

# **Romans 15:14-16:27**

## **“Paul’s Heart – Part Two”**

**8/15/12**

### **Introduction**

- The Content of Romans is not hard to understand
  - As long as you remember it is helpful to compare the content of Romans to a great theological city

### **The Book of Romans – The Great Theological City**

#### **#1 – The Courthouse – Romans 1-5**

- Paul introduces the concept of righteousness by faith, but in order to show us our great need of salvation he spends the first five chapters showing how we are all guilty before God

#### **#2 – The Power Plant – Romans 6-8**

- Chapters 6-8 help us understand there is power to live out this Christian life God is calling us to – Pastor Rob is doing an in-depth series from these three chapters on our weekend services, but we will cover them as well, just at a much more rapid pace

#### **#3 – The Synagogue – Romans 9-11**

- in chapters 9-11 Paul shares with us how Israel fits into God’s plan now that there is this new thing called the church and answers the questions, has the church replaced Israel, where do they fit into God’s plan and how does God’s sovereignty fit with man’s free will – great stuff in this section

#### **#4 – The Church – Romans 12-16**

- in Paul’s final section of this book we will study how the church is practically supposed to operate in light of the all the amazing truths about God in this book – Paul ends all of his letters very practically, Romans is no exception

### **Now tonight will finish up the book of Romans and as we do we continue to see Paul’s heart**

- Again I think we can learn a lot from the Apostle Paul
  - he was one of the most effective evangelist and church leader in church history – you know?
  - we may want to pay attention to what made his heart tick
  - so we have been looking at Paul’s heart

### **Romans 13:11-16:27 – Paul’s Heart**

#### **#1 - Paul’s heart toward the world – Romans 13:11-14**

#### **#2 - Paul’s heart toward the weak – Romans 14:1-15:13**

#### **#3 - Paul’s heart toward the work – Romans 15:14–33**

#### **#4 - Paul’s heart toward the workers – Romans 16:1-27**

- last week we considered the first two

#### **#1 - Paul heart toward the world**

- not his heart toward people in the world, we will get to that tonight, but Paul’s heart toward things in the world, the stuff of the flesh
  - Paul’s heart is that we would cast it off
- Not that we would tolerate it, like we would normally do
  - But that we would make no provision for the flesh

- The reason as I said last week, my flesh can live on a saltine cracker for a long time
  - I can read the bible, chapter by chapter
  - Spend hours in prayer and fasting
  - But one extra look, one moment of dwelling on that bitterness
  - And my flesh acts like it is King Kong
- That is why we make no, not some, no provision for the flesh
  - But instead we put on the Lord Jesus
- Like we put on our clothes early in the day and keep them on all day – same with Jesus, put Him on early and keep Him on all day!

## #2 - Paul's heart toward the weak

- Then last week we looked at Paul's heart toward the weak
  - And by "weak" - remember we don't mean those who need to hit the gym
  - But those because of their make up, susceptibility to sin, upbringing, are easily tempted in a certain area
- We looked at the fact Paul's heart was to let us know God was on both sides – He is for those that are strong in areas and for those who are weak – it is not a right or wrong issue – God has made some aware of their weakness in certain areas and they need to be really careful with those things
  - We think everyone should agree with us on every subject, and yet the truth is God has given freedom to others in other areas where they are strong – and they have liberty from God – and it's okay

### **We make sure it is really a liberty and not number one sin – something clearly defined in Scripture as sin is never a liberty, it is always sin and needs to be repented of**

- but those things not in Scripture, we take them to the Lord and see, is this a weight or a liberty
  - if it is a weight – put it down
  - if it is a liberty – enjoy it in grace
  - but not to the detriment of your weaker brothers and sisters in Christ
- if you have a prayed through, cleared by the Spirit of God liberty, enjoy it – but not in front of your weaker brothers and sisters who don't have that liberty
  - because then you are not walking in love
- as Paul told the Corinthian church – if eating meat makes my brother sin, I will never again eat meat

### **That was Paul's heart toward the world, and toward the weak, if you missed last week, I really think it was an important study to listen to, pray through and apply to our lives**

- but we need to move on tonight to Paul's heart toward the work and the workers

## #3 - Paul's heart toward the work – Romans 15:14-33

- we see Paul's heart toward his work, his ministry in this section and we really see it in the use of the words Paul uses to describe his ministry, his work for the Lord

### **In the book of Romans – Paul uses 3 words to describe his work for the Lord**

- in Romans 1:1 – He calls himself a bond slave, a doulos in the original language
  - this word means "a slave by choice" – you see ministry was not something he was forced to do – it was not even his job that paid the bills

- ministry, the work of the ministry was something he did because his master had been so good to him and he served as a response to that love
- this is something we all need to hear
  - I know for me who has now been in what we call full time ministry for 14 years now there have been seasons when it becomes like a job, oh I'm just clocking in, waiting for 5pm to roll around
  - And I know for most of you who have not had the privilege I have had to work at church, that thought is so foreign to you – how could the work of the ministry ever become like job – like clocking in at the factory or showing up for my shift

**Well the reason, and I share this now with our young guys, is because we get away from this heart of the apostle Paul that says, I am doulos, I am slave by choice – I want to serve the One who loves me like He does**

- you see everyone of us who does this ministry thing for a living started it because we loved God and His people and just couldn't believe we were going to have the opportunity to do that with our lives
  - I was telling the staff on Tuesday morning, I remember when I was first hired here, the first time, 14 years ago
  - Back then they paid you whatever your basic needs were – so I made up what I thought was a very conservative list and then had my meeting with one of the assistant pastors and he had a red pen in his hand
- He started looking at my list – what is savings???
- I started to explain, ah, where you put money aside for when bad things happen
- Ah, just trust the Lord he said, and he crossed that out of my budget
- What's this, IRA – oh that is an individual retirement account I want to put money in myself
  - Why do you need that – you plan on a day coming where you don't want to serve God anymore – well, when you put it like that – no – out came the red pen
  - That assistant pastor whittled my full time budget down to \$600 and then said – welcome to the team
- I'm telling you this not to complain, I didn't care, I did it for free for a year before I received \$600 a month – I was blessed because it wasn't a job, it was a service I entered by choice

**Well, how does this apply to me?**

- because we are all in the ministry
  - and for each of us, whatever God has called you to do – host a homefellowship, serve in the children's ministry, be part of men's group or women's group
  - there was a time when we couldn't believe we got to do that – I get to partner with God
- but the enemy, he knows how to discourage and so we must remember – I do this by choice, not because I have to, not even because of the people I get to serve, but because of Jesus who loves me so much!
  - Paul uses the term “Bond slave” to describe the work early in the book of Romans

- Here in chapter 15, in verse 8 – speaking of Christ, but doing so as an example of how He saw His work and ministry and how we are to as well
- The next word he uses is translated “servant” in verse 8, it is actually the word translated “deacon” in the pastoral epistles and Paul uses it to describe himself in Ephesians 3:7
  - It is the Greek word “diakonos” and it means “under rower”
  - Ah, the word picture is cool

**In the Greek and Roman world, the great ships that would roam the seas, they obviously had a captain and some officers – whose job it was to plot a course and make decisions, they would normally have passengers who were paying a fare and then they had under rowers**

- those servants who were below decks who had one job and one job only – grab the oar, and row – grab the oar and get the boat where it was going
- and Paul is saying that is my heart toward the work

**I am a servant by choice, and I am not the captain of this ship, I am not someone just enjoying a diet on the Lido deck taking in the sights, I am simply an under rower**

- one is not barking out orders, or demanding to be served, I am just doing what I have to do to get the ship where it needs to go, where Captain Jesus is directing
  - I love this picture, because sometimes as a leader of this fellowship – I start to worry, Lord are we doing all we can to reach North County – Lord are we seeing every opportunity and latching on
- And sometimes the Lord has to remind me – would you just grab an oar and start rowing
  - Where are we going? – Is that your job? – no
  - But what about the approaching storm? – are you a weatherman now?
  - The Lord would say – do you love Me? Do you trust Me? – grab an oar Jason and start rowing

**I think this is something everyone of us needs to hear about the work of ministry**

- we are bond slaves – we do this by choice, because of the One who loves us so much
  - and we are deacons, under rowers – not worried about charts and graphs, we will leave that to the Captain Jesus – just tell me what oar to grab and I’ll start rowing
  - thank you Apostle Paul for that!

**The final word is in Romans 15:16, this is so good**

- Paul says that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ
  - Now we miss it a little bit in English because the words, servant, minister, bond slave, kind of all sound the same

**But Paul’s choice of Word here is so interesting to me**

- It’s the Greek word, “leitourgos”
  - It basically means someone or something that is called to sacred temple work
  - You see in our day and age, Pastors can be anybody, didn’t go to school – no problem – Calvary Chapel – don’t own anything but Hawaii shirts and jeans – no problem – Calvary Chapel

- And don't misunderstand me, I appreciate the freedom of dress and recognizing that God calls a man, not the education he receives
  - Nothing wrong with it, I am back to school to be more equipped for the calling, but the calling has to do with God, not the school

**But anyway – back in Old Testament, just anyone couldn't walk into the temple and offer sacrifices, and you couldn't offer sacrifices on just anything**

- the ministry had to be done liturgically, by set apart men or the right tribe on vessels that had been dedicated to ministry
  - and Paul is saying – that is how I see the work God has given me to do
  - something sacred that is set apart and holy from God

**I hope that is how you view whatever you do for the Lord, as a holy, important, sacred calling**

- so often we can think – oh Pastor Rob's ministry – that is sacred, oh the worship leader ministry – that is sacred stuff
  - but I just teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday school
  - I am just assistant at a home Bible study
- And we have the tendency to think – some day my ministry will be sacred but right now I can wing it

**I had the tendency as a young minister**

- when I was a Bible college student, I couldn't wait to be on staff at a church
  - once I was as Scott Cunningham's assistant, I couldn't wait until I was the High School Pastor
  - and once I was that – I couldn't wait until God would call me out to plant a church and I would become a sacred senior pastor
- But praise the Lord I said almost as much to Pastor Rob as a youth pastor – and he smiled and said – hum
  - And at the next staff meeting said, I can't stand it when youth guys are always looking to the next thing in ministry
  - You are going to miss where God has you right now – I sank down in my seat – “don't call me out by name”

**But I started thinking, what if all God ever wanted me to be was a faithful highschool pastor, and what if the Lord took me home early, and I got to heaven and said, Lord if you would have let me be a senior Pastor, ah, I would have really seen my ministry as sacred and poured into, You never gave me the chance**

- and the Lord challenged, you need to see whatever you do, and whatever season, like the apostle Paul did as sacred and pour your all into it
  - and this is as much a word for you as it is for any young pastor
- You see we think, oh once what I do for the Lord is important, then I will see it as sacred
  - What you do for the Lord right now is important – it is His sacred call for you right now
- Oh but it's just helping, it's just praying – just praying, don't even get me started – we didn't

**Do you think the Lord is impressed by what I do for Him, more than what you do**

- you see some of you do! – do you really think God in heaven talking with the angels, I am so glad Jason doing that Wednesday Night study, I don't know what we'd do without him
  - No – God is not impressed with the position
  - I believe He is impressed or maybe better said, blessed with faithfulness in whatever He calls you do to – you just being faithful

**The best way to be faithful, is to see whatever God is calling you to do, like Paul did – “sacred”**

- the easiest to start mailing it in, is to see what you do as common, ah, is just handing out bulletins
  - did you not get the thrust of chapter 12:3-8 – are you an exhort – exhort – are you are teacher – teach – go for it, do it!!!
  - Do with all of heart, see it as sacred and God will honor it

**We need to have Paul's heart toward the work God has given us**

- given to it by choice
- just getting the boat where it needs to go
- a sacred calling, important

**This heart led Paul to keep having vision of what was happening next in the ministry – you see it in the text we read**

- he wanted to go to Rome, he wanted to go to Spain, he wanted to keep expanding the influence of the gospel
  - and we know from church history, something's in Paul's heart he got to do – he eventually got to Rome, it was way different than he thought he would get there – as prison, not a traveling pastor

**And whether or not he got to Spain is a matter of tradition**

- church history said he did for a time
  - modern scholarship seems to think he didn't
  - but you know what - I don't think it matters – I think God sees our hearts, he gets the credit for Spain because it was in his heart to do

**What???**

- Think of David who wanted to build a temple for God
  - Did he ever get a chance? – no
  - Was it his fault? – No – it wasn't God's plan for him
- But you read Solomon's dedication of the temple and David's name is everywhere
  - Why – because it was in his heart to do

**And I share this with you, we are almost done in chapter 15 and 16 won't take long**

- but so often we get off track on seeing the work in our lives as bond service, as being an under rower, just getting the ship where it needs to go and our ministries as sacred, because they are not important to us
  - we start to think that because we think – Lord if you would just gain from the wisdom of my insight, we could do this and this for Your kingdom
- Friend – just be faithful
  - Oh but would be so much more effective with a spouse who had a heart for ministry
  - I would do so much more for the Kingdom, if you would just let me teach a Wednesday Night

- Just be faithful - Some things God will do – but they will probably be much different
  - Some He may do in and through you, but He sees your heart, and I believe will reward u

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**Paul’s heart for the workers – chapter 16 – don’t read the chapter**

**Chapter 16 shows us that Paul was not just a soul winner but a friend maker – He didn’t isolate Himself, but poured into people**

- you would think after reading and studying Romans that if you got to spend an evening with Paul you need to brush up on the minor prophets and some points of theology
  - that would be a great exercise but I doubt it would be needed for an evening with Paul
  - He was a people person we see in chapter 16, because he loved people

**We know that because he had never been to Rome and yet he mentions these people by name, that shows me that they had been in his prayers**

- To be able to just rattle off names of people in the Roman church and people who were concerned about the Roman church from Corinth and elsewhere
  - you just see that Paul’s heart toward people, the workers, is that he loved them and prayed for them, burning their names into his heart

**Some interesting people on the list**

- Paul mentions Phoebe in verse one
  - Most believe she was given the task of carrying this letter to Rome
- Now that is no big deal in our day, but in the first century where a women’s testimony wasn’t even admissible in court, this shows Paul had the heart of God toward women

**And I mention this because you will hear on occasion of what a chauvinist Paul was because he didn’t allow women to pastor churches**

- but the truth is, everywhere the gospel of Jesus Christ has touched this world, women’ rights and standings in society have been hugely elevated and rightly so
  - because there is neither male, nor female, slave nor free, Jew or Gentile in Christ Jesus
  - Paul didn’t hold women back – he entrusted this woman with one of the greatest dissertations of theology ever written

**He also mentions Tryphena and Tryphosa in verse 12**

- their names means dainty and delicate, but Paul uses irony when he says women who work hard for the Lord
  - again not so clear in English, so I mentioned it to you

**Probably most interesting to me in verse 13 where Paul mentions “Rufus”**

- Mark 15:21 identifies Simon of Cyrene, remember the one who carried the cross for Jesus
  - Mark 15:21 identifies him as the father of Alexander and Rufus

- Now you might say, I'm sure there were a lot of people named Rufus, well – Mark's gospel was written to the same congregation Paul is writing to, the congregation in Rome
- Indicating that Alexander and Rufus would have been people known to the church in Rome
  - Because of this I believe the Rufus in the church of Rome was the one whose dad carried the cross for Jesus and was never the same

**It is so important for us to learn from Paul's heart and realize people are important, especially in the church**

- we need to greet them, and love them
  - everyone that walks in that door – they may be the next Greg Laurie or Bob Coy
  - and I'll promise you and challenge you with this, precious church – they won't act like Greg Laurie and Bob Coy do now
- they will act like Greg Laurie and Bob Coy did before they were saved
  - they might walk in high on drugs as was the case for Greg
  - Or current owner of a strip club as was the case for Bob
  - And we have a choice – to lovingly lead them to Jesus, to patiently allow them to grow
  - Or to reject them because they are not like you yet
- Men and women separated from God – don't know how to worship, they don't know how to sit in Bible study and respond to God
  - So you show them, don't shun them

**In Paris Texas there is one bar in the entire town, and owner of that bar is openly gay and goes to one church about 5 or 6 times a year – Calvary Chapel**

- and I get so much flack for that in that little town
  - what kind of water down church must that be if that bar owner feels like he can walk in
  - hopefully a church that would remind people who lived in first century Israel of Jesus
- One who the sinners and prostitutes and tax collectors felt comfortable to be around
  - Not that Jesus ever tolerated their sin
  - They knew He loved them

**Every time I'm in Texas and he walks in those 5 to 6 times a year, I throw my arms around him and I tell him – I'm so glad you are here today**

- I don't know if he will ever get saved, It's not my job to save Him, but I know he hears the gospel 5-6 times a year and instead of shutting our doors shunning our neighbors, we need to give those who act like the world, because that's exactly who they are, a chance to change

**I pray we would all catch that heart, the heart of the apostle Paul toward people**

- May we effect North county in a fraction of the way Paul effected the known world
  - We need His heart!