

Upon Further Reflection

PASTOR MIKE YODER • ROMANS 15:14-21

I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Romans 15:14

Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me

Romans 15:15

to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:16



Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

Romans 15:17

I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done —

Romans 15:18

by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Gospel of Christ.

Romans 15:19

It has always been my ambition to preach the Gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

Romans 15:20

Rather, as it is written: “Those who were not told about Him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.”

Romans 15:21

Paul affirms God's work in the
Roman believers (15:14).

Paul reveals a deft diplomatic touch by speaking so highly of believers who live in a city he has never visited.

Courtesy assumes the spiritual maturity of other believers unless there are good reasons to think otherwise. Such courtesy is not merely wishful thinking, for the Gospel “is the power of God unto salvation” (1:16) — it transforms human beings.

Thomas Schreiner

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6

Paul delights in God's calling to
the Gentiles (15:15–19a).

*Paul offers his apostolic service as
worship to God (15:15,16).*

Paul pictures himself as a priest, using the Gospel as the means by which he offers his Gentile converts as a sacrifice acceptable to God.



He sees evangelism as a way of giving God praise and thanks.

Tim Keller

*Paul celebrates the spiritual transformation
of the Gentiles (15:17–19a).*

Paul's goal in evangelism is not merely some kind of "conversion experience," but completely changed lives. He wants people who are obedient and holy toward God. [His goal is] to make disciples of Christ. The goal of evangelism is complete life change.

Tim Keller

This combination of words and works, the verbal and the visual, is a recognition that human beings often learn more through their eyes than through their ears. Words explain works, but works dramatize words.

John Stott

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, Who has given me strength, that He considered me trustworthy, appointing me to His service.

1 Timothy 1:12

Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

1 Timothy 1:13

*The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly,
along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

1 Timothy 1:14

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance:
Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom
I am the worst.*

1 Timothy 1:15

But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His immense patience as an example for those who would believe in Him and receive eternal life.

*Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God,
be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

“I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations — to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will proclaim My glory among the nations.”

Isaiah 66:19

“And they will bring all your people, from all the nations, to My holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the Lord — on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels,” says the Lord. “They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the Lord in ceremonially clean vessels.”

Isaiah 66:20

Paul desires God's fame through
pioneer evangelism (15:19b–21).



Illyricum

Jerusalem

The Journeys of Paul

- Paul's First Missionary Journey
- Paul's Second Missionary Journey
- Paul's Third Missionary Journey
- Paul's Voyage to Rome

This does not of course mean that Paul had “saturated” the whole area with the Gospel, as we might say today. His strategy was to evangelize the populous and influential cities, and plant churches there, and then leave to others the radiation of the Gospel into the surrounding villages.

John Stott

Paul was engaged in mission in certain strategic areas. Those metropolises are the main centers as far as communication, culture, commerce, politics, and religion are concerned. Paul thinks regionally, not ethnically. So he chooses cities that have a representative character.

David Bosch

*And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written:
“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”*

Romans 10:15

**Paul revels in Gospel progress through
his life and in widespread fruit.**