

Paul Persists in His Obligation

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[0 : 00] Let us go please to Romans chapter 15 and look if you will at verse 14.

You will recall that it is our custom upon the completion of a major portion of this epistle to go back over the several verses to which we have devoted some, I don't know, probably 16, 18 hours and consolidate the entirety of the text into just one setting.

That of course means we will be moving much more rapidly, not covering the material in nearly so much detail as is normally the case. This major section will encompass Romans chapter 15 and verses 14 through the end of the book.

Then for our final wrap up, in our next session together, we are going to take the entirety of Romans, all 16 chapters in one fell swoop and that will conclude the book of Romans.

That will be our grand finale as it were and that will be next week. It becomes apparent that as Paul reaches the middle of what we know as Romans 15, the Holy Spirit begins drawing the epistle to a close.

[1 : 13] Paul is going to conclude by admonishing the Romans to admonish one another. Look, if you will, at verse 14, a frequently neglected verse.

And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.

This business of admonishing one another is pretty much not simply a lost art. It is an art that has never really been developed. One of the most difficult things that a friend is ever called upon to do is to go to another friend and tell him about something that is a problem in his life.

That is, admonish him about something that is happening in his life. We run into all kinds of reasons why we can't do that and why we shouldn't do that. While I know them too well, they would never listen to me.

While I don't know them well enough, they would never listen to me. While my own situation is not perfect and who am I to go and tell anybody else that they're out of line because after all, I'm not perfect either.

[2 : 26] How can I do that and on and on and on? It is a painful thing to consider. Yet, it is something that is very, very needful when the occasion arises. Paul says that these people at Rome are qualified to do so because first of all, they are full of goodness.

That means they have the right motivation. He isn't talking about reading people out. He isn't about, he isn't talking about going to people and telling them off or giving them a piece of your mind.

That is never Paul's intent. It is always remedial. It is with the intent of restoring. It is approaching people with caring, compassion, loving consideration, not a judgmental spirit.

And it isn't just criticizing somebody. You do not have to care very much about somebody to criticize them. You can just sit back and take pot shots at somebody and caring doesn't really enter into it at all.

So, Paul is not talking about developing a critical spirit. God knows if anyone is opposed to a critical spirit. It is this man. That this is the loving, caring kind of compassion that cares enough to confront.

[3 : 35] God knows if you are. This is the idea of the writer of Proverbs when he said, faithful are the wounds of a friend. A friend, a true friend, is someone who will level with you.

A false friend is somebody who will lie to you by telling you the things that they know you want to hear, but they don't believe it and you don't either. They just say it anyway. That isn't a friend. That's a phony. That's a phony. A friend is somebody who will level with you when it's hard to do.

So, you are properly motivated. Paul says you are full of goodness and then he says you are filled with all knowledge. Now, that doesn't mean that they know everything. Of course not. Paul didn't know everything and was eager to admit his ignorance about a lot of things.

But what he is saying is this. You know all you need to know in order to confront them. You know all you need to know in order to go to them and lovingly seek to restore them to a place of fellowship and blessing.

Now, it is apparent that he is talking about people whose lifestyle, whose attitude, or whose actions are patently obvious and they are opposed to the best interest of Jesus Christ.

[4 : 44] You don't go to people and approach them because their taste differs from yours or because you do not see eye to eye on questionable issues. Paul has already dealt with questionable issues and he has said we are supposed to be tolerant one towards another and allow people the freedom of their own mind in areas that are doubtful.

So, he isn't talking about doubtful things here. It is presupposed that he is talking about an offense. And the word in the Greek that is used here, the confrontation, *nupetim*, from which the word *newteto* or *newtetic* counseling comes, it means confrontational counseling.

It presupposes that there has been an injury or an offense committed. Something needs to be addressed. The easiest thing in the world to do is just ignore it.

Pray God it will go away or that it will just diminish and kind of evaporate. And that's the coward's way out. It takes courage to confront.

It takes courage and caring to go to somebody and say with your hand on their shoulder in a loving, non-judgmental, non-critical way.

[5 : 50] Friend, there's something that I really need to talk to you about. It has really been troubling me. I want you to know it isn't easy for me to do this.

You might not appreciate my doing it, but I want you to know before God, I'm not critical and I'm not condemning and I'm not being judgmental. I'm saying these things to you because I care.

I'm really concerned. And then in a loving way, offer the admonition that needs to be dealt with.

Now, this ought to be. This ought to be available in every local assembly of believers when and where the need arises. And I'm satisfied that if it is done, the need will not arise all that often.

One of the greatest safeguards against unbiblical conduct in the body of believers is that when that unbiblical conduct is carried on, that it is dealt with.

[6 : 56] That is one of the best safeguards in the world. It needs to be done. It is never easy. It's always painful. And it ought to be done with reluctance, not with eagerness.

It is significant that as Paul begins to close out this epistle, he wants to treat that issue. And he doesn't devote a lot of time to it, but he certainly does incorporate it here.

And because he did, that of course makes it important. Keep in mind, you needn't care very much to criticize. But you need to really care to lovingly confront. And that's what the apostle is discussing.

Then he moves on to the area of his bold speech. Notice this in verse 15. I have written very boldly to you on some point so as to remind you again. And I want to point out something here.

He didn't say so as to remind you, but he says so as to remind you again. Paul was a teacher of repetition. He knew the value of it.

[7 : 53] Here was a man who sat at the feet of Gamaliel, who was probably the greatest rabbi of his day. Paul learned a lot of things from that learned man. And one of the ways that he learned was by constant repetition.

Jesus used this when he trained his disciples. He would say the same thing in six different ways. Eventually, it would begin to sink in. Paul says, I want to remind you again.

Because here's why I'm doing it. Because of the grace that was given to me from God. I don't have any alternative. I've got to relay these things onto you people because I am a man who is under a commission.

I have been given an enormous responsibility from God and I'm not about to take it lightly. And that's why I have to use the bold talk that I'm using. No namby-pamby spinelessness about this man.

And there oughtn't to be anything like that when you are persuaded that the position wherein you stand is one that is based on truth. That will afford you great boldness.

[8 : 58] Nothing. Nothing gives confidence to someone more than knowing what they're talking about.

And knowing that they know what they're talking about. Paul had great confidence in his gospel, in his message, because he knew it was a valid message. It was an essential message.

It was a God-given message and he could pull out all of the stops. And when he made these statements, he made them with great boldness and great assertiveness. And he says, I do so because of the grace of God that is given to me.

God has charged me with a responsibility. And I'm not going to fumble the ball. Therefore, it is necessary that I use great plainness of speech. I don't want any of you people to misunderstand. That's what Paul said. And this ministry involves being a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. [9 : 55] Verse 16, ministering as a priest. Not that Paul was in any wise a Levite or functioning in that capacity, but this is a spiritual priest.

And that ought to be obvious from what he says about the offering of the Gentiles. This is a spiritual offering of the Gentiles. Just as the priest in the Old Testament, with which Paul, of course, was very familiar, and many of all of the Jews in the Roman assembly who were on the receiving end of this epistle, they were familiar, that the priest would go in and offer these animal sacrifices up to God.

By the way, the way these things were offered to God was that they were offered in honor of God, but they were presented for the benefit of the people, of the priests and of the Levites.

And they brought their offerings to God. God didn't eat them. It was the Levites who ate them and the Levites' family. And Paul is saying, just as these Levites and those serving in the priestly capacity offered these animals as sacrifice to God, I am spiritually offering Gentiles, the whole non-Jewish community, up to God.

And God accepts them. And the basis on which he accepts them is also indicated. That my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

[11 : 16] That means there is no way, apart from the Holy Spirit, that the Gentiles can ever be acceptable to God. For that matter, there's no way that anybody can be acceptable to God, apart from the Holy Spirit.

And that simply means that when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit baptizes us spiritually into the body of Christ, separating us from the world, calling us unto himself. And that is that which makes us acceptable. We are accepted in the Beloved. You come just as you are. But God is not satisfied with you just as you are.

That's why he converts you. That's why he regenerates you. That's why he makes you and puts you in a position so that you have all of the potential to become conformed to the image of his Son.

That is the ministry that Paul was given on behalf of the Gentiles. And then he devotes verses 17 through 19 as his reason for boasting.

[12 : 17] Paul was not a braggart. He wasn't a windbag. But he had good reason for boasting because it all centered in the person of Christ. And Paul is saying, I know that I am what I am by the grace of God.

So the credit and the honor is God's. And I'm a happy recipient of it. And my boasting is in Christ. Notice what he says in verse 17. Therefore, in Christ Jesus, in Christ Jesus, I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.

That would not have been true before the Damascus road. It was. You know where Paul found his boasting before the Damascus road? He was opposed to Jesus Christ. He thought that the persecution of believers was a plus factor in his list of credentials.

And when he enumerated all of the things that he supposedly had going for them in his epistle to the Philippians, he says, concerning the church, I was a persecutor of it. That's where my zeal was. And I thought that was something that really made me look good. Truth of the matter is, it's the one thing I'd really like to forget. His boast before Christ was in the fact that he persecuted Christians.

[13 : 33] His boast now is in the person of Christ and I said that only God is equal to bring about that kind of reversal. For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.

I love the wording there. Same way in the Greek. Paul doesn't say, he doesn't say, I will not presume to speak of anything except what I have accomplished through Christ.

That's the reverse. It doesn't work that way. It's what Christ has accomplished through me. That makes Christ paramount and Paul secondary. That means that Christ is the mediator.

He is the one that makes it happen. Paul is simply a channel. That's all. That's brought out in Galatians 2.20. I'm crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I. But Christ liveth in me. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

[14 : 35] Paul is properly putting himself in the place. Channel. That's all. Just one through whom the power and grace of Christ flows. And that means that all of the energizing is Christ.

It isn't Paul. The genius behind Paul's preaching and Paul's message isn't Paul. It's Christ. And I want to tell you, I've got plenty to boast about.

But my boasting is all centered in Christ. Myself? Where is my boasting? I'll tell you what my boast is. I'm the chief of sinners. Not much to brag about, is it?

I who am less than the least of all the apostles, to me is this grace given. That I should preach among Christ the unsearchable. Among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Paul had nothing wherein he could boast. As it is written, let him but glory in the Lord. Notice what his ministry is geared to do.

[15 : 38] It exalts Christ. And verse 18, it results in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed. That's the bottom line.

That's what it's all about. It is a remarkable thing to consider that God uses obedient men to bring men to obedience. That's what this is all about.

And when Paul was giving his testimony before King Agrippa, he says, Whereupon, O King, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. And he set about preaching the gospel that is designed to bring men and women to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

This is the obedience of faith. Let me point it out to you once again, if I may. You may turn there or you may just listen carefully. But it is one of the principal themes that Paul mentions as he opens this epistle.

In Romans chapter 1 and verse 5, speaking of Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship, to bring about for the end result, so that, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for his name's sake.

[16 : 57] This means all of the Gentiles, as well as all the Jews, all of the Gentiles are living in a state of disobedience. Every living, breathing human being who is not linked by faith to Jesus Christ is living in disobedience.

It doesn't make any difference. They can be a law-abiding citizen. They can pay their taxes. They can do everything that the government requires them to do. They can never have run a red light or a stop sign in their life.

As far as God is concerned, they are disobedient. If they are not in Jesus Christ, they are disobedient. And it is because men dwell in a state of disobedience, they are therefore unacceptable to God.

They are rebels, and they desperately need the kind of information that they can act upon that will bring them out from under that disobedience into a sphere of obedience and blessing.

That's what the gospel is designed to do. That's what it all is about. That's the good news. The good news is you are disobedient. The bad news is you are disobedient. You are a rebel.

[17 : 58] You are estranged. You are alienated from God. Hell is what you deserve, and hell is what you're going to have because that's what you choose. And that's bad news, every bit of it.

And the good news is it doesn't have to be that way because Jesus Christ died for sinners, and Jesus Christ, and your acceptance of him by faith as your personal savior will remove you from the sphere of disobedience and bring you into favor and blessing with God into a position.

How does that happen? Through the proclamation of the gospel. See, that's information. People need to know this. They need to be informed. That's what the primary ministry of an evangelist and of a pastor is.

It's to inform people. But it isn't to inform them with their ideas and their thinking. It's to inform them with what God has said so that once they get the information, they then have the option of doing something with it.

And I am presenting you with information that requires you to make some kind of a decision. Your decision may be, that's right, I believe that, I'm going to go with that. Your decision may be, I think that's a bunch of nonsense, I don't want anything to do with it.

[19 : 12] Your decision may be, shrug your shoulders and say, but your decision is yours. Yours. I cannot tell you how grateful to God I am that I have never been charged with the responsibility of converting people.

What a horrendous burden to carry. I can't do that. I've never been called to do that. It's not my job to convert anybody. I'm powerless to do that.

My job is to disseminate information, provide people with information that will allow them to act on their options. And once I deliver the information, I cannot coerce, I cannot beg, I cannot plead, I cannot threaten, I cannot do anything to bring people to Jesus Christ.

but I can proclaim the message and the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit is to take that message, which is the gospel, the power of God, apply it to the human heart, enable people to believe and come to him by faith.

That's fantastic. The responsibility for giving out the information is mine and once that is done, you must determine what you're going to do with it before God.

[20 : 25] the same way as Paul. He never converted anyone and he was not charged with that responsibility. He says, in power of signs and wonders, verse 19, in the power of the Spirit, there is the Spirit we were just talking about, so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum, which we have designated on the map as modern Albania, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Now, that doesn't mean that Paul had preached the gospel everywhere. We know that he touched all the main population centers, but what this means is Paul not fully preached the gospel, but he fulfilled the gospel.

How do you fulfill the gospel? Remember, the gospel is good news. How do you fulfill good news? Well, if it is good news, it's already happened.

It has to have a historical base in order to be news. It has to be something that's already occurred. It has to be something that has a base in reality to be news, and what it was that happened was good, was favorable for man, so that makes it good news.

How do you fulfill that? You fulfill it by telling others about it. A gospel that is never preached is an impotent gospel.

[21 : 57] It's worthless. It's just like something wonderful happening that would really benefit you, would really be to your advantage, if only you knew it.

But you died, never having known anything about it. Well, it may have been good news, but it wasn't good news to you. You never heard it. So it pleased God.

It pleased God by the foolishness of the thing preached to save men. God has taken a message, a communication, that is based upon a historical fact of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he has imparted that message to men who have believed it and appropriated it for themselves and have received the gospel and God's salvation and God's forgiveness and God's grace and then he has charged them with the responsibility of passing it on, giving it to someone else.

You fulfill the gospel when you proclaim it. Paul said, I have proclaimed the gospel. It is the proclamation that is the end of the gospel message. Now, it's just the beginning with certain people depending on what they do with it.

But all you can do with the gospel, friends, now understand this. This is critical. All you can do with the gospel is first of all, believe it, and then secondly, share it.

[23 : 16] Pass it on. That's all you can do with it. You can tell it and tell it and tell it and that's what we ought to do. It's ever old and never new, but it always deserves an audience.

It always gets a hearing. This is what led Paul to say, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for I'm reasonably not ashamed.

It is the power of God. This means the power of God is unleashed when the gospel is proclaimed. God has committed himself to using that message, that gospel, that good news, when it is proclaimed.

God has promised to bless his word. Paul is charged with giving it out. Solemn responsibility. He is great plainness of speech. Christ is the subject of my boasting.

He is the reason for my boasting. And all throughout these areas, I have delivered the gospel. I have fulfilled the gospel by proclaiming the gospel.

[24 : 26] And I have sought to do that where Christ was never named, where people had never heard of him. Because Paul was a pioneer type missionary. He wasn't interested in taking the gospel where it had already been.

Dr. Oswald Smith, a man who is with the Lord now, his son is of the same stripe, Paul Smith, have a little saying that I think Paul would heartily endorse.

This is People's Church in Toronto. I don't agree with some of their eschatology, but I sure agree with their fervent heart and concern for missions. And their little saying is this, why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once?

I think that's the way Paul must have felt. He was commissioned to preach the gospel where it had never been named because where it had never been named and the gospel goes, it gets an initial foothold.

And from those who have it, it can spread and go throughout the area. But if it's never been there, there's no nucleus, there's no basis for it starting. So Paul went to virgin territory wherever he had an opportunity.

[25 : 33] In fact, he said, that's the thing that has hindered me from coming to you in Rome. I would have come and visited you people a long time ago, but I just haven't run out of virgin territory.

Every time I get ready to leave for Rome, I hear about a new area over here where Christ has never been preached. And I say, how can I subject myself to my desires and go to Rome when I've got a responsibility to go to this virgin territory?

And Paul was the kind of man who was diligent. He always subjected his personal desires to his personal responsibility. That's a disciplined kind of man.

He could have gone off to Rome on a nice holiday, enjoyed it, could have stole among the pigeons there in the fountains and all the rest, seen the great amphitheater, taken his brownie camera with him and gotten a bunch of pictures and slides.

I mean, every missionary needs slides. But he didn't do that, did he? He said, I've got to go to this territory where the gospel has never been preached. And before I go to Rome, one other thing I've got to do, I've got money that I've got to take to the poor saints of Jerusalem.

[26 : 39] And we saw that that was not something that we considered to be in the best interest of Paul, but that's what he wanted to do. And he did that.

That was the undoing from a human standpoint of his ministry and the public being because God then closely confined him, put him in prison in Caesarea for two years and then later to Rome. But God used him even in that. So that he wrote to the Philippians and said, I would have you know, brethren, that the things which have happened to me have fallen out rather into the furtherance of the gospel. So God superintended in his sovereignty even in that respect.

So he is not able to come to Rome as he indicates and will not for some two to three years. Then in verses 26 through 29, Paul develops the principle regarding material pay for spiritual service. and he says that these Gentiles who are on the receiving end of the gospel have received this spiritual information and this information originated in Jerusalem with the apostles before Paul, with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the dissemination of that information.

[27 : 50] It all began in Jerusalem and now those people in Jerusalem are really hurting materially. And is there any reason why you in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, Europe, Gentiles, you people who have received so much spiritually from these Jews in Jerusalem, is there any reason why you shouldn't give money to minister to the physical needs of those who have ministered spiritually to you?

The apostle says it's the only right thing to do and he indicates that in verse 27. Yes, they were pleased to do so and they are indebted to them.

That is, those of Macedonia and Achaia are indebted to the Jews of Jerusalem for if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. And this, by the way, is the same basis for the remuneration of those who minister the word of God as in 1 Timothy, 1 Corinthians 9, 2 Corinthians 9 as well.

People who minister in the word are to be remunerated with material things for having done so. It was that basis in the Old Testament, the Levitical system that was set up, the priests, the tribe of Levi was never given a portion of land.

[29 : 21] When the children of Israel came into the land and it was all divided up so much to so much tribes and the larger tribes get a larger piece of land and when God came to the Levites he says, you guys don't get any land at all.

I am your inheritance. You have no land upon which sheep may graze. You have no land upon which you may till. Because all of the others are going to do the grazing and the tilling with their

animals and their crops and they're going to bring the first fruits of that in and give it to you and I want you to concentrate on the spiritual ministry and the needs of the people.

They'll take care of your material needs. That is carried right over into a New Testament kind of ministry. Then Paul closes out chapter 15 with a concern that he be delivered from those.

Notice who they are in verse 31. They are the disobedient in Judea. We've been talking about obedient and disobedient people and these disobedient people are disobedient because they have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God and they are Jews.

Gentiles are disobedient because they have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. That's what makes them disobedient. Paul is concerned that when he goes to Jerusalem these people are going to lay hold of them.

[30 : 36] He had good reason to be concerned. You read Acts 22 or 21 through 25 and you will discover that there was such a passion for this man. Some of the Jews bound themselves with an oath that they wouldn't eat nor drink until they saw Paul's blood flowing in the stream.

The only way he escaped is that a little boy came to a Roman captain late one night and told him that he had heard of a plot on Paul's life and the Roman officer wisely ordered additional troops and got Paul out of town hours ahead of schedule.

In a sense he was not delivered. In a sense this prayer was not answered. He was not delivered from those who were disobedient unless you call being delivered from the Jews and placed into the hands of the Romans so that he was in prison for two years plus.

Deliverance that's a qualified kind of deliverance it was deliverance from impending death that the Jews were certainly going to bring upon him right then and there and it brought him into custody as a Roman citizen so he was delivered in that sense but ultimately ultimately he was not delivered.

As chapter 16 opens there are several verses the first 16 in fact that are devoted to what I call profiles of profitable people. We are not going to enumerate all of them but I would like to single out a husband-wife team that apparently meant a great deal to Paul and that's Prisca and Aquila or Aquila and Priscilla.

[32 : 13] These were people who were tent makers by profession and when Paul came to Corinth he fell in with them because he was of the same trade. They became fast friends. Ultimately he shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with Aquila and Priscilla who also were Jews.

they came to faith in the Lord Jesus and became a stalwart couple in the propagation of the gospel. And it's these two people who are going to update Apollos the eloquent orator and reveal to him what he needed to know about the death burial and resurrection of Christ.

This is a key couple a husband and wife team that is simply outstanding. Every church needs Priscilla's and Aquila's. These are the kind of people that just warm the hearts of Paul.

In fact, Paul says they risked their own necks for my life. Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. That's the kind of friend Aquila and Priscilla were.

They risked their lives, hazarded their lives for Paul and he didn't forget them. You know, some of these people may not have done very much.

[33 : 24] It says some of them like Mary, for instance, in verse 6. We don't know what Mary this was but it says greet Mary who has worked hard for you. But I think it's really neat that this gal has her name recorded in scripture for all eternity.

She worked hard. We don't know what the work was. We aren't given any details. But think of the honor that has been hers by having her name recorded here and several others who are referred to throughout this epistle.

They've worked hard in the Lord. Greet one another in verse 16 with a holy kiss. This is a demonstration of affection, of warmth, of reception, of care, of concern, a whole host of positive things.

And it was in keeping with their culture. This was not an extraordinary thing in their time at all. However, it was limited to men greeting men and women greeting women with a holy kiss.

It would not have been unusual for men and women to be doing that each to within their own sex even in public when they would meet one another. They hadn't seen each other for a long time.

[34 : 40] You and I in our western culture we walk up and shake hands. And a lot of the ladies are kissers, you know, a lot of gals who haven't seen each other walk up and embrace each other and everything. Men don't do that because in our culture it has come to be looked upon as unmanly.

And that's too bad. That's too bad because there isn't anything unmanly about it. If you note in any of the news clips you'll see the Russians and the Arabs and people in that culture get together and they'll kiss on this cheek and kiss on that cheek.

And that's their standard greeting. Paul says that really isn't good enough. We need to greet one another with a holy kiss and what that means is that the basis for the greeting is rooted and grounded in righteousness and holiness.

It is rooted and grounded in Christ. And when you greet one another that way it is with the acknowledgement that it is the bond of Christ that really cements people together as friends. And that's what makes it not just a kiss of greeting but a holy kiss. There is something about physical touching and physical contact that the human person responds to and needs.

[35 : 51] All kinds of psychological testing has been done regarding babies. Those who are placed in a crib for hours and hours a day and just left alone ignored.

I mean they're given food they're given water and that's it. There is an enormous difference between the temperament and the attitude of those babies as opposed to babies that are held and cuddled and cradled and made over and caressed.

Why is that? It's because God made us for touching. We have tactile stimulation needs. And I think any husband knows that.

Matter of fact you don't have to look at husbands you can look at boyfriends and girlfriends. Why do you think they have at some schools no PC no personal contact and at some schools they have a 12 inch rule I can imagine somebody running down the hall with a 12 inch rule to see if boys and girls are closer than 12 inches together.

Why do they do that? Because they know that there is emotional dynamite in physical contact. It unleashes hormonal activity that is responsive.

[37 : 04] And husbands who can't keep their hands off their wives know how that thing works. And if you are a husband who can keep your hand off your wives then you've got a different kind of problem.

You oughtn't to keep your hands off of her. Your wife is made to be loved and tenderly caressed and made over and she responds to that. She's supposed to respond to that. And men who think they've got all this macho stuff and they don't need the touching and they don't need the caressing and they don't need the kissing they're kidding themselves.

Guys if that's been your attitude get with it. You're missing a lot. This is something that God has provided for us. In verse 17 and 18 there are people whom we are to avoid and they are the Judaizers the Galatian variety who are not slaves of Jesus Christ but they serve their own appetite. That means their own desires. They are slaves to themselves. I don't think this means these people are gluttons and they're always sitting at the banquet table. I think this may involve that but it involves a whole spate of things.

They are self-serving self-seeking people and they're out to promote their own interests solely and exclusively at the risk and expense of everybody else.

[38 : 24] And all these people do is cause divisions and hindrances among you. I want you to avoid them. And to me it is apparent that these people are not even believers. believers because if they were believers Paul would be saying you rebuke them.

You admonish them. You restore them as a brother. But they aren't brothers. They are unbelievers and they are there to sow seeds of dissension with religious Galatianism.

You avoid these people like the plague don't have anything to do with them. And if you want to know more about them read the first two chapters of Galatians and you'll find these people described. They dogged the heels of Paul wherever he went.

they sought to undo his work. And he says in verse 19 because of your response and your obedience to the gospel having been proclaimed throughout all the world you people have established a reputation for yourself you may be sure that they will hear about it and they will be there.

You can look for them. They'll be showing up. Then he admonishes them that I want you to be wise in what is good. That means very experienced and sophisticated in what is good.

[39 : 30] but I want you to really be dumb innocent concerning evil. It isn't that they couldn't and were not to recognize evil.

It isn't that they are to be some kind of naive pushovers. But I don't want you to know anything about evil experientially. There are things that you do not have to learn by doing. And evil is one of them. I want you to be able to identify it but not participate in it. And you implement that with these people who come into your midst and the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet.

And these people are instigators from Satan. as he closes out the epistle and the manuensis of Paul inserts a note in verse 22 as being the personal writer of the letter, that is the physical writer of the letter.

And that was not at all uncommon because a great many people dictated their letters as Paul did. and Tertius was a scribe whose occupation or livelihood was achieved through the writing of documents, the recording of wills and transactions and so on.

[40 : 45] Tertius no doubt is also a believer and the Spirit of God has communicated the content of this epistle to Paul. Paul has dictated it for the actual writing to this man, Tertius. And then there is a doxology that closes the epistle in verses 25 through 27 wherein Paul emphasizes the need for being spiritually established in Christ.

And you'll recall that at the very outset of this epistle he said, I long to visit with you that I may impart some spiritual gift to you to the end that you may be established. And this has to do with their edification procedure.

They are already believers. And once someone is a believer in Jesus Christ, what he needs is established, rooted, and grounded firmly, fixed upon that foundation so that he will not be shaken and moved away and tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine that comes along.

I want you people to really get your feet firmly planted in Christ so that you know who you are and where you are and what your position is in him.

It is true, you do not have to know very much in order to be a Christian. That's wonderful. That's great. If that weren't true, probably none of us would ever make it.

[42 : 03] But after you become a believer in Jesus Christ, there is a great deal that you need to know. Not to maintain your salvation, but to nurture it, and to expand it, and to grow with it, to become more adept at operating in the Christian life.

That's your establishing here. God is able to establish you, and Paul says he does this according to my gospel. We define what that means. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ as Paul defines it and interprets it, which is a tremendous, a tremendous illumination of material that happened, well, it's seeded in the Old Testament, it happened historically in the gospels, but it's interpreted by Paul. And the thing that makes Paul's ministry so critical and so important is that Paul gives us the most expansive and detailed interpretation of the person of Jesus Christ.

Now, that's significant. Christ does not give it of himself so much as Paul does. And where did Paul get it? Well, Paul got it from Christ. Christ revealed to Paul what he wanted you and me to know by way of these New Testament epistles.

And Paul reveals things about the Lord Jesus that Christ does not reveal about himself in the gospels, but he revealed it to Paul to give it to us. That makes it Paul's gospel.

[43 : 38] Even the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret for long ages past, it is recorded in type, symbol, shadow, prophecy, promise in the Old Testament, but it is never spelled out.

Paul spelled it out in great detail. As you read Romans 3, 4, and 5, you learn about justification by faith and forensic legal justice before God, and you learn about propitiation and sanctification and foreknowledge and predestination and election and all of these glorious things, and they're all centered in the person of Christ.

And who is it that dives in and retrieves those things and brings them up and dishes them out to us? It's Paul. It's Paul. And he did so because of the abundance of revelations that God gave to him. God didn't give them to anybody else. He gave them to Paul. That's what makes it Paul's gospel. And then we relate it, and we are established.

And I want you to note in conclusion with verse 26, what is the end result of it? According to the commandment of the eternal God has been made known to all the nations, and here's what it leads to, obedience of faith.

[44 : 56] That's it. It leads to the obedience of faith. This means that the end result of the gospel, so far as the human individual is concerned, is that they may be obedient to that gospel, and respond in a positive way to what God has offered through Jesus Christ.

Now the question is, have you been obedient in that fashion? It is not, are you disobedient in any area, that isn't the issue.

I'm sure at one time or another, we all are, including this preacher. But have you been obedient as regards the gospel? Have you believed the record that God hath given of his Son?

If you have, you have been brought into a sphere of obedience by responding. If you have not, you are dwelling in a sphere of disobedience.

And the purpose for our proclaiming this gospel is in order that you might move out from under that sphere into obedience.

[46 : 15] Would you pray with me, please? Father, for this occasion, this morning, we thank you for the inherent power of the gospel.

We thank you for each and every person who has placed themselves here and exposed themselves to it. We thank you. you so much.

for his grace, that even though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

We pray the Spirit of God will deal with the hearts and minds of any who may be here this morning, who are debating and questioning what they should do.

We pray that you will graciously call them unto yourself, reveal to them the person of your Son and the salvation that is available through him. as we remain in an attitude of prayer with our heads bowed.

[47 : 53] I would give you an opportunity this morning, dear friend, young or old, a newcomer to Grace Bible Church, or one who has been here for several weeks.

Paul's gospel and Paul's message is very simple. We are in a state of lost humanity of disobedience and in due time Jesus Christ died for the ungodly.

That includes all of us. All God wants you to do is acknowledge your state of disobedience. Please don't rationalize and say, I'm not too bad.

There are a lot of people worse than I. We're all displeasing to God. We're all in a state of disobedience. No one is asking you to make yourself out to be an especially bad person.

That isn't the issue. What we are asking you to do is be honest and admit that you're in the same position with all the rest of us. All have sinned and come short of God's standard.

[49 : 00] Would you agree to that? Would you admit that? Paul says that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

That he was buried, that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. And when you believe on Christ, you make a commitment to Jesus Christ.

You abandon yourself for him and you're trusting him and him alone for your salvation. A good way you can ask yourself this question, my friend, is this, am I planning on going to heaven?

If I am, what is it that I'm counting on to get me there? Now, if your answer to that question is anything other than the finished work of Jesus Christ, the answer is wrong.

Because that's the only thing that will do the job. It's what Christ did on your behalf. It's not how good you are or how good you try to be or how good you plan to be in the future. That has nothing to do with it. It is what Jesus Christ accomplished that provides us with salvation.

[50 : 06] And if you would this morning, as an act of your will, just surrender yourself to his lordship and say, Lord Jesus, you died for me. Here I am. I'm yours. I want you as my Lord and my Savior.

I have no one else and no other hope but you. As best as I know how, I trust you now as my Lord and Savior. Commit myself to Christ. Christ. Would you do that?

If you have, I appreciate you seeing me after the service is over. I've got some literature that I'd like to give you and I've got a tape that I'd like to give you. These are yours free. You take them with you. You keep them and use them.

They'll be helpful to you in your Christian life. Thank you, Father, for this occasion to be together, for this precious gospel and for the Lord Jesus and all that he is and all that he wants to become to us. Thank you for those who have believed on him, for the joy that is theirs because of knowing him. In his name we pray.

[51 : 09] Amen. All right, we'll ask Anlo if she will come now and bring us the selection of music that she has for us. This is her last Sunday at Grace.

She will be returning shortly to Norway. We're glad to have her with us this morning. Happy she can be here. Would you better stand over there?

Okay. I'll work it out. This is right here. Okay. Okay.

Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay.

My Lord, what a morning My Lord, what a morning Oh, my Lord, what a morning When the stars begin to fall When the stars begin to fall My Lord, what a morning My Lord, what a morning Oh, my Lord, what a morning When the stars begin to fall When the stars begin to fall

[53 : 29] Don't quit, Mama, my worldly ways Tind that heavenly bed Don't quit, Mama, my worldly ways Tind that heavenly bed Oh, my Lord, what a morning My Lord, what a morning Oh, my Lord, what a morning When the stars begin to fall I have one song here that is in Swedish

But it's taken from the Bible And I think you will know it It's from Easter Day When Mary was standing outside the grave And she was looking for Jesus And she couldn't find Him And as you know, first she saw two angels And she was asking them, where have you seen Him? And they were asking her why she was crying And also Jesus came And she wasn't aware that it was Jesus And Jesus asked her also, why are you crying?

And she's telling Him that, oh, they've taken away my Lord And I don't know where they put Him And then Jesus answered, don't cry, Mary Don't cry, because the one you're looking for He has risen He is alive and He's here And the last verse is He's repeating that Mary stood outside the grave Crying But Jesus is saying, Mary, Mary, don't cry He's never gonna leave you again Maria stood og greit utanför graven Maria stood og greit utanför graven Maria stood og greit utanför graven

Maria stood og greit utanför graven Og fast hon inte visste det Stod Jesus ved hennes sida Maria, varför gråter du?

[57 : 00] Jo, de har tagit bort, min Herre Og de har tagit bort, min Herre Og jeg vet inte vad de har lagt om honom Gråt inte Maria Gråt inte Maria Gråt inte Maria Den som du söker Han er en stund, den Jesus lever, og han er her.

Han er en stund, den Jesus lever, og han er her.

Han er en stund, den Jesus lever, og han er her.

Han er her. Han er her. Han er her. Han er her.

Han er her. Han er her.

[60 : 10] Han er her. Han er her. Han er her. Han er her.

Han er her. Han er her.

Han er her. Han er her. Han er her. Han er her. Han er her. Han er her.