



Truth Matters

A Publication Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters

Scripture Reading

Week of
January 23rd - 29th

Monday

- ❖ Genesis 45:46
- ❖ Psalm 16
- ❖ Matthew 16

Tuesday

- ❖ Genesis 47:48
- ❖ Psalm 17
- ❖ Matthew 17

Wednesday

- ❖ Genesis 49:50
- ❖ Psalm 18
- ❖ Matthew 18

Thursday

- ❖ Exodus 1, 2
- ❖ Psalm 19
- ❖ Matthew 19

Friday

- ❖ Exodus 3, 4
- ❖ Psalm 20
- ❖ Matthew 20

Saturday

- ❖ Exodus 5, 6

Sunday

- ❖ Exodus 7, 8

Welcome Missionaries; Support Missionaries

Have you ever asked yourself, "Why did Paul write the book of Romans?" Chances are you have not asked yourself that question unless you were involved in some kind of inductive study of the book of Romans. Let me lead you on a series of questions that careful, Berean-like, Bible students should ask each time they take up a book of the Bible

(Stick with me and there will be a point to this little journey!).

First question: *What two things are essential for communication?*

In order for communication to happen, two things are necessary: an occasion and two parties. When we communicate with someone, we always do it in a context, for a certain reason. In this way, we can say that a context always exists in communication. In fact, onlookers will not know the meaning of the communication without knowledge of the context. So too, as onlookers of an ancient letter, we will not know the meaning of Paul's words unless we can formulate some of the ancient context.

While a context always exists, so does the necessity of two parties. In fact, the identification of the two

parties plays a large role in establishing the context. We will be further along in our understanding of the context if we know something of the relationship between the two parties.

Second question: *What kinds of inductive questions should we always ask of a book?*

The book of Romans is a letter written in a certain *context*, and it is communication between two specific parties: the Apostle Paul and the Christians in Rome. These two items form the building blocks for our understanding. They answer the inductive questions of "Who wrote the book?" (*author*); "To whom was it written?" (*recipient*); and "When was the book written?" (*occasion*). The answers to these questions will begin to lay the foundation for understanding the answers to other important questions, such as: "Why was the book written?" which will unlock the *purpose* and uncover the different *themes* ("What is he saying?"). "Who," "what," "where," "when," and "why" are the general inductive questions that must be asked in order to establish the context. Without a context, we will never have meaning and understanding.

A lot of these questions are answered for us in the New

Testament letters as we read the opening and closing sections of the letter. In the case of the letter to the Romans, the opening section is 1:1-15 while the closing section is 15:14-16:27. Read the opening and closing carefully and you might be surprised about what kinds of things you find. In fact, the point of my little exercise here is to disclose for you the reason why Paul wrote the letter to the Roman.

Third question: *Why did Paul write Romans?*

After reading through chapter one's opening verses, you come to these words in verse 10:

¹⁰ always in my prayers, asking that somehow *by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.* ¹¹ *For I long to see you,* that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— ¹² that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³ I want you to know, brothers, that *I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented),* in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles (*emphasis added*).

(Continues on page 2)



Welcome Missionaries; Support Missionaries.....Continued

If one stopped reading here, these words may be nothing more than simple wishful thinking similar to words I say when writing home, “I pray that I may visit you soon.” But the faithful reader who reads through to the end will find the theme re-visited in the closing address. Notice 15:14-29:

¹⁴ I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. ¹⁵ But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. ¹⁸ For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; ²⁰ and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, ²¹ but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.” ²² This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. ²³ But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, ²⁴ I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. ²⁷ They were pleased to do it, 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 blessings. ²⁸ When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

In verse 22, Paul says, “This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you.” That is exactly what he said in 1:13. The reason he had been hindered is owing to his mission! Paul was under obligation to preach the gospel to both Greek and Barbarian (cf. 1:14). This was the very mission he now says has been fulfilled. He had “fulfilled the ministry of the Gospel of Christ” from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum (15:19).

With Paul’s mission complete in that part of the world, he found a freedom to search for new fields. Thus, he announces in this letter that his sights are now set on preaching in Spain (cf. 15:24, 28). These are Paul’s travel plans.

First, however, he had to journey to Jerusalem so as to deliver his collection for the impoverished Jewish church. In fact, this journey brings Paul to request prayer from the Roman churches in 15:30-32. Then, once he has delivered the offering, he will journey to Spain by way of Rome.

So why did he write? I think it is really quite simple. Paul states in 15:24 that he is writing to disclose his plans to visit Rome so as to be helped (I suggest the word “supported”) in his endeavors to reach Spain. You heard me right! Romans is a missionary support letter. Paul is, in effect, asking if he can come to Rome, show his slides, and pass the offering plate for the new missionary endeavor.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every missionary could write to his supporting churches with a grasp of doctrine like Paul has in the book of Romans? May it be so!

The next time you are grappling with some hard text in Romans, remember that this letter is a missionary support letter.

The Basic Building Blocks for the Mission

Defining Missionaries

Here at LBC, we used the following questions to arrive at an understanding of both the mission and a categorization of missionaries. The complete discussion is contained in our Mission Policy (available upon request).

Why Do We Go?

2 Peter 2:9 defines the existence of LBC: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The mission statement of our church reads: "We exist to see and savor the excellencies of God in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit for our satisfaction and for the commending to all peoples' satisfaction." We were chosen to be a people who proclaim the excellencies of God. That means we exist to help the called see and savor the excellencies of God. The result of seeing and savoring the excellencies of God is proclaiming – proclaiming through praise and proclaiming through preaching. The Psalmist cries out, "Let the peoples praise you, O God." The people groups of the world's nations cannot praise what they do not prize and they cannot prize until they can esteem him as worthy. We must proclaim his worth to the nations.

Where Do We Go?

2 Peter 2:9 mentions a "race," a "nation," and a "people" as God's own possession. This is

none other than the every language, every tribe every tongue nation purchased by Jesus blood in Revelation 5:9. There will be men and women from every nation worshipping the Lamb slain (Rev. 7:9). Furthermore, in Matthew 28:19 Jesus sends us to "go and make disciples of all the nations" (meaning people groups – τὰ ἔθνη – ethnic groups). The gospel of God's kingdom "will be preached to all the nations and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). These verses make the Great Commission able to be defined, measured and completed.

Defining Missions:

Paul gives us the best definition of missions in Romans 15:20 when he said, "I aspire to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation." There are those who establish the foundation and those who build on it. We will delineate the two kinds of missions as "foundational missions" and "structural missions."

Foundational Missions

Missionaries are needed to go to areas of the world where people groups exist that have no gospel and no indigenous evangelizing church established. Since we are specifically told that the Great Commission will only be fulfilled when some from every people are won to Christ, therefore a special focus on penetrating unreached people groups is warranted. Paul is

a clear example of a missionary who went out to build the foundation so that others could come behind and build the superstructure.

Structural Missions

We must wholeheartedly continue to multiply churches within people groups where an indigenous evangelizing church has already been planted and where the gospel exists for further use. The church is continually in need of further work. Timothy is a clear example of a missionary who served in an already established church, though he was away from his home.

Support Missions

We will further delineate between structural missions (those who are actively involved in church ministries) from support missions. Support missions is that group of people who come alongside the missionaries in the field. They may act as teachers for missionary children, office administrators for missions organizations abroad, etc.

Given this emphasis, LBC, will work toward directing most of its support toward foundational missions. We will not abandon structural missions or support teams, but we will demonstrate with our resources that the Great Commission is our primary objective.

"Sanctity of Life" Sunday

Fifteen Pro-Life Truths to Speak - By John Piper¹

"You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." - Jesus Christ



1. Existing fetal homicide laws make a man guilty of manslaughter if he kills the baby in a mother's womb (except in the case of abortion).
2. Fetal surgery is performed on babies in the womb to save them while another child the same age is being legally destroyed.
3. Babies can sometimes survive on their own at 23 or 24 weeks, but abortion is legal beyond this limit.
4. Living on its own is not the criterion of human personhood, as we know from the use of respirators and dialysis.
5. Size is irrelevant to human personhood, as we know from the difference between a one-week-old and a six-year-old.
6. Developed reasoning powers are not the criterion of personhood, as we know from the capacities of three-month-old babies.
7. Infants in the womb are human beings scientifically by virtue of their genetic make up.
8. Ultrasound has given a stunning window on the womb that shows the unborn at eight weeks sucking his thumb, recoiling from pricking, responding to sound. All the organs are present, the brain is functioning, the heart is pumping, the liver is making blood cells, the kidneys are cleaning fluids, and there is a fingerprint. Virtually all abortions happen later than this date.
9. Justice dictates that when two legitimate rights conflict, the limitation of rights that does the least harm is the most just. Bearing a child for adoption does less harm than killing him.
10. Justice dictates that when either of two people must be inconvenienced or hurt to alleviate their united predicament, the one who bore the greater responsibility for the predicament should bear more of the inconvenience or hurt to alleviate it.
11. Justice dictates that a person may not coerce harm on another person by threatening voluntary harm on themselves.
12. The outcast and the disadvantaged and exploited are to be cared for in a special way, especially those with no voice of their own.
13. What is happening in the womb is the unique person-nurturing work of God, who alone has the right to give and take life.
14. There are countless clinics that offer life and hope to both mother and child (and father and parents), with care of every kind lovingly provided by people who will meet every need they can.
15. Jesus Christ can forgive all sins, and will give all who trusts him the help they need to do everything that life requires.

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