?

****He made plans, but knew that his plans would be directed and changed by the will of God.*

How can Paul's heart for God and other believers be seen in verses 32-33?

James 2:13-17

What mind set was James addressing (vs 13)?

What did James reveal about the plans of men (vs 14)?

How should you make plans (vs 15)?

What happens when you make your plans and try to make those plans happen (vs 16)?

How can seeking after your plans be sin, even if they are godly in their foundation (vs 17)?

****God does not command your service, but He commands your obedience. I believe there are many people who spend their lives attempting to serve God in their time and their way, but who aren't obedient to Him.*

How can you know if your plans are yours or if they are God's?

Personal Application

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

“Only Because of God”

Study: Romans 15:17-25

Reading: I Corinthians 1:1-31

Memory: Matthew 5:30

Before video editing programs became common and simple, I was often asked to make videos for people's weddings, anniversaries and special events. When I first started, it took me several hours to produce videos and they didn't always turn out the way I wanted them to. As software progressed, the process became easier each time I did it. What used to take me hours can now be accomplish in minutes.

Today, we are going to see how important it is to realize that successful ministry only comes from the power of God. I could have started bragging about how good I was at making videos, but if I did, I would be wrong. It isn't anything that I did that made the videos better and easier, but it was the advancement in software. In our Christian lives, it is the power of God that truly works and not our effort and abilities.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul understood the he was simply a servant of Jesus Christ. All the results that his ministry brought forth and every heart that was turned to the Lord wasn't because of his ability, but was a result of the power of God. Paul had nothing to be proud of in himself. That is why he described himself as a "wretched man" earlier in his letter to the Romans (7:24). He knew that it was the power of the Holy Spirit that allowed Him to be an example in word and deed (vs 17-19).

This realization gave Paul the desire to accomplish more for the cause of Christ. His desire was to reach out to the whole world and to share the Gospel to those who had never heard. One of the reasons that Paul wanted to do this was because He didn't want to interfere with how God was using others to help build the kingdom of Christ. It wasn't about him and his results, but about God and how God could use all believers to reach the world. The other thing that motivated Paul was the opportunity that God gave him to fulfill the Scripture, specifically Isaiah 52:15. This verse describes how God would reach out to those who had never heard of Him

or His Son (vs 20-21).

As discussed much earlier in this devotional, Paul hadn't visited the Roman church when he wrote this letter, but did desire to meet them. The thing that hindered him was the leading of the Holy Spirit to evangelize the region he was in and to make sure that every place had opportunity to hear the Gospel. His next plan was to stop at Rome for a little while and then travel onto Spain where the Gospel hadn't been taken (vs 22-24).

Though Paul's desire was to make it to Spain, many scholars think that he never made it there. After his trip to deliver money to the Jerusalem church, he was arrested and spent the next several years in the custody of the Roman government (vs 25).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What is your purpose for serving the Lord the way that you do? Do you do it for the results that you can see, the feeling that you get or the praise that others give you? If you do it for those reasons, you will find yourself frustrated and disappointed in your Christian life. Though most believers know they should serve out of a love for God which motivates them to obey, we as humans often get hung up on results. We want to apply human thinking and reasoning to the work of the Lord which might produce numbers, but doesn't often produce godliness. You need to come to understand the same thing Paul understood. He came to the realization that any attempts that he made to be successful for God through human efforts would fail, but when He allowed God to work through Him, he was always victorious.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for choosing to use you to accomplish His plan.*
- * *Ask God to help you do things only through His power.*
- * *Praise God because He can use a wretch like you.*

Thought for the day

“Trusting God’s Way”

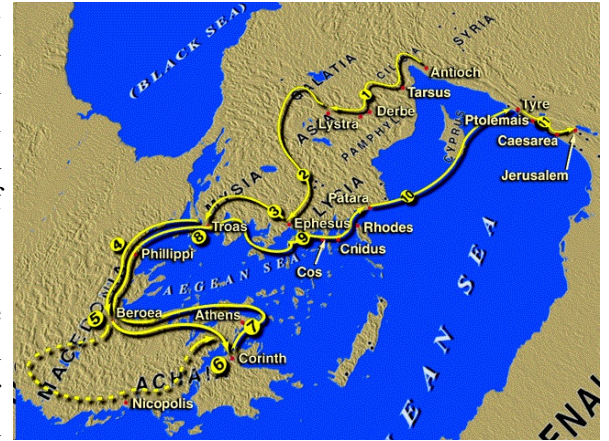
Study: Romans 15:25-33

Reading: Ephesians 3:1-21

Memory: Matthew 5:30

What Does the Bible Say?

The reason that Paul was headed to Jerusalem before he traveled to Spain was to deliver the financial aid that he had collected throughout the region of Macedonia and Achaia. Those regions were different provinces of the Roman empire and would be similar to states in our society. Paul mentioned how those throughout the



Region of Macedonia & Achaia towards bottom left

region were more than happy to give some funds to the Jerusalem church to help them out because of the severe financially difficult times that some of the Christians in Jerusalem were facing. They weren't just happy to give, but they felt a sense of duty to give. After all, it was the Jerusalem church that sent out missionaries to share the Gospel, and it was also the place where many Jewish believers were converted before they were dispersed to other regions of the Roman empire as a result of persecution. They owed the Jerusalem church far more in spiritual blessings than they could ever repay in material blessings (vs 25-27).

Paul once again mentioned to them his plan to visit the believers in Rome before he traveled to Spain to share the Gospel. He was looking forward to getting to know them and building relationships with them. He was thrilled in the fact that believers around the known world were growing in the Lord (vs 28-29).

Paul then asked the believers to pray for Him. In fact, he strongly desired their prayers because He understood the power that God gives through prayer. Paul knew that prayer wasn't easy, and that is why he asked

them to “strive” together in prayer with him. The word “strive” described how hard work and agonizing effort was needed. He wanted them to pray that God would soften the heart of the unbelievers in Jerusalem so that they wouldn’t hinder his ministry. He also wanted them to pray that he would have sweet fellowship with the believers in Jerusalem. He asked for prayer to fulfil his desire to be able to visit with and get to know the people which made up the Roman church (vs 30-33).

Though on the surface it appeared that God didn’t answer their prayer for Paul to come minister in Rome, God did, but in His own way. According to the book of Acts, Paul was able to make it to Rome and was able to spend a few years there under house arrest, which allowed Paul and the believers to spend much time together.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you find yourself battling between the physical and spiritual? It is easy to allow the way the physical world works to overtake the biblical explanation of how the spiritual world works. It is clear from the writing of Paul, that spiritual influence was far more important to him than any material influence. It also was apparent that Paul knew the power of prayer. He begged the Romans to pray for him because he knew the spiritual warfare that he was facing. He knew that Satan would raise up men to oppose him, and that he needed the power of God to prevail. As believers prayed, God did work in the situation. Though prayer can’t be fully understood by the human mind, it needs to be fully practiced in your daily life. Choose today to make prayer a vitally important part of your life.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for listening to your prayers.
- * Ask God to help you to trust Him and His ways.

Thought for the day

Sunday

Reading: Romans 15:14-23

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

www.biblegateway.com

Bible Memory

Matthew 5:15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. 27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.