

Romans

The Apostle Paul's Vision for World Mission

By Russ Mitchell*

Note: This is an inductive study about the missionary themes found in Paul's letter to the Romans. It is designed to help groups or individuals discover the missionary vision of the Apostle Paul. We will use the New American Standard Bible (revised).

Introduction

How important do you think it is for the church to be actively involved in taking the Gospel to other nations?

Here are some statements about mission. Which one do you think represents the opinion of the majority of people in your church? Which one best reflects our opinion?

- a) Mission is not at all necessary
- b) Our mission is local; we have to reach our own people first and then we can do something for those in other countries.
- c) We would like to be involved in foreign missions, but because our church is new, small, doesn't have resources, etc. God does not expect us to be involved in mission.
- d) Our church has a foreign missions program. It is one of the ministries of our church. We are doing our part.
- e) Mission is the number one priority of our church.

What do you hope to gain from this study?

Mission: The Forgotten Frame of Romans

Thomas Schirmacher** refers to the introduction and conclusion of Romans as the "Forgotten Frame of Romans." He points out that Romans 1:1-15 and 15:14-16:27 show that Paul did not forget his missionary plans during the body of his letter. Let's take a closer look at the introduction and conclusion to see how indeed they provide an important "missiologial frame" for understanding Paul's message in Romans.

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** Schirmacher, Thomas. "Romans as a Charter for World Mission: A Lesson in the Relation of Systematic Theology and Missiology." *International Journal of Frontier Missions*. Vol. 10:4, Oct. 1993, 159-162.

Read Romans 1:1-15 and 15:14-16:27. What did you observe about mission in the introduction and the conclusion of Romans? What are some of the key ideas?

Paul's letter to the Romans

The "missionary context" of Romans

Many might pass over the introduction and conclusion of Romans supposing that they do not have much significance to the real meaning of the book of Romans. However careful examination reveals that they provide the context for understanding the broader implication of Paul's teaching in Romans – and that has to do with world missions. As we will see much of what Paul teaches in Romans provides a firm basis for mission.

Here are some introductory thoughts about Paul's letter to the Romans that help us begin to see the missional purpose of this letter.

- Romans is Paul's "letter of introduction"
- Paul sent this letter to those in Rome to prepare them for his future visit. (1:8-15)
- After visiting Rome, Paul planned to go to Spain on a missionary journey. (15:24,28)
- Paul hoped that the church in Rome would help him to go to Spain. (See 15:24)
- One of Paul's purposes in writing this letter is to present an apologetic for his missionary work among the gentiles.

The Structure of Paul's Letter to Romans

Paul's letter to the Romans has a "chiastic" or parallel structure:

- A Introduction, 1:1-6
 - B Greetings, 1:7
 - C About Paul's visit to Rome, 1:8-15
 - D Paul's motivation: the power of the Gospel, 1:16,17
 - E TEACHING, 1:18-15:13
 - D' Paul's motivation for writing this letter, 15:14-21
 - C' About Paul's visit to Rome 15: 22-33
 - B' Greetings, 16:1-24
 - A' Conclusion, 16:25-27

Similar ideas in the introduction and conclusion of Romans

Now let's take a closer look at Romans 1:1-16 and 16:25-27.

Underline the ideas about missions that you find in the introduction and conclusion of Romans. Which of these are found both in the introduction and the conclusion? Circle these and connect them with a line.

Introduction Romans 1:1-6	Conclusion Romans 16:25-27
<p>Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called {as} an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;</p>	<p>Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, {leading} to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.</p>

How many ideas about missions did you find? List them here.

There are at least six ideas about mission here. Let's look at them in detail.

I. The First Missionary Theme in Romans: The Gospel is the Basis for Mission

“Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called {as} an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God...” Romans 1:1

What do you think about the following statements? Rate each one from one to five, five indicating strong agreement, one indicating strong disagreement.

- _____ 1. God would never condemn anyone to hell who never heard the Gospel.
- _____ 2. Mission/evangelism efforts show a lack of respect and tolerance for people of other religions.
- _____ 3. Missions/evangelism efforts should be the responsibility of professionally trained church leaders, not church members.
- _____ 4. Church members can best be involved in missions/evangelism by praying, giving and witnessing by their example.
- _____ 5. Today’s churches are at about the right level in their efforts toward missions/evangelism.

(Adapted from FaithQuest, vol. 2, p. 117)

The Gospel is the Basis for Mission

We see that Paul mentions the “Gospel” both in the introduction and conclusion of Romans:

Romans 1:1 “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called {as} an apostle, set apart for the **gospel** of God...”

Romans 16:25 “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my **gospel** and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,”

Read Romans 1:16. This verse is referred to as the principal idea or theme of Romans. What basis for mission do you see in this verse?

Paul continues to add many more details about the Gospel in Romans. There are five points that are prominent in his presentation of the Gospel. These are:

- 1. God
- 2. Man and Sin
- 3. Jesus
- 4. Redemption
- 5. Salvation and faith

Let’s see what we can find out about each point. Under each section you will find a number of key texts in Romans. Read the verses and write down your observations. If your time is limited, the **underlined** passages are most important.

1. God

- What do you discover about God in Romans 16:26-27?

- In 3:30

- In 1:20 and 4:17?

- In 1:19-20?

- In 1:18; 2:5; 5:9; 9:22-24?
 - Why do you think that God is angry about sin?

 - Can you think of examples in the Old Testament where God showed his wrath towards sin?

- In 2:5-8; 14-16; 14:10-12?

- In 2:9-11; 3:29-30; 10:12?

- In 2:4; 3:25-26; 5:5,8; 8:39; 9:16; 11:22,32; 15:9?

- In 11:36?

- In 15:33 and 16:20?

- Summarize what you discovered.
- How might these be important for mission?

2. Man and sin

- What do you discover about man and sin in Romans 1:18-32?
- What do you discover about man and sin in Romans 2:1-29?
- What do you discover about sin in Romans 3:1-23?
- What do you discover about sin in Romans 5:12-14?
- What importance do these truths have for missions?

3. Jesus

- What do you discover about Jesus in 1:1-5?
- In 9:3-5?
- In 4:24?
- In 5:12-14?
- In 15:8-9?

- Summarize these truths.
- What importance do these truths have for mission?

4. Redemption

- What do you discover about redemption through Jesus in Romans 3:24-26?
- What do you discover about redemption through Jesus in Romans 5:6-8?
- What do you discover about redemption through Jesus in Romans 5:15-19?
- What importance do these truths have for missions?

5. Salvation and faith

- What do you discover about salvation and faith in Romans 3:21-30?
- What do you discover about salvation and faith in Romans 10:9,13?
- In 1:16-18?
- What importance do these truths have for missions?

Practical Application: Go Tell the Good News to the Nations!

We see clearly now that the **Gospel is a message for all people**. So Paul makes the conclusion that all peoples must hear the Gospel. That's why Paul in Romans 10 presents the **missionary principle of going to the nations**.

Romans 10:12-15

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same {Lord} is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Joel 2:32)

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?

How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" (Isaiah 52:7)

- What things are necessary for people to believe the Gospel and be saved?
- What is true about those who proclaim the good news?
- What will be the destiny of those who do not hear the Gospel? Read Romans 1:20-2:16?
- Why might some say that this is an "Inconvenient Truth"? (Or explain how you would respond to the objection that a loving God would never send anyone to hell.)
- Read Romans 1:14-15. What was Paul's response to the Gospel? What will be your response? Who will take the message of the Good News to this generation?

Drawing Conclusions

- It is said that "mission flows from the very nature of God." What have you observed about the nature of God in Romans that supports this affirmation?
- How does a proper understanding of the Gospel provide a basis for world mission?

II. The Second Missionary Theme in Romans: The Basis for Mission is Found in the “Prophetic Writings” in the Old Testament.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets... Romans 16:25-26

Introduction

Do you think there is a basis for world mission in the Old Testament? Which of these statements best expresses your opinion?

- a. Missionary work to the world is not commanded in the OT. So there is no basis for world mission in the Old Testament
- b. There are some instances when „mission” happened in the Old Testament but these were more „accidental” rather than an „intentional” response to God’s direction.
- c. People in the Old Testament did not have any obligation to make God known to the nations around them; but their lives were to be an attractive witness to the nations.
- d. There is a very clear mission mandate in the Old Testament.
- e. I have not really thought about this before and have not formed an opinion.

How many verses or examples can you think of that refer to world mission in the Old Testament?

1. General observations about how Paul uses the Old Testament

- See Romans 1:2 and 16:26 where this theme is mentioned.

1:1-2 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called {as} an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

16:25-26 (The) “gospel... now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets...”

- In Romans Paul cites the Old Testament more than in all his other letters. In Romans, Paul uses the Old Testament 55 times in comparison to 42 times in all of his other letters.
- In Romans Paul cites the Old Testament at least 26 times in relation to missions.
- Also Paul often indirectly makes reference to the Old Testament.

2. An example of an indirect reference to the Old Testament in Romans

Romans 15:8-9 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the **promises {given} to the fathers**, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."

- What are the promises given to the fathers? What do these have to do with mission? Let's take a look at them.

3. Promises given to the fathers (patriarchs) in Genesis (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)

- Underline all the synonyms for “nations” in these passages.

Abraham – Gen. 12:1-3 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Abraham – Gen. 18:17-18 “The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?"

(Note: Genesis 12:3 plus Genesis 18:18 are found in Galatians 3:8.)

Abraham – Gen. 22:18 “"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." See Acts 3:25

Isaac – Gen. 26:4-5 “"I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."

Jacob – Gen. 28:14 “Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Judah – Gen. 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him {shall be} the obedience of the peoples. (e)

- What did you think these promises given to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) have to do with mission to the nations?
- Why is it important that the Messiah come from the line of Abraham and Judah? (See Romans 1:3)

4. Examples of direct references to the Old Testament in Romans

In Romans 15:8-12 Paul cites the Old Testament regarding the Gentiles:

For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises {given} to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME." (2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49)

Again he says, "REJOICE, O GENTILES, WITH HIS PEOPLE." (Deuteronomy 32:43)

And again, "PRAISE THE LORD ALL YOU GENTILES, AND LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE HIM." (Psalm 117:1)

Again Isaiah says, "THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE." (Isaiah 11:10)

Other references to missions in Romans

Romans 15:21 "but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND." (Isaiah 11:10)

Romans 9:25-26 As He says also in Hosea, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'" (Hosea 2:23)
"AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."
(Hosea 1:10)

Romans 10:13 "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Joel 2:32)

Romans 10:20 And Isaiah is very bold and says, "I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME." (Isaiah 65:1)

Romans 14:11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." (Isaiah 45:23)

What does Paul want to say about the gentiles by using these passages in the Old Testament?

"What is the purpose of the letter to the Romans? Paul wanted the Roman church to join him in his struggle to reach the unreached peoples which had no church in their midst. The best way to get the church going was to show them from the Old Testament that world mission is the essence of God's love and is the purpose of the Church of Christ." Thomas Schirmacher, p. 161.

We will see more of how Paul uses the Old Testament as we continue our study.

Drawing Conclusions

Now that you have looked at how Paul has used the OT what do you think about this statement "The whole Bible is the basis for mission." Is „mission" to all peoples just a NT concept or is it supported by both the OT and NT?

III. The Third Missionary Theme in Romans: “All nations” are the target group of mission

(The) “gospel ... has been made known to all the nations” Romans 16:25-26

Introduction

How many least reached people groups make up each of these five religious blocks? Match the number with the correct religious group. (You can find the answers are at the end of this section. (Information from www.joshuaproject.net accessed 26.02.2009.)

___ Tribal Groups	A. 2,703
___ Hindu Groups	B. 2,286
___ Unreligious Groups	C. 983
___ Muslim Groups	D. 440
___ Buddhist Groups	E. 44

“All nations” are the target group of mission

- Read again the introduction and conclusion of this letter to the Romans and see what is said there about the Gentiles.
- Why is the target group of mission all peoples? Make a list of reasons that you have discovered thus far in parts I and II.
- We can observe the following things as well

1. God awaits the worship of the nations

- Psalm 117:1 quoted in Romans 15:11
"Praise the Lord all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him."
- Read Romans 15:4-7. What is mentioned about worship in this passage? What conditions should be fulfilled for worship?
- Read Romans 15:8-9a. Jesus became a servant for two purposes. What purpose do you see in verse 8? What purpose do you find in verse 9? How does this purpose relate to worship?

- Read Romans 15:9b-12. What does the OT prophetically say about the Gentiles?
- Many Old and New Testament passages declare that all nations will worship God. Here are a few.

Psalm 86:9 "All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name."

Isaiah 45:22-24 "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other." "I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear {allegiance.} "They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame. (See Philippians 2:11.)

Revelation 7:9-10 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and {all} tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches {were} in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

- How should God's desire to be worshiped by all peoples motivate us to be involved in mission?

"God is pursuing with omnipotent passion a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshippers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He has an inexhaustible enthusiasm for the supremacy of His name among the nations. Therefore, let us bring our affections into line with His, and, for the sake of His name, let us renounce the quest for worldly comforts and join His global purpose." John Piper

2. Jesus awaits the evangelization of the world to come again

- We see this truth in four passages in the New Testament.

Romans 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation--that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Matthew 24:14 "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."

Mark 13:10 "The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

2 Peter 3:11-12 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

- What do you observe here about the second coming of Jesus and evangelizing the nations?

"We talk of the Second Coming; half the world has never heard of the first."

Oswald J. Smith

- Explain the biblical basis for this affirmation: "Frontier mission is the priority of our time."

3. The priority of "frontier missions" in the Apostle Paul's work

Let's see how frontier mission was a priority for Paul.

- Read carefully Romans 15:14-21. Look carefully at verses 15 and 16. How did Paul view his ministry? What does this have to do with worship?
- What hindered Paul from going to Rome? (This is important to see.) See 15:18-22 and note 1:13. What does this show us about his priorities?
- What OT passage does Paul cite to support his work among those who have never heard about Jesus? See verse 21.
- Why was Paul going to Rome now? See verses 23-24 and 28.
- Was Rome unreached? Note 15:14. Think carefully about this.
- Was Paul being inconsistent in his priorities by going to a people that already heard the Gospel?
- What did Paul hope the church in Rome would do for him? See verse 24. How does this reflect Paul's priority to frontier mission?

Consider also this passage where Paul speaks about the priority of frontier mission.

For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach to you, for we were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ; not boasting beyond {our} measure, {that} {is,} in other men's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows, we will be, within our sphere, enlarged even more by you, so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, {and} not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another. 2 Corinthians 10:14-16

- How do you see that frontier mission was a priority for Paul? Why do you think Paul was so motivated?
- Where would Paul want to go today to proclaim the Gospel in “regions” where Christ is not yet known?

4. How many “peoples” are there today? How many have not heard about Jesus?

Let’s look at the following information from the Joshua Project
www.Joshuaproject.net (Accessed Oct. 2008)

ETHNIC GROUPS BY NATION

- Nr. of ethnic groups: 16,451
- Nr. of least evangelized ethnic groups: 6,851
- Percentage of unevangelized ethnic groups: 41.6%

INDIVIDUALS

- Population of the world: 6.63 billion people
- Nr. of unevangelized peoples: 2.68 billion people
- Percentage of unevangelized people: 40.4%

Drawing Conclusions

- What will be your role in seeing that the Good News about Jesus reaches the 40% of the world that has never heard about him?
- How could “frontier mission” be a priority in your life? In your church?

Answers to the introductory question about the number of unreached people groups that make up each major religious block.

- C. 983 Tribal Groups
- B. 2,286 Hindu Groups
- E. 44 Unreligious Groups
- A. 2,703 Muslim Groups
- D. 440 Buddhist Groups

IV. The Fourth Missionary Theme in Romans: The Imperative of Mission is the "Command of the Eternal God."

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel ...which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, ... according to the commandment of the eternal God ... Romans 16:25-26

Here are some statements. Say if each statement is true or false. If you think the statement is false, mention why you think it is false.

- If God wants to reach the pagans, he will do it without your help or mine.
- God does not expect us to send missionaries to other countries until our own country is reached first.
- Jesus can return at any time since nothing needs to happen prior to his return.
- Every Christian is a missionary.
- Only those with a special calling should be missionaries.
- The missionary age ended with the apostles. So we do not need missionaries today.

1. Missionary commands in the Old Testament

David's psalm of thanksgiving, recorded I Chronicles 16 on the occasion of the Ark being brought to Jerusalem, draws from Psalms 105, 96 and 106. Read I Chronicles 16:8-36, noting where you find references to "peoples", "all the earth" or "nations".

In I Chronicles 16 we find three „missionary commands" that are also found in other Old Testament passages.

1 Chronicles 16:8-9 = Psalm 105:1-2 = Isaiah 12:4 Oh give thanks to the LORD, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples. Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders.

I Chronicles 16:23-24 = Psalm 96:2,3 "Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.

1 Chronicles 16:31 = Psalm 96:10 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."

There are still other „missionary commands in the Old Testament, for example.

Psalm 9:11 "Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion; Declare among the peoples His deeds.

Isaiah 42:12 Let them give glory to the LORD And declare His praise in the coastlands.

Finally there is "the great commission" of Isaiah 49:6 that Paul and Barnabas refer to in Acts 13:46-47 to justify their preaching to the gentiles.

Isaiah 49:6

He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Normally we consider this Isaiah passage to apply to the Messiah. But Paul and Barnabas consider it a command to *them*.

Acts 13:46 Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

Acts 13:47 "For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.'"

- How could Paul and Barnabas consider this to be a command to them to preach to the gentiles? Consider how John 20:21 might have influence their thinking.

“When Paul and Barnabas wanted to prove that from now on they should preach the Gospel to the Gentiles instead of the Jews, they did not quote the great commission Jesus had given... but the great commission of Isaiah.” Thomas Schirrmacher, 160.

- How many commands about missions are there in the Old Testament? (The references are underlined.) Count them.

- There are other passages that speak about mission of God’s people to the nations in the Old Testament. For example Psalm 145:10-12:

All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, And your godly ones shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom And talk of Your power; To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts And the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom.

2. Missionary commands in the New Testament

1. Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
2. Mark 16:18 “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”
3. Luke 24:46-48 "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in

His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. "You are witnesses of these things."

4. John 20:21 "Peace {be} with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."
 5. Acts 1:8 "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
- Compare the number of the missionary commands in the Old Testament to the number of missionary commands in the New Testament. What do you see?

"The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed." Hudson Taylor

- What would you say to the objection to foreign missions, "Isn't there enough to do at home?" in light of the missionary commands of God?
- What will be your response to the "command of the eternal God"?

Digging Deeper: Are There Apostles Today?

- Is there a need for a special missionary calling to be involved in missions? What is your opinion?
- Is it biblically correct to say every Christian is a missionary? Consider the following, and then give your answer.

1 Cor. 12:28-30 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, {various} kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not {workers of} miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

"Apostle and missionary have the same meaning 'the sent one', the former coming from the Greek, the latter from Latin." Thomas Schirrmacher, 161.

- It is clear that some have a special missionary calling. See Romans 1:1-3. How did Paul understand his calling to mission?
- Normally we think of the 12 followers of Jesus and Paul as “the apostles.” But we shall see that the New Testament names others apostles as well. Read the following passages. Underline those who are considered “apostles”.

Acts 14:14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out

1 Thes. 1:1; 2:6 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy.... Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

Romans 16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Philippians 2:25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger (APOSTOLOS in Greek) and minister to my need.

- What purpose does an apostle pursue? What can you find out about apostles from the following verses? Describe the things an apostle (or frontier missionary) should do?

Romans 1:5 we have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

Romans 15:15,16 But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that {my} offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:20 And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was {already} named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation.

1 Cor. 3:10 ¶ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.

Eph 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner {stone,} in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Eph 4:11-12 And He gave some {as} apostles, and some {as} prophets, and some {as} evangelists, and some {as} pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Drawing Conclusions

- Does a person need a special calling to be involved in God's mission? What do you think?
- How could the biblical responsibility of every believer to be involved in God's mission be better expressed?
- Is there a need for apostolic ministry today? If so, where?
- How will you respond to the "command of the eternal God?"

V. The Fifth Missionary Theme in Romans: The Outcome of Mission is the “Obedience of Faith”

We have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake. Romans 1:5

Introduction

Which of the following statements best describes the mission activity of your church?

- a) We have no interest in missions.
- b) We would like to get involved in missions some day.
- b) We are involved in a few mission projects from time to time.
- c) Missions is a regular part of our ministry.
- d) Mission is given a high priority in our church and is integrated into the life of the church.

How might a better understanding the biblical basis for mission help you and your church?

1. The Obedience of Faith

Romans 1:5 “we have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} **obedience of faith** among all the Gentiles for His name's sake”

Romans 16:25-26 Rom 16:25 ¶ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, **{leading} to obedience of faith;**

- You might wish to look at these verses in several different translations to see the difference.
- Also see Romans 15:15-18. What do you find here about the obedience of faith?
- In light of these passages what do we learn about Paul’s purpose as an apostle?

What does the obedience of faith mean? Scholars have several opinions as to the meaning of the phrase based on the grammar. Perhaps the whole debate about the relationship of faith to obedience misses Paul’s primary point, namely that he wants all peoples to **obey** God.

- See Matthew 28:19-20. What do you see here about obedience?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- What similarity is there between Paul’s apostolic purpose and the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:19-20?
- Could Paul’s expression “the obedience of faith” be a paraphrase of the Great Commission? What do you think?

2. Let’s take a closer look at faith and obedience in Romans.

Romans 1:17 is considered the theme verse of Romans.

For in it {the} righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS {man} SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

- How are the concepts of “faith” and “obedience” seen here?
- Look at Romans 1:9. What does Paul say that is known “throughout the whole world” about the church in Rome?
- Now look at 16:19. What has been reported about the church in Rome?
- What else does Paul say about the believers in Rome in Romans 6:17-18: But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

- Is there a similarity between what Paul says about the church in Rome and his missionary purpose stated in 1:5, 15:18 and 16:26?

Do you think Paul talks about the obedience part of “obedience of faith” in Romans? Consider this: Approximately 50% of the book of Romans talks about practical Christian Living. Note how the chapters in Romans are equally divided between doctrine (faith) and practical Christian living (obedience).

There are 16 chapters in Romans	Nr. of chapters	Nr. of verses that mention “faith”	Additional verses that mention “believe”	Total
Chapters 1-5 are doctrinal:	5	22	6	28
Chapters 6-8 are practical:	3	0	1	1
Chapters 9-11 are doctrinal:	3	6	7	13
Chapters 12-16 are practical:	5	7	0	7
Total of chapters that are doctrinal:	8	28	13	41
Total of chapters that are practical:	8	7	1	8

It is pretty clear that the doctrinal chapters place a great deal of emphasis on faith. The practical chapters place emphasis on how a person who has faith (believes) should live (obey).

Obviously Paul’s purpose was more than hoping that people would give mental assent to a series of propositions. He was looking for a change in behavior what would be evidence of new life in Christ. Genuine faith in Christ results in a changed life (Romans 12:1-2). “The righteous will live by faith” (Romans 1:17).

Digging Deeper: Paul’s teaching about New Life in Christ in Romans

What kind of new life in Christ does Paul have in view? Read the following passages and make some observations about what Paul teaches about the new life in Christ. Then ask yourself if what you find is true about yourself.

Passage	Observation	Personal Evaluation
Romans 6:1-7		
Romans 6:8-14		
Romans 6:15-23		

Romans 7:4-6		
Romans 8:1-17		
Romans 12:1-2		
Romans 12:3-8		
Romans 12:9-21		
Romans 13:1-7		
Romans 13:8-11		
Romans 13:12-14		
Romans 14:1-15:7		
Romans 16:17-19		

Drawing Conclusions

If a person has not begun to live the new life in Christ, then involvement in mission is premature. Are you obedient to the form of teaching you have received?

VI. The Sixth Missionary Theme in Romans: The Motive for Mission is for "His Name Sake"

"We have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake." Romans 1:5

Introduction

- Consider what motivated these people:

"I have but one passion: It is He, it is He alone. The world is the field and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ." Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, 1700-1760

"To win for the Lamb the reward of his sufferings." Motto of the Moravians

"If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him."

C.T. Studd, 1860-1931
Missionary in China, India and Africa
Pioneer of the Student Volunteer Movement

"It is my desire to show my attachment to the cause of Him who died for me by devoting my life to His service." David Livingstone

- What motivates you to be involved in mission?

1. Our motive for involvement in missions is "for his name sake"

Romans 1:5 "We have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,"

John 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

"Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love" Roland Allen

- Why is love for Jesus the chief motive for missions? How does this manifest itself?

2. III John – a case study “for his name sake”

5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially {when they are} strangers; 6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. 7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. 8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

- What was the missionary motive in this passage?
- What is the responsibility of the church to these kinds of people?
- What is true of a church that sends missionaries “in a manner worthy of God”?
- What application can you make to your own life and the life of your church?

3. Case study the Church at Rome

- How does Paul “minister” to the church at Rome? See 1:9-10. What can missionaries learn from Paul’s example regarding their ministry to those who send them?
- What did Paul expect to happen when he arrives in Rome? See Romans 1:11-13 and 15:32.
- What expectations did Paul have about the involvement of those in Rome in his future missionary journey to Spain? See 15:22-24,28.
- Read again 10:14-15. What connection does this passage have with Paul’s hopes for the future?
- Read Romans 12:8,13. How might what Paul says here apply to supporting missionary work?

- In what way did Paul hope that the church in Rome would be involved in his future mission to Jerusalem? See 15:25-27,30-32.
- Paul might also have desired to have some helpers go with him from the church in Rome. Read through chapter 16 and consider which of the individuals mentioned there Paul might have wanted to accompany him to Spain. Mention why you think Paul would have wanted each person you chose.

Historical insight: Did Paul ever reach Spain? There is historical evidence from Clement (c. 95 AD) and the Muratorian Fragment (c. 170 D) that after Paul arrived in Rome (Acts 28), he was released and made a fourth missionary journey to Spain.

- If Paul was writing to your church, what would he say? Who might he have in mind to accompany him on a missionary journey?
- Summarize. In what ways does Paul see the Church at Rome involved in his missionary work? How might these be applicable to missionary work today?
- What are some practical implications of what you discovered here for your church's involvement in missionary work? For your involvement in missionary work?

Drawing Conclusions

Think back over this entire study. Write down your most important insights from each section.

Theme	Your most important insights
Mission is based on the “Gospel”	
Mission is based on the “prophetic writings” in the Old Testament	
“All nations” are the target of missions	
Mission is based on “the command of the eternal God”	
The outcome of mission is the “obedience of faith”	
Our motive for mission “for his name sake”	

- What is your motivation for involvement in mission?
- How do you support missionary work?
- How do you think you can implement what you have learned in your family? (If applicable)?

- What can you do in your church?

Every Christian is called to join God in his global mission; some have a special calling to work with God to establish groups of obedient believers among people groups who have never heard the good news about Jesus.

- How is God calling you to join him in his global mission? What are your first steps?

- Who can you tell what about you have learned in this study and how God is leading you?

This would be an appropriate time to go to the Lord of the Harvest in Prayer. Honestly tell him where you are in your spiritual journey, what the desire of your heart is and what barriers you need to overcome to join him in his global mission.

ANNEX SCRIPTURE VERSES

FAITH

Rom 1:5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about {the} obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

Rom 1:8 ¶ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

Rom 1:12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you {while} among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

Rom 1:17 For in it {the} righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS {man} SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Rom 3:3 What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

Rom 3:22 even {the} righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

Rom 3:25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. {This was} to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

Rom 3:26 for the demonstration, {I say,} of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Rom 3:27 ¶ Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

Rom 3:28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Rom 3:30 since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

Rom 3:31 ¶ Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.

Rom 4:5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Rom 4:9 ¶ Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Rom 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

Rom 4:12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

Rom 4:13 ¶ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Rom 4:14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

Rom 4:16 ¶ For this reason {it is} by faith, in order that {it may be} in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

Rom 4:19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb;

Rom 4:20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

Rom 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom 5:2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 9:30 ¶ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;

Rom 9:32 Why? Because {they did} not {pursue it} by faith, but as though {it were} by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone,

Rom 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?'" (that is, to bring Christ down),

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

Rom 10:17 So faith {comes} from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Rom 11:20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

Rom 12:3 ¶ For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Rom 12:6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, {each of us is to exercise them accordingly:} if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith;

Rom 14:1 Now accept the one who is weak in faith, {but} not for {the purpose of} passing judgment on his opinions.

Rom 14:2 One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables {only.}

Rom 14:22 The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

Rom 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because {his eating is} not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

Rom 16:26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, {leading} to obedience of faith;

BELIEVE

Rom 1:16 ¶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Rom 3:3 What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

Rom 3:22 even {the} righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

Rom 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Rom 4:5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Rom 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

Rom 4:17 (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, {even} God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

Rom 4:18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."

Rom 4:24 but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

Rom 6:8 ¶ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Rom 9:33 just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Rom 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus {as} Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Rom 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Rom 10:11 For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

Rom 10:14 ¶ How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

Rom 10:16 ¶ However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

Maybe try to stay within Romans to develop this theme instead of running around.

Rom 1:17 For in it {the} righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS {man} SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Rom 4:9 ¶ Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Rom 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

Rom 4:12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

OBEDIENCE

Romans 2:8; 6:12,16

Rom 2:8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

Rom 6:12 ¶ Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

Rom 6:13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin {as} instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members {as} instruments of righteousness to God.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Rom 6:15 ¶ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

Rom 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone {as} slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

Rom 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Rom 6:18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

16:19 too

OBEDIENCE OUTCOMES

Rom 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

Rom 7:4 ¶ Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Rom 7:5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were {aroused} by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

Rom 7:6 But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

Rom 8:12 ¶ So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh--

Rom 8:13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Rom 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, {which is} your spiritual service of worship.

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.