

## Romans 1:8-15

### Introduction

One of the keys to a successful meeting is having a good agenda. Here, Paul sets out the agenda for his letter to the church at Rome. At the heart of Paul's agenda for this epistle and his whole ministry is his passion to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations.

### Summary

**In Romans 1:8-15, Paul wants the Romans to know of his personal desire to see them, the reason for his desired visit, and the essence of his gospel ministry.**

#### 1. Desired Visit vv. 8-11a; 13

As an apostle and missionary, Paul's desired to communicate with the church at Rome. He does so via letter but he also desired to visit them (**Rom 1:11a**).

Paul had received good reports of the church's faith in Christ (**Rom. 1:8b**).

When Christians adorn their professed faith in Christ with the fruit of good works, they are like lights shining in the darkness pointing to Christ and His gospel.

This is the obedience of faith (**Rom. 1:5**).

On the darkened battlefield, however, bright light draws enemy fire; light immediately lets the enemy know where he needs to concentrate his fire.

Paul, therefore, made constant mention of the church in his prayers (**Rom. 1:9-10**).

As much as Paul desired to visit the church in Rome, however, thus far he had been unable to do so (**Rom. 1:13**).

#### 2. Explained Reason vv. 11b-12

Paul wanted to visit the Christians in Rome so that he could impart "some spiritual gift" to strengthen them (**Rom. 1:11**).

Paul does not mean that he wanted to give the church spiritual gifts (**1 Cor. 12:4-10**).

Rather, he wanted them to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

Paul's desire was to bring the gospel as a source of encouragement.

The gospel is not merely for the beginning of the Christian life.

#### 3. Specific Agenda vv. 13b-15

Paul explains his agenda for his apostolic ministry (**Rom 1:14**).

Paul mentions here that part of his desire was to come to Rome that he might reap a harvest among them "just as among the other Gentiles" (**Rom. 1:13b**). The gospel cuts across all lines of division: Jew, Gentile, slave, free, male, female, young old, wealthy, poor, high class, low class, cultured, or uncultured. For Paul, the gospel brings unity in place of division and strife, but that unity comes only in Christ

The gospel of Christ consumed Paul's ministry.

How differently his life compares to so many churches..

It is important for churches and people to ask what their agendas are.

What agenda drives our lives and those of our churches? Do we align ourselves with the divinely given agenda of the church in the Great Commission?

Like Paul, the church has received a commission from the risen Christ.

The church has been given the task to be a light unto the nations to see that people of every tribe, tongue, and nation hear the proclamation of the gospel.

This was Paul's great agenda. Is it ours?

Bringing about a radical reprioritization in the agenda of a church or an individual is not simply a matter of making a motion at a church business meeting or allocating money to a different place in one's personal budget.

Paul was eager to preach the gospel in Rome and to reap a harvest among them and the Gentiles in that city for a reason (**Rom. 1:13, 15**).

Paul wrote in the opening verses of his epistle that he was set apart by God's grace "for obedience to the faith among all nations for [Christ's] name (**Rom. 1:5**).

Only God's grace in Christ and the gospel enables sinful people to repent, embrace Christ, change their ways, and reorder their lives according to the gospel.

Only God's grace in Christ enabled Paul to see his sinfulness, repent, and make the gospel the chief priority in his life.

Only the gospel has the power to change lives and congregations to embrace Christ's agenda for the church, making disciples, baptizing the nations, preaching, and teaching people to believe Christ and do all that He commands (Matt. 28:18-19).

The reliance on God's grace in Christ and the gospel was exhibited in Paul's own conduct.

Paul prayed fervently and unceasingly for the church Rome, for he knew that only by God's grace in Christ would the church grow, mature, and add to its numbers

Our desire, both corporately and individually, should be that Christ's agenda orders and prioritizes our lives.

Pray that Christ conforms us to His image and that we reflect His holiness and righteousness.

Pray that God gives us a zeal for the lost, a concern that manifests in our prayer lives and conduct.

Pray that our churches cease to look like us but instead reflect the image of God as it shines forth in the divine image bearers of every tribe, tongue, nation, and walk of life.

Our prayer should be that Christ would set the agenda for our lives.