

THE MINISTRIES OF PAUL (Romans 15:14-33)

I. The ministry of remembrance (vs. 14-16).

- A. When you and I read the book of Romans, we ought to be examining ourselves.
 - 1. Are we still serving sin?
 - 2. Are we true children of Abraham?
 - 3. Do we have the hope that saves?
 - 4. So many different things are brought up in this book, that it should be easy to see what we are doing or not doing for God when we read it.
- B. Now at the end of the book, after Paul has brought up numerous things that were hard and seemingly harsh, Paul gives them an exam grade.
- C. He says first that they full of goodness.
 - 1. They had true motives.
 - 2. They were good people who wanted to do right.
- D. He says second, they were filled with knowledge.
 - 1. They understood what God wanted from them and were striving to do it.
 - 2. They couldn't do this if they weren't full of goodness.
 - 3. They weren't like a lot of us, just getting along hoping things turn out well in the end.
 - 4. They were actively striving to do what was right.
- E. He says third, that they were able to instruct one another.
 - 1. This indicates maturity on their part.
 - 2. They didn't have need of one to teach them, they could and did teach others.
 - 3. They were able to take their knowledge, enacted out of their goodness and pass it on to others.
- F. In other words, they were able to remind one another of the gospel.
- G. What a blessing it is to be able to help fellow Christians.
 - 1. We all have the basic desire to do right.
 - 2. Sometimes, we need to be reminded of what right is and mature Christians can do that.
- H. Unless we have goodness and knowledge, we can't be reminders.
- I. We aren't mature enough to be such.
- J. Paul was simply reminding them of hard aspects of the gospel so that he could be the proper minister of Jesus to the Gentiles.
 - 1. He wanted them to be accepted by God.
 - 2. The only way this would take place is if they were set apart from the world by the Holy Spirit's message.

- K. The way this was done was by them accepting the message of Paul and being reminded of what was right and continue putting it in action.

II. The ministry of reconciling (vs. 17-24).

- A. Reconcile means to bring together two parties who were estranged.
- B. Paul reconciled Gentiles to God through the preaching of the gospel.
- C. Because of his ministry of reconciliation, he could glory in Christ.
- D. He would not preach in places others had because he did not want to take any credit for their work.
- E. He did preach all over Asia Minor, parts of Europe and wanted to go to Rome but had been unable up to that point.
 - 1. It was his great desire and eventually he did, although not like he had planned.
 - 2. He had preached everywhere else he needed to go but not in Rome.
 - 3. He planned on going to Spain and going through Rome to get there.
- F. We must be about the ministry of reconciliation.
 - 1. You and I, as Christians, have this ministry because we are the hands of Jesus.
 - 2. We are striving to reconcile sinful men to God.
 - 3. If we don't do it, no one else can or will.
- G. The love for Jesus that we have should motivate us to do this.
 - 1. We won't ever be motivated very long by a command to do this.
 - 2. We can quote the Great Commission backwards and forwards.
 - 3. Until the love of Christ motivates us, we will sit back and do nothing.

III. The ministry of relieving (vs. 25-29).

- A. Paul was about to go to Jerusalem to bring the contribution about which we read in 1 and 2 Corinthians.
 - 1. The Gentile congregations had given in a great way to their brethren in Judea.
 - 2. There had been a famine and things were very difficult for the Christians there.
- B. It made the Gentiles glad to do this because they were debtors to the Jews.
 - 1. The Gentiles benefitted from the spiritual blessings the Jews had received.
 - 2. The Jews brought in the Christ to the world.
 - 3. The Jews had been willing to serve God when the Gentile world was not.
- C. Being brethren in a spiritual sense also motivated the Gentiles to helping

- the Jews.
- D. Paul was going to deliver this gift to the brethren and then go to Spain through Rome.
 - E. He would come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, but not how he imagined.
 - 1. He would come in chains.
 - 2. However, he would come to that city and plant the seed of the gospel in its very heart.
 - 3. In other letters we read of mentions of people in Caesar's own house who had obeyed the gospel.
 - F. I am so thankful to be a part of a congregation that seeks to relieve their brethren when the opportunity presents itself.
 - 1. A few years ago, we needed relief and many of our brethren came to our aid.
 - 2. I know this had an effect on us that lasts even until now.
 - G. We have aided brethren in LA, TX, AL, MS and I'm sure in other places as well.
 - H. We never should allow this spirit to die.
 - I. Paul believed in relieving those in need and we must continue to do as we have done and I'm confident we will.

IV. The ministry of requesting (vs. 30-33).

- A. Paul begged the brethren in Rome to pray for him.
- B. He first asked to be delivered from non-believers in Judea.
 - 1. He was delivered but not in the way he would have wanted.
 - 2. He was taken by them but Roman soldiers rescued him and then his nephew overheard a plot to kill him.
- C. He then asked to them to pray that his gift be accepted by the brethren in Judea.
 - 1. It was accepted by them.
 - 2. James even called Paul a beloved brother.
- D. He then asked them to pray that he would make it to Rome to be refreshed by them.
 - 1. We know that he eventually did make it to Rome.
 - 2. When he landed on the shores of Italy, Christians from Rome came all the way to a village called Three Taverns to meet him.
 - 3. This refreshed his spirit and a request was answered.
- E. We need to be ministering to others through prayer.
- F. I have a friend, a preacher, who will occasionally text a group of us and ask us how he can pray for us.
 - 1. We know how great it is when someone prays for us.
 - 2. It lifts us up and refreshes us.
- G. We need to be letting our requests be made known to God and we need to be requesting for others as well.

- H. There are so many things to pray for.
 - 1. It may be health;
 - 2. It may be of a spiritual nature;
 - 3. It may be about ones family;
 - 4. It could be about a job situation.
- I. Any number of things are request worthy and we need to be praying for one another because of the power of prayer.

From an outline by Ray Stedman