The Book of Romans : Epilogue

The Mission: God’s righteousness is revealed as His grace is proclaimed to all nations. (Romans 15:13–16:37)

***The Passion of God in the Gospel Or, God’s Love for the Nations -- Romans 15:14-33***

If “God” is the subject of the Bible, what is the predicate, or verb? In other words, what is God doing that the Bible records? What, after all, is God’s story? God’s purposes are clear, and His legacy written in the blood of His Son, the blood of the New Covenant, the Gospel.

Why is this so important? First because we often hear that God is distant, unknown, and unknowable. He is none of those things. But recall that our key sins are not believing God and receiving His grace when offered. Instead, we worship everything from trees and rocks to moon and stars to humans and animals, anything but God. So He comes for us in Person, in and through His Son, who dies for us and rises again. This is what He is about. And it is what we must be about. And this is what sets the Gospel apart from all religions of mankind.

* ***The Grace-Filled Apostle to the Gentiles. . .*** 15:14-22

Paul knew who he was and why he was here. His boast was not personal, but in the grace of God, for he was chosen despite having persecuted believers. Having successfully completed this chapter in his life, Paul now desires to move on in evangelizing other nations (Gentiles). The book of Acts recounts his history up to this point in chapters 9-20, showing how the Gospel had gone first to the Jews in and around Jerusalem, and then to the surrounding areas and nations. ***21st Century Takeaway: God seeks out His enemies to forgive and redeem them, including them in His passion to reach all nations.***

* ***grasps the interdependence of Jew and Gentile***. . . 15:23-27

Paul is “taking the long way” to Rome, and eventually to Spain. He is first returning to Jerusalem to drop a gift (for the mostly Jewish church) from the mostly Gentile churches in Macedonia and Greece. He sees the Gentiles as paying a debt of sorts to the Jews because so many of our blessings have come through them (John 4:22; Romans 3:1, 2; 9:4, 5). And in some ways, the Gospel has gone even more quickly to the nations because Israel rejected Jesus and His message (Romans 9:11-16). From chapter one, Paul has written about this very thing: Jews and Gentiles both lost and in dire need of the Gospel. (See Rom. 3:9-20).

***21st Century Takeaway: We are all in this (leaky ship) together, and no ethnic group can claim superiority with God.***

* ***and enlists the prayerful partnership of the church in sharing God’s love with others.*** 15:28-33

Paul was no “loner” seeking his own will for God’s Kingdom. Rather, he knows that the prayers and support of others are absolutely necessary means for God’s will to be done. He knows that danger awaits him in Jerusalem, but that he would triumph over that and fulfill his mission through partnering with others in sending churches.

***21st Century Takeaway: We are called to give and pray to fulfill God’s passion and mission to reach every nation with His grace.***

 Times and cultures have changed, but God’s passion and mission have not. We are still called to the Great Commission by way of the Great Commandment, and every believer must play a part, not just “missionaries” and “pastors.”

***1. Do you see and grasp God’s plan to save us?***

God has made His mission clear if we receive it. Mark 2:17

***2. Do you see and grasp your need to be saved?***

God has made it clear that we are lost. Isaiah 53:4-6

***3. Are you involved, by His grace, in saving others?***

God has empowered us all to help. 1 Thess. 1:2-10