

Romans 15:23-33

Verses 23-24

But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, ²⁴ I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

- Having established churches to the glory of God and having long desired to visit the church in Rome, Paul announces his intention to visit Rome. His intention is to begin establishing new churches in the area of Spain. On his way to Spain, he intends to visit the Christians in Rome. He hopes that the Roman Christians will support his new mission to Spain.

Verses 25-27

²⁵ Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. ²⁷ They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

- However, Paul's immediate plans are to go to Jerusalem to deliver an offering to the church in Jerusalem from the Christians in Macedonia and Achaia (see 2 Corinthians 8-9). The Greek churches had taken a free will offering to help the Jerusalem church. Paul had been entrusted with delivering the gift. Delivering the gift was his top priority at the moment.

Verses 28-29

²⁸ So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this contribution, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

- After delivering the gift to Jerusalem, Paul will go to his new mission field, Spain, and in traveling there, he will visit Rome.

- Paul expects to be greeted warmly by the Christians in Rome in keeping with his office.

Verses 30-33

³⁰ I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ³¹ Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, ³² so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. ³³ The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

- In returning to Jerusalem, Paul expects trouble from the Jews, the Jewish authorities, and from those who do not believe that Jesus is Lord. He asks that the Roman Christians join him in prayer as he goes there (see Acts 20:22-23). He asks the Roman Christians to pray with him that the gift he brings will be well received by the Christians in Jerusalem.
- The offering is important to Paul. He wants to bring the gift to the Christians in Jerusalem, but people are people and money often causes problems. He does not want this to be the case. He wants all things to be done peacefully according to the will of God.
- Paul concludes his letter formally by praying God's peace, the peace which comes from God and passes understanding, on the Roman church. This is the formal ending to the Book of Romans.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *The Planned Visit to Rome*. 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.)