

HOLIDAY PLANS?

ROMANS 15:22-33.

INTRODUCTION.

Paul was planning a trip.

There was nothing wrong with his plans, they just didn't quite match up with God's plan.

Paul knew that everything he did was in God's hands. So confident was he of being in the centre of God's will that every plan he made was subject to God's over-ruling direction.

We need to learn what that means in our own lives.

Proverbs 16:9 Proverbs 19:21

It is very important to make plans, but those plans must always be subject to God's redirection.

1. ONWARD TO SPAIN.

Romans 15:22-24.

This is the reason that I have so often been hindered from coming to you. But now, with no further place for me in these regions, I desire, as I have for many years, to come to you when I go to Spain. For I do hope to see you on my journey and to be sent on by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a little while.

Paul's desire was to preach the Gospel where it had not yet been preached and not to build on someone else's foundation. He did that among the gentile lands all the way from Jerusalem to Illyricum.

Rome already had a church. Whether it had been established by one of the other Apostles or simply by believers who had heard the Gospel elsewhere doesn't matter. Paul didn't plant it yet he had a strong desire to visit this church that he had heard so much about.

Romans 1:8-10.

He recognises that his work is finished and he sets his eyes on the unreached people of Spain.

He is not just planning a stopover. He is planning on spending a decent length of time with them so that they can be encouraged by him and he in turn by them. Not only that but he hopes that they will be willing to assist him in his missionary endeavour to Spain.

2. MEETING NEEDS FIRST.

Romans 15:25-29.

At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem in a ministry to the saints; for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.

They were pleased to do this, and indeed they owe it to them; for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things.

The Gentile churches had received a great blessing, the blessing of salvation, via the Jerusalem church.

At the time of Paul's ministry the church in Jerusalem was suffering great persecution and poverty. While Paul was ministering he was also encouraging these other churches to supply the needs of those in Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 16:1-4.

Obviously it seemed advisable for Paul to go too because that is what he is now planning. vs28 **So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will set out by way of you to Spain; and I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.**

Paul has made his plans. The collection for the saints in Jerusalem has been gathered. He is going to personally deliver this gift then head for Spain with a stopover in Rome on the way.

3. PRAYER PLANNING.

Romans 15:30-33.

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company.

The God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

Notice how Paul describes this part of his ministry. He calls on them to join him in his **struggle**. This was no easy task. The word is the Greek word from which we get our English word 'Agonise'.

This was war. Spiritual war. Paul knew the opposition he would face.

Note the three things he asks them to pray for.

Safety, that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea.

Success that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints

**Satisfaction so that by God's will I may come to you with joy
and be refreshed in your company.**

Acts 19-28

Paul knew what was coming.

He gets arrested, is tried before the Sanhedrin, spoken to by God, there is a plot to kill him so he is transferred to Caesarea, stands before Felix and Festus, he appeals to Caesar and finally boards a ship for Rome. Not as a tourist but as a prisoner.

And what a pleasant trip that was.

Storms, shipwreck, bitten by a snake. Our idea of an ideal holiday?

It took them over three months to travel that short distance from Jerusalem to Rome.

Finally he arrives in Rome as he had planned.

Acts 28:14. And so we came to Rome. The believers from there, when they heard of us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

When we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

CONCLUSION.

We have no idea if Paul ever got to Spain.

What we do know is that all Paul's prayers were answered.

He was kept safe in Jerusalem.

He was successful in his mission there to deliver the gift to the church.

And he was satisfied that he had done all that God required him to do.

2 Timothy 4:7-8.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.