

June 10, 2018 18045-A #3

Romans 1:8-17

On Walking with God

I. Mark 1:35-39. Jesus took time to pray and discern amid the incredible demands of his ministry. When he did, clarity came from the Father.

A. In this passage we get a peek into Paul's way of walking daily.

II. Romans 1:8-17. Why did Paul Write this? A Lesson in Ministry.

A. He's a True Pastor. Pastoral. 8-10

1. Gratitude for them and their witness. 8
 - a) Paul was grateful for their faith – that they trusted the Lord.
2. Interceding for them (mentioning and begging) 9-10
 - a) Interceding for them: Unceasingly mention.
 - b) Begging for a chance to visit them.
3. Longing for them. 11

B. With a Clear Mission. 11-15

1. The goal is “establishment” “strengthening” 11
 - a) Spiritual stability. Establishment rather than entertainment.
2. The means are mutual, both ways. 12
 - a) Beginning with apostolic instruction (preaching the gospel among you)
 - b) Continuing in sharing between Christians.
 - c) Christians learn from each other, correct and hone each other. 1 Cor. 12
3. The calling implies an obligation. 14-15.
 - a) one who owes another, a debtor
 - b) one held by some obligation, bound by some duty

C. Grounded in a Powerful Message. Gospel. 16-17

1. The power of the gospel is the power of the Spirit Himself.
2. Because the Word of God is the Spirit of God in communication.

D. Pastoral work is essentially being used by the Spirit to:

1. Nourish Jesus' sheep (Jn.21:15-17; 1 Pet.5:1-5)
 - a) Midwifing them, caring for them, etc.
2. That they may grow stable and strong in grace (2 Tim.2:1; 2 Pet.3:18).
 - a) Grace is not static. You can grow in it.
 - b) Bearing fruit, character, service, mission, etc.
3. By hearing the Lord's voice (Jn.10:27).
 - a) By the Spirit, through the Word (gospel/Bible)

E. *The mission is crucial, but it will flounder if the Christians are not growing in grace.*

III. Six Suggestions for walking with God in general.

A. Start with Prayer rather than Planning. 1:10 (Mk.1:35-39)

1. Paul was praying to go to Rome. Prayer is where it starts.
2. Jesus did. Matt.9:38; Mark 1:35-39.
3. Prayer is how God incorporates us in His mission.
4. It is more powerful and effective than planning and strategizing. Jas.4:13-16
 - a) Though planning is important. Paul planned...

B. Look Forward rather than Backward. Phil. 3:12-16.

1. The Lord is out in front of us, He is younger than we are and has plans for His Kingdom.
2. *Nostalgia is not a sin, but it is not helpful with today's challenges.*
3. *Regrets are inevitable but need not be paralyzing.*
 - a) *Regrets, touched by Grace = wisdom. 1 Tim.1:15-17*
4. *It is hard to press on if you feel that your life is behind you. But no Christian's life is ever behind them, ever. As a believer, our lives are always and will always be in front of us. We press into them because we will live for ever.*

- C. Let your Spiritual priorities clarify His Providence. See 15:20b-22 (Jas.4:13-16)
1. Prioritize the kingdom/gospel and other things will follow. **(Matt.6:34)**
 2. **Priorities:** Paul's priority of doing ground-breaking apostolic work among Gentiles meant that his visit to Rome needed to be postponed.
 3. **Providence.** God-given priorities are part of providential guidance.
 - a) Providence is as good a guide as a heavenly vision.
 - b) He was "hindered" but saw the Lord's will in it.
 4. *Providence without priorities is aimless, "fate". Like a horse without a rider, without a path or a direction.*
 5. *Priorities without providence will reduce to anxiety and discouragement (because it's totally up to you alone), or pride and arrogance (if things work out you will think it's because of you alone)*
- D. Set other people's Faith into your Life Purpose.
1. A sense of worth and meaning is never achieved by concentration on meaning itself or worth or self, *but by losing yourself in a broader reality, a bigger purpose.*
 2. All spiritual gifts are for helping others. Luke 22:32 – Strengthen your brothers ...
 3. Your strength will also grow and so will your sense of meaning.
- E. Value Persistence over Momentum. Heb.10:36 (endurance)
1. Often, I have been prevented ...yet now, perhaps I will get to come ...
 2. *Persistence is a better friend of ministry than momentum.*
- F. Trust Grace over Effort. 16-17
1. It's one thing to put in effort. Another thing to trust the effort itself. We put in effort, but we trust Grace.

IV. All because what He has done for Us is more important than what we do for Him.

- A. Trust who He is and what He has done—Gospel.