

**ROMANS – LIVING BY FAITH**  
**GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS & MAN’S REBELLION – Chapters 1-3**

**LESSON 3 – THE HEART OF A LEADER – Romans 1:8-15**

Paul had a passion and purpose to minister, but always submitted his plans to the will of God. The insights into Paul’s life found in Romans 1:8-15 give us a glimpse into his heart. We find the zeal of a prophet, the mind of a teacher, the determination of an apostle and the heart of a shepherd.

**Paul’s Praise For The Romans**

Like us, the Roman believers were far from perfect but Paul has nothing but praise for their faith. These Roman Christians had a faith that was known throughout the Mediterranean world.

**The Priority of Paul’s Praise**

In his usual manner, Paul begins with thanksgiving. “First, I thank my God...” In every epistle he wrote with the exception of Galatians, he expresses gratitude for those to whom he is writing. Years after writing Romans, Paul was in prison in Rome where he wrote the books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. In each one of these letters we find Paul expressing a spirit of gratitude.

**The Possession of Paul’s Praise**

Paul calls God, “my God.” Paul calls the gospel, “my gospel.” For Paul, God was not some impersonal force or some far away persona. His God was personal.

**The Point of Paul’s Praise**

When Paul expresses gratitude for the faith of the Romans, he is talking about their daily walk with God. The church in Rome had a good reputation concerning their faith and commitment to the Word of God.

How many churches today are known for these things?

**Paul’s Prayer For The Romans**

Paul spent a lot of time in prayer for believers he had never met.

**His Prayer Was Intense**

Taking an oath in Paul’s day was the most serious form of telling the truth. Paul goes on record by saying in verse 9,

“God...is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers...” This is not a unique thing between Paul and the Roman Christians. We find similar statements by Paul for the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 1:23; 11:31), Galatia (Galatians 1:20) and Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 2:5).

**His Prayer Was Incessant**

Paul described his commitment to prayer as being constant and without end. Prayer was a very high priority in his life. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones made this statement...

“I don’t suppose the world has ever known a busier man than this apostle. There he is, working day and night, and yet he finds time to pray for these people.”

## His Prayer Was Intercessory

Paul prayed for both groups of believers and individual believers. He prayed that their hearts would be united with the heart of God, that their knowledge of God's Word would be made complete and that their obedience to God's will would be made perfect.

### **Paul's Purpose For The Romans**

#### He Desired to See Them

Paul longed for the fellowship and face to face relationship with those for whom he prayed. His own words in verses 10-13 reveal this desire. "The way may be opened for me to come to you"... "I long to see you"... "I planned many times to come to you."

#### He Desired to Strengthen Them

Paul is happy about the faith of the Romans but he knows that they need to be strengthened and encouraged in that faith. Even though the Romans' faith was famous, Paul knew it was not yet firm.

#### He Desired to Be Strengthened by Them

Paul does not consider himself to be superior to these Roman believers. If his faith can make theirs stronger, then their faith can do the same for his.

### **Paul's Preaching To The Romans**

#### His Desire in Preaching to Them

This desire is recorded for us in Acts 19:21, "After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. After I have been there, he said, I must visit Rome also."

In Acts 23:11, the Lord assured Paul that he would go to Rome as His witness. "The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

#### His Delay in Preaching to Them

When Paul tells the Romans that he was hindered in

coming to see them, he touches on mystery regarding divine guidance. Why is a person who wants to do the will of God sometimes hindered from doing it? This hindrance can come in many different ways...

**Unfinished Obligation** – Sometimes we are hindered from moving to the next stage of God's will because the current stage is not complete. (Romans 15:19-23)

**Unprincipled Opponent** – Paul explained to the church in Thessalonica that he had been delayed in coming to see them by Satan himself. (1 Thessalonians 2:18)

**Unparalleled Opportunity** – Once, when Paul desired to go and preach in Asia Minor, God told him, "No." (Acts 16:6-7) Why? Because the Lord was opening the door for Paul to go to Macedonia (Acts 16:9-10). God often shuts one door in order to open a different one for us.

## His Determination in Preaching to Them

In Romans 1, Paul says three things about himself...he is a debtor, he is ready and he is not ashamed. His determination never wavered in spite of being mobbed in Jerusalem; mocked in Athens; and martyred in Rome. Paul was a leader of leaders when it came to the determination to fulfill his mission for Christ.

### **Leadership Lessons From Paul**

The life and writings of Paul teach us six crucial lessons about leadership...

**Leadership is about people** – Paul loved the Christians of Rome.

**Leadership is about prayer** – Paul prayed for people he had never met.

**Leadership is about purpose** – Paul had a plan but submitted himself to God.

**Leadership is about persistence** – Paul kept going in spite of changes in plans.

**Leadership is about patience** – Paul grew where he was planted...trusting in God's timing.

**Leadership is about passion** – Paul was passionate about the spiritual needs of people.