

PAUL'S DESIRE FOR THE ROMANS
(Romans 1:8-12)

I. Paul was thankful to God.

- A. Notice that Paul says he thanked God for their faith.
- B. Paul did not thank the Romans for their faith.
 - 1. This would be pandering to them as people and appealing to the wrong attitudes.
 - 2. This would be praise of men for which Paul was not very well known.
- C. Instead, he was thankful that God allowed such faithfulness in them.
 - 1. He was showing these Christians the true source of their faith: God.
 - 2. The work they did, in whatever manner, was because God allowed them to do such.
- D. Paul was a servant, not by force, but by desire.
 - 1. This shows in his words to the Romans.
 - 2. If he was forced to serve God, there would be no thanks to God.
 - 3. A bond slave was not thankful to his owner, he cowered before him.
 - 4. Instead, Paul was thankful because he served God by desire and not force.
- E. Thankfulness comes from a heart of love and it is something that comes naturally, it is not forced.
 - 1. A forced slave is not thankful he is in such a condition.
 - 2. One who serves by choice is.
- F. He also was a servant of the Romans in that he acknowledged their faithfulness as an example to others.
 - 1. While praising God was the primary focus of this verse, letting the Romans know their faith was exemplary was also important.
 - 2. Paul knew that people need commendation from time to time.
 - 3. Paul used a spiritual point to commend them.
- G. Whatever they were doing was being spoken of by brethren in many places and Paul wanted them to know the service they were giving God was known to others.
 - 1. This would result in Christ receiving more glory and honor.
 - 2. This was something that always brought Paul joy.
- H. A mark of a servant is thankfulness to the ones he serves.
 - 1. We should be thankful for our brethren that we serve.
 - 2. We should be thankful for those outside of Christ whom we may serve by being benevolent or teaching them the gospel.

II. Paul was prayerful.

- A. Paul spoke of these Roman brethren to God in prayer.
- B. Incidentally, Paul used the perfect formula for prayer in verse 8.
 - 1. He spoke to God.
 - 2. He did so through Jesus.
 - 3. This is the way we are to pray.
 - 4. Evidently, Paul knew nothing of praying to the Holy Spirit or anyone

- other than the Father.
- C. Paul prayed to the One he served in heaven for the ones he served on earth.
 - D. In this instance, he was praying for a way or means to get to the ones he wanted to serve in the flesh.
 - 1. Thus far, Paul had not been allowed, for various reasons, as we'll note in another sermon, to visit Rome.
 - 2. Paul often prayed that he could get to them and he wanted them to know this.
 - E. Paul did not want these brethren to think they were alone in the world.
 - 1. In 49 AD, Claudius had expelled all the Jews in Rome.
 - 2. This is why we meet Aquilla and Priscilla in Acts 16.
 - 3. Suetonius, the Roman historian, says Claudius did so because of a division among the Jews about one he thought was named Krestus, really Christ.
 - 4. These brethren, mainly Gentiles, were somewhat alone in the city, with some of the Jews having been allowed back into Rome.
 - 5. Paul did not want them to feel as if no one wanted to be with them or strengthen them.
 - F. Paul was one who was prayerful.
 - 1. This came out in his writing.
 - 2. Numerous times in his letters, and at least three times in this letter, Paul was inspired to write one of his prayers.
 - 3. Paul wanted these brethren to know that he was serving them through prayer.
 - G. You don't pray for people whom you are not willing to serve unless your prayers have no meaning.

III. Paul was mindful.

- A. The main reason Paul wanted to go to Rome was because he was mindful of the fact these brethren needed strengthening.
 - 1. Paul wanted to impart miraculous gifts in that city to these brethren for their strength.
 - 2. We know the word of God had not been fully revealed, so miraculous gifts were necessary to confirm the spoken word.
- B. Paul wanted to make sure these brethren had every power at their disposal to confirm the gospel they were preaching.
 - 1. He also wanted them to be fully armed against the coming judaizing teachers.
 - 2. He was aware that they would need every spiritual armament they could possess against such false teachers.
 - 3. The word "established" carries the idea of stabilizing something.
 - 4. He wanted them to be stable in the faith so that when false teachers came, they would not be tossed about as the Galatian congregations had been.
- C. Paul was mindful of their state and his state as well.
 - 1. He desired to be comforted in his mind, knowing he had done all he

could for God and them to bring about their strengthening and stabilization.

2. When this took place, he and they could be comforted by the fact that everything could be done to save them.

3. Their faithful actions together would bring about that comfort.

D. We need to be mindful of the fact that we are working for the salvation of ourselves and others as well.

1. Paul understood this fact.

2. We all want to go to heaven and the best way to get there is to help one another and we must be mindful of that fact.