

Living out Your Part in God's Story Romans 15:14-33

How is God working out His Story through you? Romans 15:15-16

"...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 15:15-16)

- **Sometimes it's disruptive**

"...because of the grace that was given me from God..." (Romans 15:15)

"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come." (2 Timothy 4:6)

- **Sometimes it's humbling**

"For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me" (Romans 15:18)

- **Sometimes it's beautiful**

"...in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." (Romans 15:19)

How is God revealing His call in your life? Romans 15:20-21

"...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;" (v.20)

- **For Paul:** Pioneering new frontiers
- **For Matt:** Strengthening marriages and families
- **For You:** _____

How is God inviting you to join others? Romans 15:22-33

"For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you" (Romans 15:22-23)

- **SHARE IN the vision God has revealed to others (v. 22-24)**

*"I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: **Tarshish**, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations." (Isaiah 66:19)*

- **GIVE TO the vision God has revealed to others (v.24-29)**

*"...whenever I go to Spain - for I hope to see you in passing, **and to be helped on my way there by you**, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while - but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints..." (Romans 15:24-25)*

- **PRAY FOR the vision God has revealed to others (v.30-33)**

"...Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me..." (Romans 15:30)

The "God of peace" is working out His Story.

"Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." (Romans 15:33)

Digging Deeper: Financially

Let's get this out of the way. Most of the time we are OK with "digging deeper" as long as it involved some soul searching, but not when it comes to digging deeper in our pockets, our finances. In Romans 15:26-27, Paul says, "For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased to do so..." This isn't the only time this comes up for Paul. He says it again in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

LifeGroup Discussion:

Together, ask some pointed questions in this area.

What is the condition of your heart when you give? Is it "pleased to make a contribution"?

How did Paul see the generous gifts of the Gentile churches to the poor Jewish people in Jerusalem as potentially something that could bring them together? What was his fear?

How can some of our financial gifts and generosity today bring unity?

Is there room to increase what you are giving to serve the needs of your church and mission?

Digging Deeper: Prayerfully

In the last part of verse 19, Paul indicates his conviction that his task was nearly finished. "From Jerusalem ... to Illyricum" Paul said he had "fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ." This is an incredible statement. We might wish that we could say this of our block or our neighborhood. Paul said it concerning a large portion of his world.

Assured that he had fulfilled his mission as an apostle from Jerusalem to Illyricum, Paul's eyes now look to the horizon of his world. His desire was to preach the gospel where it had not been heard before. He did not wish to build on the foundation of another. He found the words of Isaiah 52:15 descriptive of his calling, and thus he quotes them in verse 21: "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND."

LifeGroup Discussion:

You don't have to be a pioneer to new frontiers like Paul to be faithful to what the Lord is calling you to as you live out your part in His Story. Where do you sense God is pointing you?

What's your mission? Are you being faithful to living that out or are there excuses that have come between your living out God's plans for you? Are there any pockets of people in your life "who have no news" of Jesus?

Next Steps:

- Missionary Postcards:** As a church family we support Calvary missionaries, financially and in prayer, who are reaching out and sharing the good news of Jesus. Many are serving around the world with "those who never been told... and those who have never heard" (Romans 15:21). Today, we are going to take time in the service to express our gratitude by sending postcards, letting our missionaries know they are being prayed for and encouraging them as they continue to strive for the gospel.
- Serve Weekend:** We are called to share the love and grace of Jesus, in what we do and in what we say, so that others will know the good news! Join us as we reach Orange County for Jesus Christ through our Serve Day this Saturday, 8.09.14, and our "Fill the Bus" backpack drive on Sunday, 8.10.14. Learn more and sign up at the table in the Lobby or at calvarylife.org/local
- Beach Baptisms & Church Bonfire:** Come be baptized and share your story of how the good news of Jesus has changed your life at the Beach Baptisms on 8.24.14 at 5:00 pm at Little Corona del Mar. If you would like to be baptized, come to the required one-hour class about baptism on August 17 or 24 at 8:45 am or 10:45 am in the Prayer Room. And, everyone is invited to come celebrate with those being baptized! After the baptisms, wrap up the summer at the Church Bonfire at 5:45 pm with hot dogs, s'mores, and fun! Learn more about the baptism class, Beach Baptisms, or the Church Bonfire at calvarylife.org/baptism