

WHAT MAKES PAUL AN EFFECTIVE MISSIONARY?

Romans 15:14-33

Introduction: A Story from Africa

I. Paul's Position: His Identity was Centered on Missions (v.14-18)

- A. Paul described himself as a missionary: "the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (v.15-16)
 - o If God called Paul to this task, then what does that say about God?
- B. Missions was all he talked about: "For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience" (v.18)

II. Paul's Practice: He Shared the Gospel Wherever He Went (v.19)

- A. "From Jerusalem to Illyricum" encompassed all of Paul's travels
 - o In essence, Paul is saying I have faithfully preached wherever I happened to be
 - o No one could have known Paul without hearing about Jesus!

** Key question: How long do people have to know you before hearing about Jesus?
- B. Paul's practice corrects our misconceptions about missions
 - o Missions work is not restricted to overseas: it can be *anywhere* you are
 - o Missions work is not just an "event," but a lifestyle. It happens naturally.

III. Paul's Passion: He Desired to Take the Gospel to New Places (v.20-21)

- A. Paul's Passion was decidedly Global
 - o He wanted "to preach the gospel not where Christ has already been named" (v.20)
 - o Others were called to "water" churches, Paul was called to plant them! (v.21)

Key point: The Gospel is very *inclusive*—it's for the whole world!
- B. There are still "unreached" groups today

- o Globally: the 10-40 Window
- o Locally: America is quickly becoming post-Christian

IV. Paul's Plan: He Took Concrete Steps to Reach the Nations (v.22-29)

- A. Paul Laid out a Specific Strategy
 - o First deliver contributions to Jerusalem
 - o Then travel to Rome
 - o Use Rome as a platform to going to Spain
 - o From Spain go to the ends of the earth
- B. What's your plan for reaching your non-Christian neighbor?
 - o Why do you think people rarely have a plan for reaching the lost?

V. Paul's Prayer: He Leaned on God for Support in Trials (v.30-33)

- A. Paul was not naïve about the difficulties of being a missionary
- B. So, he asked the Romans "to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf" (v.30)

Discussion Groups

1. What are some ways that you can share your faith in the normal and natural routine of everyday life?

2. Think of some specific folks you want to reach for Christ. Now, brainstorm about some specific and concrete steps that you can take to reach them.

3. Surprise question: Have you ever considered that God may be calling you to be a full-time, vocational missionary? As a way to explore this further, is there a nation or people group that God has laid on your heart?
