

Anytime, Anywhere
Romans 1:8-17 15:14-22
- Sermon Recap -

Paul is amazed, and in fact boasts/glories, in the transformation that has taken place as a result of Jesus the Messiah in his life (he's gone from persecuting the church to proselytizing Gentiles!). This is not personal pride or boasting, but an incredible awe of the work of Jesus.

Paul writes the letter to the Roman church while resting for three months in and around Corinth around 56/7 AD. He has desired to come to Rome for some time but extensive ministry travels (evangelism, discipleship and raising funds for the church in Jerusalem) have kept him from coming. At the time of his writing Paul figures that those ministry obligations are complete and he can finally visit Rome. He wants to come for three reasons:

1. Impart some spiritual gift to make them strong (1:11) - to bless them fully.
2. That they might mutually encourage one another (1:12) - he would build them up and that they would provide a hub for his western mission.
3. He might have a harvest among them (1:13) - in Rome...as well as in Spain and the regions west of Rome.

Although resting, Paul is not resting in the sense we often think of it. For Paul resting means preparing for the work he had been called to - living in and sharing the gospel. Paul lived what he believed and he believed that "He (God) gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:16). He was prepared anytime, anywhere to be faithful to this calling. For Paul there was no "regular" life compared to "ministry" life. There was just life in the gospel; he lived what he believed and was not ashamed. All Christians are called to the same life and in so doing, we, like Paul, will be able to boast/glorify in all that Jesus the Messiah does in our lives as he transforms us into all we have been created to be.

Take some time to go through the two lists on the next page:

"What Christians believe" is not just a list of "take it or leave it" beliefs, but are basic biblical Christian doctrines. To disagree with any one of them is to move away from what the Bible says about what it means to be a Christian.

"Our shame in the Gospel" is not meant to be legalistic. It is to spur consideration of our own lives in order that we might acknowledge our sin, repent, and live in the grace of Jesus the Messiah.

What Christians believe...

(Michael Bird, *Romans*, page 48)

1. There is one triune God, not a plethora of gods, nor an impersonal consciousness at the heart of the universe
2. The single most important event in the history of the world is Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.
3. Jesus' death was atonement for human evil, not merely an example of human suffering.
4. God raised Jesus from the dead and "resurrection" is no empty metaphor for God's continuing cause.
5. God has placed a human being, the exalted Lord, at the helm of the universe.
6. Jesus is the only way to God, not one of many ways to God.
7. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a real experience, not the name we give to our religious consciousness.
8. The church is a gathering of the saints for service to God, not a religious society with backward beliefs and Victorian-era morals.
9. At the return of Jesus every knee will bow, including every Jew, Muslim, Hindu, atheist, and Scientologist.
10. There will be a final judgment after which there will follow everlasting life or everlasting destruction for every man and woman of the world.

Our shame in the Gospel...

(Michael Bird, *Romans*, pg 51.)

1. I am ashamed of the gospel when I am afraid to tell it.
2. I am ashamed of the gospel when I'm too intimidated to uphold it.
3. I am ashamed of the gospel when I'm too lazy to teach it.
4. I am ashamed of the gospel when I'm too selfish to live a life worthy of it.
5. I am ashamed of the gospel when I make other things the centre of fellowship.
6. I am ashamed of the gospel when I affirm any political, economic, or social position that denies what the Lord Jesus taught about the poor, the orphan, the sick, the elderly, or the homeless.
7. I am ashamed of the gospel when I make excuses for the unchristian behaviour of my political heroes.
8. I am ashamed of the gospel when I spend more money on chocolate than charity.
9. I am ashamed of the gospel when my social life becomes more important than my church life.
10. I am ashamed of the gospel when I spend more time on combing my hair than active in prayer.