



Today's Sermons

Morning: The Glorious Body & Bride of Christ
 Evening: Paul: The Chief of Missionaries

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FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	40
Sunday AM Worship	50
Sunday PM Worship	31
Wed. Bible Study	8
Offering	\$1876



A Weekly Publication of the
West Jefferson Church of Christ
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 Phone: (336) 846-5615 | Email: info@wjchurchofchrist.org
 Volume XI January 21, 2018 Number 03

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Times of Services:

Sunday
 Bible Study:... 10:00am
 AM Worship:...11:00am
 PM Worship:...6:00pm
 2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday
 Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program
 Sunday:.....7:30am
 "Back to the Bible"
 AM 580 WSKS
 93.5 FM

**We Extend A
 Warm & Cordial
 Welcome
 To All Our
 Visitors!**

WHAT DID THE APOSTLE PAUL HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH BY GOING TO ROME?

Roger D. Campbell

Paul made no secret about the fact that he longed to go to Rome. He prayed about it (Romans 1:10,11). He asked the saints in Rome to pray about it, too (Romans 15:30-32). He wrote in unmistakable language about his desire to go there and that such a longing was not something new on his part: *"For I long to see you . . . having a great desire these many years to come unto you"* (Romans 1:11; 15:23).

We have heard accounts of those who have visited the city of Rome in our generation. For some travelers, it is a "must see" on their voyages to the European continent. Others have made it their honeymoon destination. Rome was, is, and apparently will remain, a most unique place.

Paul's intent on going to Rome, however, was not "to see the sights" or to enjoy its world-famous dining. There is nothing wrong with either of those motives; Paul just had other things in mind. Why did he have a yearning to make it to the capital city of the Roman Empire? In Romans 1:11-15, we read four reasons why he wanted to go there so badly. Here they are:

Continued Inside

The Bible is a collection of evidences showing divine wisdom

Old Testament was written from 1500 to 400 years before Christ

New Testament is eyewitness testimony

Acts 1:1-2

Human wisdom alone could not and would not write these

Born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)

Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)

Rejected by the Jews (Isaiah 53:3)

Betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9)

Sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12)

Crucified with sinners (Isaiah 53:12)

Prophetic word

Hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16)

Bore our sins (Isaiah 53:6)

Soldiers cast lots for His garments (Psalm 22:18)

Not a bone broken (Psalm 34:20)

Robbed from the grave (Isaiah 53:9)

So we have the prophetic word strongly confirmed. You will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dismal place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. **2 Peter 1:19**

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(1) Paul wanted to impart some spiritual gift to them. *“For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established”* (1:11). In the New Testament, the term “spiritual gift” can refer to miraculous gifts that the Holy Spirit gave to first-century saints (1 Corinthians 12:1; 14:1). They were for the purpose of edifying and guiding the Christians of that era. They were temporary in nature: once the complete will of God was revealed to mankind, there was no more need for those gifts (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). From Acts 8:14-20 and Acts 19:5,6 we learn that spiritual or miraculous gifts were distributed to the disciples when apostles laid hands on them. That idea – an apostle laying hands on other saints to impart a spiritual gift to them, certainly fits the case of Paul telling the brethren in Rome that he wanted to come to them and impart a spiritual gift to them. Note that he could not just pray for them to receive such: he had to be present with them. We would also do well to note Paul’s motive in wanting them to receive such a gift: *“that you may be established.”* The age of miraculous gifts has long passed, but there is always a need in the body of the Christ for its members to show an interest in establishing and building up one another. Are you and I doing that?

(2) Paul wanted to be able both to give and receive comfort. *“That is, that I may be comforted [encouraged, NKJV] together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me”* (1:12). Paul may have been an apostle, but he certainly did not think of himself as being superior to others, nor did he believe that he could not be benefitted by his association with other faithful followers of the Christ. In this same connection, in Romans 15:32 we read of Paul’s desire to go to Rome in order to *“be refreshed”* with them. Put these ideas together and you have a picture of Paul’s outlook: making it to Rome and being with the brothers and sisters there would afford both him and them the chance to be comforted, encouraged, and refreshed. Is not fellowship with other Christians wonderful?! You cannot put a price tag on the benefits that we get from our close association with other children of God. For the life of me, I cannot comprehend how some members of the church apparently find no delight in spending time with those of like precious faith.

(3) Paul wanted to be able to bear some fruit there. *“Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles”* (1:13). In the Bible, we read about the harvest of souls, which would be the bearing of fruit in the form of teaching and producing followers of Jesus (John 4:35,36). More often, though, the word “fruit” points to the fruit of spiritual maturity, as *“the fruit of the Spirit”* (Galatians 5:22,23), *“being fruitful in every good work”* (Colossians 1:10) and *“being filled with the fruits of righteousness”* (Philippians 1:11). Since the Book of Romans was addressed to the “saints” in Rome (Romans 1:7), then it would appear that when Paul told those saints about his desire to *“have some fruit among you”* (1:13), that he had their spiritual development in mind. If they had family members or friends that had not yet obeyed the gospel, do you suppose that Paul also would have been interested in meeting such folks and teaching them the gospel, with the potential of bearing fruit? Sure.

(4) Paul wanted to go to Rome in order to preach the gospel. *“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also”* (1:15). Brethren, Paul was a gospel preacher. No one who heard or observed him would have any doubts about that. He was not planning to go to Rome to put on a drama performance, conduct a circus, or entertain people. Some preachers of our generation, whether they realize it or not, come across more like an actor, clown, or performer, than they do a gospel preacher. The world is lost in sin and far too many of God’s people are turned to idols, immorality, and unauthorized practices, yet some “preachers” can hardly seem to work in a Bible verse or two around jokes and stories of their personal experiences. That is pitiful!

How excited the brethren in Rome must have been when they received Paul’s letter, telling them of his intense desire to visit them. How encouraging it must be when they read that his motives were spiritual in nature, with their spiritual growth at heart. May God help each of us to be a helper and encourager like Paul was.

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We believe God's people are the greatest people on earth! We believe they have the greatest love for the lost the world has yet known. We have everything necessary to do any job God wants done. We know God stands ready and waiting to bless, guide, and establish our every effort. May we then launch out into the deep to gather a harvest of souls like this world has never seen! [Andrew Connally, *So You Want a Glorified Holiday*, pp. XI, XII]
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"Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.' "16 Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, "I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt" (Exodus 3:15-16).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Jan 28 – Song Service
- Feb 4 – Men’s Business Meeting & Ladies’ Bible Class
- Feb 11 – Preach-N-Eat & 1:30 Worship
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell