

Exegetical Notes - Romans 15:14-22

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Romans 15:14-22

Verses 14-16

I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.¹⁵ Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

- These verses begin the proper conclusion to the Book of Romans. As he draws his arguments and instructions to an end, Paul is aware that he has spoken strongly to the Roman Christians, as he frequently does to the Church in his writings. He does not want the letter to end on a note of misunderstanding.
- In Romans 14:1-15:13, Paul has spoken about weaker and stronger Christians. It is entirely possible that those to whom he wrote might misunderstand him and conclude that he wrote as he did because he believed those to whom he wrote to be weaker Christians. Remember that Paul had not yet visited the Church in Rome and, although he knows members of that church personally (see Romans 16), people there might not understand his style of teaching and so be offended that a stranger would speak to them as Paul has. He has been blunt and straight-forward, but many people are offended by such teaching.
- So, Paul begins this passage by assuring his readers that he does not regard them as weaker Christians. He believes them to be “good, competent in knowledge, and capable to teach each other.” None-the-less, he has “spoken to them boldly.”
- Paul wants the Roman Christians to understand that he was reminding them of what they already knew not declaring them incompetent. He has done this to fulfill his calling from God. He is called to be a minister to

Gentiles. Fulfilling his calling is his priestly duty. His desire is to help the Gentile Christians become an “acceptable offering to God who have been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” In speaking to the Roman Christians as he has done, and later to the Church at Corinth and all the other churches to whom writes, Paul speaks boldly to fulfill his calling before God.

Verses 17-19

Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. ¹⁸ I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

- “Therefore,” because he is under God’s calling, Paul does what he does. He has traveled around the world to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Jews and non-Jews (see verses 15-16).
- God has demonstrated his approval of Paul’s ministry through powerful signs and wonders and through the power of his Spirit.
- As a result of all this, Paul glories in what Jesus has allowed him to do and gives Jesus alone full credit of all and anything which he may have accomplished. All he has done has been to the glory of God.

Verses 20-22

²⁰ It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation. ²¹ Rather, as it is written:

***“Those who were not told about him will see,
and those who have not heard will understand.”***

²² This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.

- Paul was called to begin churches in places where there was no church. He was a church-planter, not a pastor.
- Paul was not the founder of the Roman Church. He had never visited that church. His purpose, building churches in communities where there was no church, meant that he had no reason for visiting the church already established there. That was not what he was called to do.
- Paul is now preparing to visit the Roman Church (see 15:23-33). He wants them to understand that he has not come before because it was his calling

to establish churches in places where there was no church. All that he is doing is done to fulfill his calling before God.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *A Minister to the Gentiles*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship*, Coatesville, Pennsylvania, & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)