**Aim to Preach the Gospel**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 15:20-27**

**Wednesday Evening**

**April 30, 2025**

**Romans 15:20-27**

20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, 21 but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."

22 For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you. 23 But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, 24 whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while. 25 But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 27 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.

**20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,**

Saints, the reason for the extent of Paul’s ministry was the driving ambition to share Christ in territories where the name of Christ has never been heard.

Paul saw his mission as moving into the centers of population, starting a church, being sure it had a good foundation, then allowing it to continue the work of evangelization in its area while Paul moved on to areas uncharted by the gospel.

Other preachers would have brought the gospel to some areas that Paul had not gone to; they would be involved in the follow-up and spiritual growth of the believers there.

Paul did not want to move into those areas when it was more important for him to preach where people had not yet heard the Good News.

**21 but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."**

Saints, Paul quoted from part of Isaiah 52:15 to show that those who had been ignorant of God’s word would respond positively to the Messiah.

Isaiah predicted how surprised the Gentile nations would be when they saw the humiliation and exaltation of God’s Servant, the Messiah.

Paul uses this prophetic word to affirm the need for his missionary efforts to the Gentiles.

**22 For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you.**

Saints, because of his driving force to bring the gospel to people who had not yet heard, Paul had been delayed from going to Rome.

He had much territory to cover in Asia Minor and around Greece, so it seems likely that he postponed his trip to Rome because there was already a strong church there.

**23 But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you**

Saints, at this point, Paul felt that enough local churches have been established throughout the area (not just by him, but by the other apostles and other missionaries) that these churches could complete the work of evangelization.

Because he feels that his work in the regions of Jerusalem and Greece has been finished, and because of his great desire to meet the believers in Rome, he will visit them on his next trip.

The fact that he knows so many of them personally is reason enough for his desire (see chapter 16).

But up to this point, his pioneering missionary work has taken all his time.

**24 whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while.**

Saints, the planned destination of Paul’s next trip is Spain.

On the way, he will stop off in Rome to fellowship with the believers there.

Apparently Paul did not plan to stay long in Rome, but he hoped that the believers there would send him on his way as he continued on to Spain.

This statement should dispel any concern that Paul would try to assume some sort of permanent leadership position or take advantage of the church’s hospitality.

Instead, he was planning to move through, to the next uncharted territory for the gospel, at the western limit of the Roman Empire.

Spain was a Roman colony, and there were Jews there. Paul wanted to take the Good News there.

Also, Spain had many great minds and influential leaders in the Roman world (Lucan, Martial, Hadrian), and perhaps Paul thought Christianity would advance greatly in such an atmosphere.

**25 But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.**

Saints, Paul was indefinite about exactly when he would visit Rome because he was busy with another matter at present.

Paul was on his way to Jerusalem from Corinth (from where he had most likely written this letter. He had been in that city for about three months, see Acts 20:3) with a delegation of men chosen by each church to take a gift from those churches to the Christians in Jerusalem (see Acts 24:17; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 9:13).

Paul considered his delivery of this offering as an act of worship. Indeed, it was a fitting climax to his ministry in the east before he moved west.

**26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.**

Saints, Paul had collected voluntary offerings from various churches, including the ones in Greece, and would be taking that offering to the poor Christians in Jerusalem who were going through such hard times.

The Gentile believers had collected an offering for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem.

These Gentile churches were very glad to do this because they felt they owed a real debt to the Jewish church in Jerusalem.

The Gentiles had received the gospel (spiritual blessings) originally from Jerusalem (where Christianity began), so they wanted to offer financial help to the needy poor there. Not only that, but Paul hoped that such generosity and caring among the churches would strengthen the ties between them.

The Jerusalem church, obviously made up mostly of Jews, at first had a difficult time even accepting ministry to the Gentiles (see Peter’s situation in Acts 10:1–11:18).

**27 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.**

Saints, some were still concerned about these mostly-Gentile churches.

Gentile churches helping to meet the needs of the Jerusalem church was a sure way to maintain harmony among the believers and strengthen the bond of brotherhood.

This was not the first time a collection was taken to the church in Jerusalem.

About ten years earlier, Paul and Barnabas brought a collection from the church in Antioch of Syria to help the Jerusalem church during a time of famine (Acts 11:30; 12:25).

It seems that being Christian and being poor went together if one lived in Jerusalem.

Christianity was not well accepted by the Jewish authorities, and when Jews became Christians they were often cut off from family and friends.

The Jerusalem church probably had little means of support, so help from the other churches was needed and greatly appreciated.

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**