

Romans – Gospel of God Exalted

Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver

Zoom Meeting ID:

 **828 7580 6094** ►

Thursday November 20, 2025

Women of Excellence

Bible Study 7pm

Memory Verse

Romans 15:16 (NLT)

¹⁶ I am a special messenger from Christ Jesus to you Gentiles. I bring you the Good News so that I might present you as an acceptable offering to God, made holy by the Holy Spirit.

In Defense of Boldness Cont.

Romans 15:17–21 (NLT)

¹⁷ So I have reason to be enthusiastic about all Christ Jesus has done through me in my service to God. ¹⁸ Yet I dare not boast about anything except what Christ has done through me, bringing the Gentiles to God by my message and by the way I worked among them. ¹⁹ They were convinced by the power of miraculous signs and wonders and by the power of God's Spirit. In this way, I have fully presented the Good News of Christ from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum. ²⁰ My ambition has always been to preach the Good News where the name of Christ has never been heard, rather than where a church has already been started by someone else. ²¹ I have been following the plan spoken of in the Scriptures, where it says, "Those who have never been told about him will see, and those who have never heard of him will understand."

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Romans 15:17–21 (NASB95)

- 17** Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.
- 18** For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,
- 19** in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.
- 20** And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation;
- 21** but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND."

POINT 3- PAUL THE PREACHER

Therefore, in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. (15:17–19)

Although Paul was a priest only in a figurative sense, he was a preacher in the most literal sense. He was constrained by the love of God to minister God's Word (2 Cor. 5:14). "I am under compulsion," he declared in his first letter to Corinth; "for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (**1 Cor. 9:16**).

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It was in regard to his preaching that he could declare with both boldness and humility: **Therefore, in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.** In the next two verses Paul explains the nature of that boasting, and in doing so reveals five features of a faithful preacher.

First, Paul *took no credit for himself*. Lest he be misunderstood, he immediately explained, **I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.** In other words, he was not boasting in what he had accomplished as an apostle but only in what Christ had accomplished through him.

In both of his letters to the church at Corinth, Paul admonished the immature and proud believers there: “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord” (**1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17**). We have no right to take credit for any spiritual effect we have had, but every right to boast in what God has done through us, though we are weak vessels.

Paul would seem to have had more reason to boast than any of the other apostles, including Peter and John. He was used by God to reveal more of the New Testament than any other human writer, and the greater part of the book of Acts focuses on his ministry. He wrote Timothy, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. And yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant” (**1 Tim. 1:12–14**). He considered himself still to be the foremost of all sinners, and testified that it was for that very reason that he “found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life” (**vv. 15–16**).

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On his “own behalf,” however, Paul would “not boast, except in regard to [his] weaknesses.... Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me” (**2 Cor. 12:5, 9**). He declared, “May it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (**Gal. 6:14**).

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, where they had been commissioned and sent out (Acts 13:2–3), “they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles” (**14:27**). At the council in Jerusalem, “all the multitude kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles” (**Acts 15:12; cf. 21:19**). In both instances those men made clear that they were not recounting what they themselves had accomplished but “what God had done through them.”

But even his boasting “within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us” was not self-boasting, as Paul goes on to make clear. “But he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord. For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends” (**vv. 17–18**). The people God uses to accomplish His will are His instruments, and no Christian should take personal credit for what God does through him. No brush takes credit for a masterpiece it was used to paint. No violin takes credit for the beautiful music the musician makes with it. Neither should a Christian deny or belittle what God has done through him, because that would be to deny and belittle God’s own work.

The second feature of a faithful preacher is emphasizing obedience to the Lord. Paul’s preaching resulted **in the obedience of the Gentiles**. The gospel not only

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calls men to faith in Christ as Savior but to *obedience* to Him as Lord. At the beginning of this epistle Paul states clearly that “we have received grace and apostleship to bring the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name’s sake” (**Rom. 1:5**). He never preached a gospel that did not include a call to obedience, because that call was integral to his apostolic mandate from God. Later in the letter he reminds believers in Rome “that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed” (**6:17**). In that context, obedience from the heart is a synonym for saving faith.

The third feature of a faithful preacher is *personal integrity*. Paul preached to the Gentiles **by word and deed**. His life was totally consistent with his message, without hypocrisy or self-righteousness. There is no greater deterrent to the work of God than a disparity in the life of a preacher between the message he proclaims and the life he lives.

The fourth mark of a faithful preacher is *divine affirmation of his ministry*. For Paul, that affirmation often was made evident **in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit**. Divine affirmation does not require miracles. Much, perhaps most, of Paul’s own ministry was not affirmed in such dramatic ways. But **the power of the Spirit** is always evidenced in some way when the gospel is rightly proclaimed, even by the simplest and most uneducated preacher who proclaims and glorifies Christ.

Before the full gospel message was recorded in what we now call the New Testament, God often used **signs and wonders** to authenticate true preaching and teaching. The ministry of the apostles, especially in the earliest days of the church, was accompanied by authenticating miracles.

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Paul reminded the Corinthians that “the signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles” **(2 Cor. 12:12)**. It is fitting to acknowledge that the apostles “went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed” **(Mark 16:20)**.

But even in the days of the apostles, the greatest miracle of miracles has always been the regeneration of a human soul from sinner to saint, from being an enemy of God to being a child of God, of being transformed from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. The greatest divine affirmation of ministry has always been the spiritual transformation of souls. The truth of the gospel today is proved by God’s completed Word in the New Testament, but the power of the gospel is demonstrated by the lives that are transformed.

The fifth feature of the faithful preacher is that his *work is thorough*. He completes what God has called him to do. Paul could claim that **from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ**.

From Jerusalem, in the far southeast, Paul travelled through Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and even to **Illyricum**, the region roughly corresponding to the former eastern European country of Yugoslavia—a span of some 1,400 miles. The phrase **fully preached** can mean two things. It can refer to preaching the full gospel message (cf. Acts 20:27) or to preaching throughout the full geographical area in which he was called to minister. Paul obviously had the first meaning in mind when he told the Colossian believers, “Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God” **(Col. 1:25)**.

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Both meanings appropriately describe Paul's ministry, but the context seems to indicate that the apostle here had the second meaning in mind. He was affirming that he faithfully and fully ministered in every place to which the Lord sent him. He permitted nothing to deter his selfless, bold, and fervent ministry. He informed the Corinthians that, beyond any other person who ministered among them, he had been involved in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. **(2 Cor. 11:23–27)**

Paul was the ideal master preacher. He was humble, faithful, genuine, divinely blessed, thorough, and unswerving. Near the end of his life, he could truthfully tell his beloved Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" **(2 Tim. 4:7)**.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What stood out to you in this section of the lesson? Paul the Preacher.**
- 2. What Scripture stood out to you. What was the theme of that Scripture?**

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POINT 4 - PAUL THE PIONEER

And thus, I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; but as it is written, "They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand." (15:20–21)

Even a superficial reading of the book of Acts reveals that Paul was a pioneer missionary, evangelist, and church planter. He preached **the gospel** where no one else had ministered, **where Christ was not already named**. Judging from the New Testament record, Paul ministered in more previously unevangelized areas than any other apostle or preacher. More than any other, he reached the unreached, because his calling and his desire were to **not build upon another man's foundation**. Such was surely the primary function of a New Testament evangelist.

It was not that it is wrong to build on another minister's foundation, because that process is part of God's plan for establishing and maintaining His church. Paul explained to the church at Corinth that he "planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth" (**1 Cor. 3:6**). In that instance, Apollos had built on Paul's foundation, which was perfectly in accord with the calling of both men. It is still God's plan that some believers lay the foundation by bringing unbelievers to saving faith in Christ (evangelists) and that others build up those converts by ministering God's Word to them (pastors).

Quoting **Isaiah 52:15** from the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, Paul declares that, **as it is written, "They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand."** The context of that passage in Isaiah indicates that its primary reference is to Christ's second coming. But in its broadest application it refers to the process of evangelism that began in Paul's day

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and will continue throughout church history until its ultimate fulfillment at Christ's return.

People who have **had no news of** Christ, **who have not heard** the gospel, are found everywhere. They can be found in every country, every city and town, and in every community and neighborhood. God does not call every believer to be an evangelist, but He calls every believer to be a witness. It therefore should be the desire and prayer of all believers that the unsaved will be given spiritual sight to see Christ as their only hope of salvation and that they will be given spiritual hearing in order to **understand** the gospel and turn to Him to be saved.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What stood out to you in this lesson? What part would you like to apply to your life?**
- 2. What Old Testament Scripture quote is used ? What's the main theme the quote conveys?**

Closing Prayer