

## Romans: “Being Ministry Minded” Chapters 15 & 16

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Well, the end of summer is almost here. We also are ending our series, “Romans: The Life of Faith – The Power of Grace.” This has been a great study for me personally and I hope you have benefited in growing in your knowledge of the Lord and in applying these things to your life as I have. Today we look at the last two chapters.

Throughout Romans we have seen Paul’s heart for people and ministering to them to the glory of God. Paul has written to inform and remind those in Rome of the importance of right thinking in regards to what they believe about God and how that right thinking should affect us in right living. When our thinking is right and our living is right, we are going to be focused on the Lord and ministering to others around us.

Paul is the perfect example of a man of ministry and in these closing paragraphs in these last 2 chapters, we can see some things that are essential if we are going to be ministry minded like Paul in our own lives. What will a God glorifying ministry look like in our own lives? It may not look exactly like Paul’s, but it will include certain aspects of ministry that are included in how Paul ministers.

We see here that what Paul views as one of His chief ways of glorifying the Lord is in proclaiming the gospel. **Read vs. 15-6** Now, I realize that Paul had a special gift and calling, but that doesn’t mean we all don’t have responsibility to proclaim the gospel. Just because we are not Paul does not mean we do not have priestly duties as believers in Jesus. We do. The priestly duties of proclaiming God’s word belongs to all of us. Not in the sense of holding the office of pastor or elder, but in the sense that God has placed us in the lives of others that we have an influence over that no one else will have. Eternities depend on us using our ministry to proclaim the gospel. Peter tells us to “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

If you were in a conversation with someone at work or in the neighborhood and they asked you, like the Philippian jailer asked Paul, “What must I do to be saved?” what would you say? Paul responded with “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.” But what does it really mean to believe in Jesus? I think this is where Christians start to get anxious about talking about the gospel to someone. They thing they might mess it up.

I want to give you a helpful way to remember what to share with someone so they know who Jesus is and can really receive Him by believing in Him. To believe in Jesus means to:  
**Believe in Who Jesus is** – He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, God in the flesh. A person who believes in Jesus must believe this about Jesus. This is what being the Christ, the Messiah means.

Believing in Jesus also means to

**Believe in What Jesus did** – He died for your sins, in your place and rose from the dead. This is the substitutionary atonement, Jesus dying in your place for you and the bodily resurrection, Jesus defeating death so now we too can have eternal life.

And, I would add a pre-cursor to that: Know who YOU ARE - Believe in WHO Jesus is - Believe in WHAT Jesus did.

We also see that a God glorifying ministry serves other people. **Read vs. 18-9** People have come to Christ because they have been witnesses of how Paul has served people both in word and action. The things we do and how we do them is essential to a God glorifying ministry.

Paul sacrificed greatly to serve people. He was beaten, He was jailed, He suffered, He sacrificed resources, He sacrificed time. Serving people will always require sacrifice at some level.

Are you sacrificing time to be there for others in their times of need?  
Sometimes that will mean being there to listen during difficult times in their life.  
Sometimes that will mean helping them in a financial way as the Lord lays that on your heart.  
Sometimes serving others will mean sacrificing what you want to do for what they want to do.

If you want to glorify God through your life and experience the joy of being used by Him, then keep your eyes opened to how you might serve others.

The third thing we see about a God glorifying ministry is that it includes praying to God. It has to be a ministry that seeks God always. **Read v. 30** Paul recognizes that without God's work nothing is going to happen so he prays and asks others to pray for him.

Jesus said that apart from Him, we can do nothing. In John 15:5 Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." If we are going to see our lives used then we have got to be praying and seeking the Lord.

I am continually asking people to pray for me and I pray for myself, especially asking for prayer in my preaching. If anything is going to be accomplished through the preaching ministry here, it will not be because your pastors are such good speakers, but it will be because God used us to communicate His word well and in a helpful way. That is my prayer all the time. Lord, help me to communicate your word so people will know you better.

You need to be praying for how the Lord wants to use you. "Lord, use me in my workplace to be an example of your mercy and grace. Lord, help my words to be encouraging to those around me.

Lord, help my focus to be on you when I am in a work environment that is oppressive and difficult."

Prayer affects things and prayer strengthens us so we can be God glorifying ministers of the Lord. Pray in the car on the way to work. Pray in the morning in the shower. Get up 5 minutes early and spend that time praying. You will never glorify the Lord without praying to God for help, wisdom, guidance and strength. **Plug for seeing movie, War Room.**

Finally, a God glorifying ministry is personal and caring. In chapter 16 Paul greets many by name, reminded by their faithfulness, service and sacrifice. **Read snippets...**

It is amazing to me that Paul knows so many people who are in Rome and yet has not been to Rome.

Now, he has obviously met some if not all of these people in other places during one of his missionary tours. But it appears that he does not just know who they are, but that he knows them. That's because Paul is a people person and he cares about people and he takes the time to get to know them and be in relationship with them.

Do you care about people? Are you working at establishing relationships or maintaining relationships with people, both Christians **and** non-Christians. Notice that Paul just didn't forget about people after they became a Christian either.

**Conclusion** – So, for each of you here today who are believers in Jesus Christ, recognize that your life is a ministry to the Lord and you are to constantly seek to glorify God in and through your life, by proclaiming the Gospel - serving other people – praying boldly and specifically to God - and being personal and caring toward one another. It is those things that will always help us to be ministry minded, and truly bring glory and honor to Jesus. In His name. Amen.