

May 27, 2007

## Romans: Intro 2, The Recipients, Purposes And Theme

Rom. 1:1, 7

### Introduction

In the last few years several major events have captured the headlines on the world news  
The war on terror, the sunami, the nuclear crisis in N. Korea and Iran and so on

But imagine if you lived somewhere between 57 A.D. and 61 A.D.

You live in Rome, the capital of the Romans Empire, but like today there are newspapers that report world news and satellite television where you could watch the equivalent of today's Fox News or CNN

Now what would have been some of the major headlines during that period of history?

Well Nero had become emperor just a few years before in, 54 ,and the papers and broadcasts would certainly contain all the latest political intrigue from the capital

One rumor that would have made the papers in 59 was that Nero had his mother Agrippina put to death in her country home

The news would probably report, in 57 A.D., that the emperor of China's Eastern Han dynasty had died after a long 32-year reign

Much attention would have been given in 58 A.D. to the great victory of the Roman general Corbulo who defeated the Parthenian forces in Armenia and made it a Roman protectorate

Also the rebellion of Boudicca, queen of the Iceni, in Eastern England, in which seventy thousand Romans were killed

The rebellion was eventually crushed in a tremendous battle in 60 A.D.

These are a few of the events that may have captured the headlines between the years 57 and 61 A.D.

But the one most influential and important event of that time period would never have been reported on the news

And what was it?

Well around 57-58 A.D. a man named Paul wrote a letter from Corinth to a small group of Christians in Rome

No big deal, nothing to make the news, not even the local Corinthian Progress

Just a letter that a very few people would have even known about

Just Paul and his companions and a little hand full of Christians in Rome

But, as I argued last week, there is no piece of writing that has had a greater impact upon the history of the world and upon the lives of men than that letter

Of course, the letter that I'm speaking of is Paul's epistle to the Romans, which we return to this morning

Now this should be an encouragement to us

Dear brethren, this is the way God often works in the world

His greatest works are often done in secret, in very small ways, or by very small numbers of relatively unknown people, that the world at the time never takes notice of

We may be a very insignificant group of people in the eyes of the world

Our little efforts for Christ may never make the headlines of CNN or Fox News

But don't be fooled by appearances

When the tale of history has been completed, only God knows how important our efforts may prove to have been in the outworking of His gospel purposes in the world

Listen, the most important things that are happening in the world today are not the things that you hear about in the news

The most important things are happening through the unseen efforts of people like you and me  
And the efforts of little churches, and unknown missionaries in hidden places of the world who are laboring for the cause of Christ and the advancement of the gospel

So we return this morning to our study of the book of Romans

I began last week with something of an introduction in which we considered the tremendous impact this book has had in history

And then we also focused upon the author of the book, the Apostle Paul

Well this morning's message is still something of an introduction to Romans

Having considered the author, there are two additional matters of introduction that I think have great relevance to our study, that I want us to consider today

First, the recipients of the book of Romans

And, second, the reasons for the book of Romans

So let's begin with...

## **I. The Original Recipients Of The Book Of Romans**

I mentioned in the introduction that this epistle was written around 57 or 58 A.D.

We can be pretty certain of that by comparing the events of Paul's third missionary journey in the book of Acts with certain things that are mentioned in this epistle

We can also be fairly certain that Paul wrote this epistle from Corinth

This is further confirmed by some of the names he mentions in the greetings he passes along in ch.16 of this epistle

So Romans was written near the end of Paul's third missionary journey around 57 or perhaps 58 A.D.

And the recipients were a group of Christians in Rome

As we read in y.7, "To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints"

This raises some questions

Basically two questions that I want us to consider

**First of all**, how had these people become Christians?

How did they hear the gospel so that there was now a group of Christians in Rome?

Well let's begin with *a negative*

This church was not founded by the Apostle Paul, for as Paul goes on to explain in this epistle he had never been to Rome at this point

He was hoping to come there, and eventually he will come there some years later

But at the time he wrote this epistle he had never been to Rome

He had been hindered from coming there

Notice in v.10 he says that he's been praying that if, by some means, at last he might find a way to come to them

"For I long to see you", v.11

v.13, "Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now)"

So this church was not founded by the Apostle Paul

Let me add that, contrary to Roman Catholicism, it was not founded by the Apostle Peter either

There's no credible historical or biblical evidence for that

And certainly if Peter was the founder of this church Paul would have made some reference to him in this epistle

Also Paul specifically says in ch.15 that he made it his practice to never interfere with another man's work

So neither Paul nor Peter founded this church

Indeed, there is no evidence that any of the other apostles was the founder of this church

So then, *positively*, how did it come into being?

Well we're not told specifically so we can't be dogmatic

But there is circumstantial evidence that can help us piece together how it probably happened

*First of all*, remember the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out and Peter preached his great sermon?

Well according to Acts 2:10 among those present were "Visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes"

Explain-not hard to imagine...etc...

In addition to that, as the capitol of the empire, there were always people coming and going there from throughout the various regions of the empire

So there were soldiers, and slaves, merchants and artisans, common people and others constantly passing through the city

And some who came there were probably Christians who brought their faith with them

So it's very likely that the church began along one or both of these two lines

Through Roman Jews or proselytes who were visiting Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost

And through Christians from other regions in the empire who had moved there

Now there's something to learn from this

This reminds us that God has many ways of spreading the gospel

We sometimes forget that

Gospel work is not limited merely to the developing of some kind of sophisticated evangelism program

And it doesn't *only* occur by means of evangelistic preaching or special evangelistic services

Or even through men and women who are sent out and supported as missionaries and church planters

All of that is important

But very often God works apart from such things

Perhaps some Christians who were converted in some other context move to a particular area

And then some others move to the same area, and they decide to start a church

A church is planted and begins to grow, not because of some kind of deliberate church planting effort

It just comes together by God's providence

Sometimes the gospel spreads through very ordinary people simply living the Christian life before their neighbors

People who are not preachers or missionaries

Perhaps, soldiers on the local army base, or workmen in the local factory

Living the gospel and sharing the gospel with their friends

Here and there someone gets converted, and then another and perhaps another

And the kingdom of God progresses in very hidden and unspectacular ways

This is the way it often happens, brethren

We need to realize that

It will keep us from becoming overly discouraged at times

You'll burn out if you don't realize this

Pentecost days are not the norm in the history of the church

The things that happened during the days of Whitfield and Wesley are not the norm in the history of the church

Praise God there are times like that

We should long for days like that and pray for days like that, but we must not despise the many much less spectacular ways in which Christ is building his church in the world

And is building this church right here in Easley, SC

We're not all flaming evangelists or gifted preachers and communicators

And it's very rare when we experience hundreds of souls suddenly converted in a short space of time

But God is still at work and we all have a part

Simply living a genuine Christ-honoring life before our neighbors and before the people we work with

Seizing those little opportunities that come to share our faith

“Being always ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”(1 Peter 3:15)

These are some of the ways, no doubt, that the church in Rome came into being...

And some of the ways in which Christ continues to build his church today

So much for how the church came to be....

**A second question** about the original recipients of this letter..

What was the make-up of this church?

*First of all*, indications are that it was made up of very ordinary, common people

Ordinary men and women who had come to believe the gospel

This letter was not written to a seminary class at *The Institute For Advanced Theological Studies in Rome*

It wasn't written simply to the elders or the officers of the church

It wasn't written as a manual of specialized higher instruction for preachers and pastors

No, it's a letter written to ordinary men and women in the local church at Rome

This letter is meant for you; it's meant for the ordinary person in the pew

The ordinary Christian is intended to understand the things Paul writes in this letter

So, my friend, don't be intimidated by it

Don't say, "Oh well God doesn't expect me to understand these things?"

Yes he does!!!

And you can if you come to this letter prayerfully and in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit to help you

It's interesting to see people's reactions when you say that you're going to preach through Romans

They raise their eyebrows and make little comments

"Oh that's heavy man, that's deep, you have to be a Christian for fifty years before you can even begin to understand Romans, don't you?"

And so we end up psyching ourselves out before we ever try

Well I think that whole attitude is absolutely wrong

God gave this letter to the church to be read and studied by the church...

And its truths are to be learned and understood by the ordinary Christian

This book contains the fundamentals of the gospel that every Christian needs to be grounded in

The Christian mom and house wife with her busy days changing diapers, washing clothes and cooking meals for the family

The accountant spending hours behind the computer, or with his calculator crunching numbers  
The factory worker on the assembly line

The carpenter earning his living each day by the sweat of his brow

Indeed, the greetings Paul gives in [ch.16](#) indicate that were slaves in the church at Rome

And yet this letter was written to them and to all the church

It's an epistle for the common man, and not just for those who have a Doctorate in Theology

But there's something else related to the make-up of this church

Something that has an important bearing on our interpretation of this letter at certain points...

It's the question, "Was this a Gentile church or was it a Jewish church?"

Of course, it was a *Christian* church, but were these Jewish Christians or Gentile Christians?

Well it's very clear when you read this letter that it was both

*First of all*, clearly there were converted Jews, Christian Jews in the church

In fact, there is evidence that Christianity first began in Rome among Jews

Remember the reference to Jews and proselytes from Rome who were present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost

We also have a reference from the 4<sup>th</sup> century in the early church father Ambrosiaster in which he identifies the beginning of Christianity in Rome with converted Jews

And in further support of that there's an interesting remark by the Roman historian Suetonius

He tells us that "Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because they were constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus"

Most scholars believe that "Chrestus" is a corruption of the Greek Christos or Christ

And that the reference is probably to disputes within the Jewish community about the claims of Jesus

One ancient writer has dated that event in A.D. 49

And, indeed, we read in [Acts 18:2](#) that Aquilla and Priscilla had recently come to Corinth from Italy "because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome"

Well when Romans was written Nero is now in power, and the ban of Claudius against Jews was no longer in effect

And so we find in the greetings that Paul gives in [ch.16](#) of this epistle that Priscilla and Aquilla, Jewish Christians, were now back in Rome

He also greets Jewish Christians he refers to as his own kinfolk, Andronicus, Junia, and Herodian

Furthermore, there are points in the letter in which Paul specifically addresses Jews

So there were clearly Jewish Christians in the church

But mixed with the Jewish Christians were also Gentile Christians

In fact, there are indications that Gentiles were the majority by this time

In Paul's introduction to the letter he includes the Roman Christians among the Gentiles for whom he has been called an apostle

Read-v.13

So apparently he viewed the church as primarily a Gentile church

Also in ch.11:11-24 where Paul is explaining the place of the Jews in God's plan, he specifically says, "For I speak to you Gentiles"

His argument there was specifically directed to Gentile Christians

So there were both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians in the church in Rome

This will help us in a few moments as we move now from the recipients of the letter to consider, secondly...

## II. The Reasons For The Book Of Romans

Why did Paul write this epistle?

That may seem like a presumptuous question to ask, because Paul's not here, and how can we know all the reasons for which he wrote it?

Well that's a good point

And I do think that we have to be very careful about such questions

Sometimes commentators seem to think that they've got to come up with some main reason for which a particular book of the Bible was written

They come up with what they believe to be the one main reason, and then that colors their whole interpretation of the various passages in that book

Personally I think that's dangerous and it's not always that simple

I mean, when I write a letter to someone I don't always have just one main, self conscious, reason for writing it; do you?

Certainly I write it for a reason but I may have several reasons

Well I don't think Paul had just one reason for writing this letter

In fact, I imagine that we may never know all the reasons for which he wrote it

However there are several reasons that are indicated in the text of the epistle itself

I'm not saying that any one was the main reason, or that there may not have been other reasons

But there are at least three interconnected, interrelated reasons indicated in the epistle itself

**First of all**, he wrote it in order that the Christians in Rome might be firmly established in the faith

Remember Paul desired to visit the Roman Christians, but he had not been able to yet

And what was one of his main concerns?

Look at v.11 of ch.1, "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, *so that you may be established*"

Paul wants them to be established

The word means strengthened, to be made stable and firm

Well since he's not able to come to them right now and do that face to face, he writes this letter to them

In the last chapter, Ch. 16:17-18, after giving all of this instruction that he gives, he says, "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple"

Well, you see, this is why Paul wants them to be established

It's not enough to be converted, you need to be strong in the faith

You need to be stable and established because there are people who use smooth words and flattering speech who will try to mislead you

They claim to be Christians; they appear to be so nice and friendly

They're so well spoken

But their doctrine is not the doctrine that you have learned and that I've set before you in this epistle

And if you're not established in the faith you're liable to listen to them and to be deceived by them, to the ruin of your soul

So it's not enough, Roman Christians, that you've professed Christ, you need to be established and well grounded in the faith

You must not be like children who are carried away with every new wind of doctrine that comes blowing by

So this is one of the reasons that Paul wrote this letter

Now this reason applies just as much to us today as it did to them

You and I need to be established

We need to be stable and strong in the faith

We need to be firmly grounded in the doctrines of the gospel, just like these people did and for the same reason

There are many false teachers today

There are many unbiblical notions and unbiblical practices even in many of the Christian churches

There's a false gospel that has gained the ascendancy in much of the modern evangelicalism of our day

And we need to be solid and firm in our understanding of what God's word actually teaches

There's also a spirit in the modern church that says, what you believe doesn't really matter that much

As long as you call yourself a Christian and profess Christ, all of this doctrine and careful teaching is unimportant

Doctrine just divides people

We all just need to love Jesus and love one another and work together and all will be well



Don't bother me with all your doctrines?

Well, my friend, Paul says that it's *false* doctrine that causes divisions and offenses  
And it's sound doctrine that will unify the true people of God and keep the pretenders out

It's very likely that some of these Roman Christians to whom this epistle was written were among those who were martyred for their faith by Nero

They died for what they believed in

They suffered cruel injustices and terrible mistreatment  
Christians in Rome were burned; some were thrown to the lions

But they stood firm because they were established  
Look at church history

We read about the Protestant reformers  
Latimer and Ridley and many others who were burned at the stake  
What led to that?

Well they knew why, and what they believed, and they weren't willing to give it up  
They loved the truth, and they saw how important the truth is

They realized what was at stake if the true doctrines of the gospel were compromised  
For example, some of them died for the doctrine of justification by faith alone

And yet today we have an increasing number of so-called evangelicals compromising on that very doctrine  
And many others in our pews who have no idea what the doctrine of justification is all about

Well many of our fathers died because they refused to compromise that doctrine  
And there are many other important doctrines; key essential doctrines of the Christian faith, that are under attack today  
Doctrines that have been forgotten, or perverted in the churches

Doctrines that are taught right here in this epistle to the Romans  
That's why we need to study this epistle, and we need to know it, and to understand what it teaches

I wonder how many professing Christians today would be prepared to die for their faith?  
We need to be prepared, and our children need to be prepared

There's an increasing spirit of hostility in our culture toward Christians  
I think we're only seeing the beginning of the kind of persecution that we, or our children, may eventually be exposed to

I wonder how many men and women in our churches, in this church, have such a clear understanding, and a such a firm unshaken conviction, of the truths of the gospel.....  
That they could suffer like some of our fathers did with the undoubted certainty that what they are suffering for is, indeed, the very truth of God

Fuzzy notions about truth...

Nebulous ideas that have never become heart-deep, gut-gripping convictions will never produce the kind of Christians that stand firm against the pressures of a godless age

We have enough spineless, weak, sickly Christianity around today

We need Christians who have moral and doctrinal backbone

Christians who are steadfast like a rock in the faith

As we stand before this book of Romans, don't you start saying, "Pastor I don't like all of this doctrine"

"I'm not really interested in doctrine, I just want something practical"

Well, my friend, I hope you'll see in this study, that there is nothing more practical than the doctrines of the gospel

So this is one of the reasons that Paul wrote this epistle

That the Christians in Rome might be established

And we need to carefully study this epistle for the same reason

In the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Acts, Luke tells us that during Paul's missionary journeys he spent two years in Ephesus teaching "the word of the Lord" to all who lived in Asia

A marginal note in one of the ancient manuscripts suggests that he did this for five hours each day

Now let's do the math

Counting six days to each week, giving him one day off...

And counting fifty weeks in a year, giving him two weeks off each of the two years...

That makes 3,000 hours of apostolic instruction that Paul gave during his two year stay in Ephesus

That's the equivalent of about 3,000 sermons in a two year period

What do you think Paul taught the people in Asia during those two years?

Well I think Boice is probably right when he suggests that Paul taught them essentially what we have here in outline form in the book of Romans

Or another way of saying it...

This is probably what the apostle Paul would teach us if he were to labor among us for the same length of time

That is, of course, if we met together for five days a week

It would take him a whole lot longer than two years just meeting one day a week

You say, "Pastor, why do you sometimes take a pretty long time preaching through certain parts of the bible?"

Well, brethren, if you'd be willing to meet five days a week like they did in Ephesus, I might actually finish Romans *in much less* than two years

So keep it in perspective

But now **a second reason** for which Paul wrote this epistle

And it's connected to the first reason...

He wrote it to strengthen the unity of the church

We've seen that the church was made up of both Jewish and Gentile Christians

Well there are indications that there may have been some tensions in the church between these two groups

Indeed in Ch. 14:1-15:13 Paul addresses a specific problem in the church between Jewish and Gentile Christians(turn)

Read- 14:1-3, 5; 15:1-2

Apparently there were Jewish Christians who still had scruples that they had carried over from Judaism

Paul mentions various differences such as the eating or not eating of certain meats

The observing or not observing of certain special feast days or holy days, and so on

So there were differences of perspective about these things

Most of the Gentiles had no scruples at all about eating any kind of meat and they cared nothing for observing old Jewish holidays

And rightly so

But some of the Jews still had scruples of conscience concerning these practices

So Paul addresses this very practical problem

He wants them to worship God together, in peace and harmony

And so one of the things he does in this epistle, as we'll see, is that he shows that the gospel of Christ is the only basis of true unity in the church and among men

On the one hand, he underscores that the gospel is not something entirely new

It's the same gospel witnessed to in the O.T.

It doesn't contradict the O.T.; it grows out of the O.T. and is the fulfillment of the O.T.

For a Jew to embrace the gospel is not to reject his heritage

Because Christ is the fulfillment of what the history of Israel and the O.T. scriptures were pointing to

This note is struck often in this letter

Indeed we see it right here in the first three verses of ch.1

Read-v.1-3 (comment)

But, on the other hand, Paul also emphasizes in this letter that now that Christ has come the gospel is to be taken to the nations

It's to be preached to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles have been grafted into the people of God

What identifies the true Israel of God is not being born a Jew

It is faith in Christ

It's the gospel that joins the two together

The gospel is to be the basis of unity in the church

This is true for us as a church today

What is it that should bring us together and cause us to stand together come what may?

Well it's not that we all come from the same part of the country, or were even born in the same nation

It's not that we come from the same ethnic background

It's not that we all have the same convictions and practices with regard to non-moral issues

It's not that we are all homeschoolers or Christians schoolers or public schoolers

The thing that unites us is not that we all look the same and dress the same

That all the mother's breast feed, and wear jumper dresses, and we all use Shockley vitamins

Listen, a unity based on things like that is not the Christian unity spoken of in the bible

When people come to our church and they look at us, it's a healthy thing when they see diversity among us

It's a testimony to the unifying power of the gospel

When there's unity based on something else other than Christ and the gospel, that's nothing different than what you'll find out in the world

Men love their own kind, and birds of feather flock together

There's nothing supernatural and divine about that

Also when we fuss and fight and divide over silly things that have nothing to do with the gospel, what a disgrace that is!!!

What reproach that brings upon Christ!!

Don't we care about the reputation of our common Savior more than that?

I read recently about two struggling churches in the same community who decided to join together and thus become larger and more effective

But the merger never happened

Why?, you ask

Did one church hold to false doctrine or compromise the gospel?

No, it wasn't anything like that

They just couldn't agree on how to recite "The Lord's Prayer" in their worship services

One group wanted "forgive us our trespasses", while the other demanded, "forgive us our debts"

I trust, brethren, that there is something much more substantial than that kind of wooden uniformity, that brings us together this morning

When people attend our church and they look at us they should be able to say, "You know, I don't get it"

"It's obvious that these people are different from each other"

"They're from different places, they're skin is not the same color"

"They have different accents, they don't all do everything exactly the same way"

“They’re clearly not a bunch of clones cut out by the same cookie cutter”  
“I don’t understand it, what is that brings such different people together?”

Well after being among us a while they should be able to say, “Ah I see, it’s the gospel that brings them together”

It’s their common devotion to Jesus Christ that brings them together

And let me just say that the gospel is also the only message that will bring peace and unity to this war torn, divided world that we live in

We live in a world that is full of tension and strife

But the answer is not the United Nations

It’s not even the United States

As much as I believe in Democracy and a Republican form of government, that’s not the real answer

Peace rallies and world congresses and sentimental slogans are not the answer

There is only one thing that can bring people from all races and walks of life to embrace one another with heart felt love and oneness of mind

It’s the gospel which is the power of God to salvation applied to the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit

This the only message that when embraced by a renewed heart breaks down the walls of hatred and prejudice

It’s a message that points to the real problem with our world

A problem that we are all a part of

A problem that is equally true of every man, woman, boy and girl

It doesn’t matter whether you’re red, yellow, black and white

None of that matters?

The fact is that we are all children of the same father, Adam

We are fallen sinners in Adam

We’re all sinners by nature and sinners by choice and under the wrath of God

We all deserve nothing but hell

And the good news of the gospel is the same message for everyone and it’s to be preached to everyone

It’s to be preached to all the world

There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved

And that name is Jesus Christ

And the only way any of us can be saved by Him is that we must come stripped of all confidence in ourselves

Stripped of all boasting in our pedigree, stripped of all boasting in our family connections or in our ethnic identity  
Stripped of all boasting in our own good works

And we must put our faith in Christ alone and what he accomplished by his finished work upon the cross

That's the only way anyone can be saved, no matter who you are

And all who put their trust in Christ receive forgiveness and acceptance with God..

And the gift of the Holy Spirit who causes us to love one another

And that leads to a **third reason** Paul wrote this epistle

There are indications that he wrote it, in part, to prepare for his planned mission to take to the gospel to Spain

Paul refers to this in Ch.15

He says to the Roman Christians in Ch. 15:24, "Whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you"

The verb translated "helped" sometimes carries the idea of helping with material support

Furnishing someone with the things necessary for their journey

In v.28 he again speaks of "going by way of them to Spain"

One of Paul's concerns is to mobilize the support of the church in Rome for his mission in Spain

He desires to establish these brethren in the true gospel; the gospel that he preached

And he wants to strengthen the unity of the church

And then as a unified , doctrinally sound, firmly grounded church, the Church in Rome could serve as a base for further gospel endeavors into the unreached parts of the world

And this is another reason that we need to be firmly established

And that we need to be unified

It's not merely that we can enjoy and boast about how established in the faith we are and how unified we are (etc...)

No, it's in order that we might be equipped and able to be an effective launching pad for taking the gospel to the nations

We desperately need churches that can produce the kind of men who can be effective missionaries

Strong, growing, unified, spiritually and doctrinally mature congregations who can support missionaries and train missionaries and send missionaries to the uttermost parts of the earth

And that's one of the concerns of this epistle that we're beginning to study

Someone has said commenting on Paul's letter to the Romans, "Oh that all our missionaries would know the book of Romans and preach the book of Romans. And Oh that those of us who send would know the book Romans and live the book of Romans so that we would send missionaries the way Paul wanted to be sent and supported from Rome to Spain. The mighty and merciful message of this book will make rich Americans strip down to a more wartime lifestyle and pour their resources into the cause of the gospel. And the mighty and merciful

message of this book, in the mouths of suffering missionaries, will break the powers of darkness and plant the church of Christ in the hardest places”

Yes, the book of Romans is an intensely missionary book

It comes out right here in the first chapter and it will keep coming out

Paul speaking of himself in v.5 says, “Through Him(Christ) we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name”

Read-vv.14ff

After describing the lost condition of all men under the wrath of God in the latter half of ch.1 through the middle of Ch.3 Paul concludes, “For we have charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin...There is none righteous no not one”

Then he goes on to say, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed...even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith”

“Is He the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also”

And this emphasis upon the need that all people have of the gospel and of the preaching of the gospel to all peoples is weaved like a thread throughout this epistle...

Till we get to ch.15 where Paul quotes from the O.T. prophets..etc...(turn)

Read-vv.8-12; 15-16

He says in v.20...(read-vv.20-21)

And then he goes on to explain his plans to take the gospel to Spain

Romans is a missionary book, and one of its purposes is to produce a missionary church

Well may God grant that it will have that effect on us