

# SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

## *In The Grip of God's Grace*

### The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

#### Romans 1:8-13 - "Paul's Loving Heart"

Romans 1:8-13, *"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles."*

Someone has fittingly said, "When God measures a man, he puts a tape around his heart and not his head."

Paul the Apostle was a man with a big heart.

In this section of scripture we find that Paul wanted his Roman readers to know four things:

1. That he cared about them (vs. 9-13)
2. That he wanted to come to them
3. The reason why he hadn't come to them
4. Why he wanted to come to them (vs. 11)

In doing this Paul opens his heart.

We get a revelation of his great love and see the marks of true Spiritual service.

People serve the Lord from many different motives:

- legalism – earn salvation
- fear – what God will do if they don't
- prestige, esteem – to be seen of men
- position or power –
- peer-pressure – friends or family

Ephesians 6:6, "*Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;*"

What kind of a heart should we have in our service to God?

## I. A Thankful Heart (vs. 8)

Romans 1:8, "*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*"

Paul was a man with a thankful heart.

In all of Paul's letters he thanks God for them (except for Galatians).

Notice who Paul thanked – "*my God*" – not the Roman believers.

Paul was thankful because his focus was on God, not himself (he was in prison)

Paul was thankful for God's blessings – He saw God's hand!

Paul was also thankful for God's blessings in the lives of others – "*for you all,*"

Notice what he's thankful for:

Their faith (vs. 8) – by faith Paul is not referring to salvation faith but preserving faith and trust that brings spiritual strength and growth.

"*throughout the whole world.*" – Paul uses a hyperbole here – "everywhere I go I hear about your faith!"

Paul doesn't mention the size of the church 'budget', 'building', or 'programs'.

How do you evaluate a 'church' and it's people?

My desire for us here at Calvary Chapel San Bernardino is that we believe what God has told us (in the Bible) and seek to live by it.

## II. A Servant's Heart (vs. 9a)

Romans 1:9a, "*For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, ...*"

The word 'serve' is always used in the New Testament of religious service. The Greek word used in the Septuagint referred to the service of the priests in the Temple, including the idea of worship.

It's translated 'worship' in Philippians 3:3, "*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*"

Our service should be done as an act of worship!

The New Living Translation reads this way, "*I serve with all my heart*".

Notice that there is no distinction between sacred and secular service.

Colossians 3:23-24, "*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily (with all your heart), as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*"

Is your service sincere, and wholehearted?

### III. A Prayerful Heart (vs. 9b-10)

Romans 1:9b-10, "*... that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.*"

Prayer and service must be intertwined – balance your service with prayer!

Prayer must direct our service

Prayer makes our service effective

Prayer changes the one praying so that he or she becomes the kind of person through whom God can accomplish His purpose.

Here are some important characteristics of Paul's prayer life from the text:

1. It was constant (vs. 9 – "*without ceasing*")
2. It was personal (vs. 9 – "*I make mention of you*") – a prayer list
3. It was specific (vs. 10 – "*I might have a prosperous journey*")
4. It was submissive (vs. 10 – "*by the will of God*")

James 4:15, "*For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*"

### IV. A Longing Heart (vs. 11-12)

Romans 1:11-12, *"For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."*

We see Paul's shepherds heart!

Why did Paul long to see them?

1. *"impart unto you some spiritual gift, to them (vs. 11)*

Why?

- Love

What?

Gifts are given by the sovereign Spirit.

2. Why? - So they would be strong in the Lord (vs. 10)

Ephesians 4:11-14, *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"*

R. Kent Hughes – "Paul is not sure what gift or gifts he might impart because he has not been to Rome. He simply wishes to enhance their spirituality. Paul said almost the same thing to the church in Corinth: "what I want is not your possessions but you" (2 Corinthians 12:14). He is not in it for what he could do for himself, but what he could do for them.

Paul's spirit was for all practical purposes duplicated in the life of General Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. Once when General Booth stood before Queen Victoria and she asked what she might do for him, the rugged old man replied, "Your Majesty, some people's passion is money, and some people's passion is fame, but my passion has been men."

3. to experience encouragement from them (vs. 12)

Christian fellowship

Paul was humble – he received younger believers

There is mutuality in ministry – Like 6:8, *"Give and it shall be given ..."*

V. A Purposeful Heart (vs. 13)

Romans 1:13, *"Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles."*

Paul's view of ministry was that it was a quest for spiritual fruit?

The ministry is not an ends in it self, it is a means to an end.

Preaching - fruit

There are 3 categories of fruit:

1. attitude
2. action
3. addition

What was the fruit Paul wanted?

Converts & spiritual growth!

Jesus said in John 15:16, *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."*

Paul's purpose in life was to bring forth much fruit.

What's your purpose in life?

Spiritual fruit for His glory?

Remember the words of Jesus in, John 15:8, *"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."*

Review:

Paul was in the ministry for fruit!

The Marks of a Loving Heart

1. Thankful
2. Worshipful
3. Prayerful
4. Humbled
5. Purposeful