

## **Romans 1:11-15** **To Impart Some Spiritual Gift**

Beginning at verse 8, **First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ on behalf of you all, that your faith is being spoken of in the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit.**

As we saw last week service to Christ and relationship with Christ takes place in the spirit, in my spirit in the spirit realm. Even though my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, my physical body does not fellowship with Christ, my spirit does. All of my service to Christ takes place in my spirit.

Paul says, **Whom I serve in my spirit, in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always upon the occasion of my prayers.** He is talking about his prayer life here in verses 8-10. **Making petition.** The word *request* is literally the word *petition*. King James usually translates it *prayer* or *supplication*. *Prayer* is just prayer in general, *supplication* is *petition*. That happens to be this word here.

**10) While making petition, if how now at length I might have a prosperous journey in the will of God to come unto you.**

His passion in verse 11:

**11) For I long to see you, that I might impart to you some spiritual gift, that in the end (that is, *the goal*) you might be established;**

**12) that is, that I might be comforted together among you, in the mutual (that is) the faith among us, both of you and of me.**  
(Just taking that this morning. Let's take verse 13.)

**13) Now I do not intend for you to be ignorant, brethren, that often times I purposed to come to you, but was let hitherto.**  
*Let* means *forbidden* or *hindered*. *Hitherto* means *until now*.

**That I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.**

**14) I am a debtor both to Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to wise, and to unperceptive,**

**15) so, much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.**

There are three parts to the introduction to the book of Romans. (1) Verses 1 through 7, that we have completed, we saw Paul's capacity in the body of Christ that he is a servant, a slave. (2) That his calling, is he is a called apostle, an apostle based on calling. (3) And his consecration, that he was set apart even from his mother's womb for the preaching of the gospel.

We saw the promises given. The chosen instruments were through the prophets. The chosen communication was in the Holy Scriptures. And the chosen creed was the gospel about Jesus Christ. The Bible, the gospel, tells about Jesus Christ, and that is our message.

The pedigree of Christ in verses 3 and 4. His humanity: He was born through the seed of David. His deity: He was raised from the dead in power. God displaying His deity. And His identity: He finally identifies who the Son is and that is Jesus Christ our Lord.

The provision in verse 5. That we received grace and apostleship for obedience. Both our functions in the body of Christ and our obedience is because of God's grace that He has poured out upon us to give us that provision to do that.

Our position in verse 6. We are also called of Jesus Christ. Every genuine Christian is a Christian by calling. That is God has called us and we responded to the invitation. That is what the word **καλέω** (kaleō) means. Not just *to call out* but to call and to respond to the calling to accept it. He invited us. We came. We responded. We are the called. I am saved today based on His calling upon my life.

The people in verse 7, to those who are in Rome, whom he describes in two ways. Number one, they are beloved. That is that they are the objects of God's love. And number two, they are called saints. That is, they are saints by calling. And the word saint means to be set apart. It does not have anything to do with performance, it has to do with position. That when the Holy Spirit came into my life the Holy Spirit set me apart as a saint. Both same word: saint and holy. And the term Holy Spirit are the same words.

The preface at the end of verse 7. The preface, the normal greeting for both Greeks and Jews. The grace and peace be to you. That is *grace* for the Greeks and (*shalom*) peace to the Jews, showing that he is ministering to a mixed group of people who were there in Rome.

The second part of this introduction is verses 8 to 15 that we started last week. And the third part will be what we take next week verses 16 and 17, before we actually get into the presentation of The Doctrine of Condemnation, starting with chapter 1 verse 18.

But first of all, we saw Paul's Prayer. That he gives thanks through Jesus Christ for them because their faith is being spoken of in the whole world. Our testimony is our faith. It is not what we say, it is what we do. It is our trust in Christ. It is our surrender to His Spirit that is our testimony. Not what we use as a salesmanship with our mouth.

He says verse 9 that God is his witness whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of the Son. God is his witness that without ceasing he makes mention of you always upon the occasion of my prayers. Two things: without ceasing and always. It means upon every occasion of his prayer time he is giving thanks to God and he is giving thanks to God because of their faith that is being spoken of.

He also says in verse 10 that during his prayer time he is making petition how he might come to them and have a prosperous journey. But he also shares that his desire to come to them is found in the will of God. His life, his decision-making; he prays for God to lead but that everything be done in the will of God. To come to them according to God's will.

His passion, verse 11. Verses 11 and 12 he shares his passion. He says, **For I long to see you.** The word *long* is literally *to put one's desire upon someone*. It is the word for *passion*. I have a passion to see you. The purpose: **in order that I might impart to you some spiritual gift.** To *impart* means *to give* in the sense of reciprocal, back and forth. And he says, **Give to you some spiritual gift.** The word *spiritual* means that this gift that he is talking about is governed by the Spirit of God in the spirit realm. It is spiritual, it is not human.

Secondly the word *gift*, **χάρισμα** (charisma), where we get our word *charisma* from. Those of you in the Greek class, you will remember that all nouns that end in *em, ay* (-μα in the Greek) are nouns that represent action. **χάρις** (charis) is the word for *grace*; **χάρισμα** (charisma) is *grace in action*.

The word *gift* is translated *gift* only because all of the action of grace is not by us but it is from God, it is a gift to us and through us to other people. It is a gift. Unfortunately in English we think that when we come across the word *gift* that is something given to us and that is the way it is taught a lot in our country, in our culture. That God has given you a gift, a **χάρισμα** (charisma), one. And that you must take that, and you must develop it, and that is your function in the body of Christ. Well that is not what the Bible teaches. The only Greek word used for giving as a gift as we know it is the word used for the giving of the Holy Spirit to us. God has given us His Holy Spirit.

But the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit has the capacities and abilities to express God's grace. That is why I Corinthians chapter 12 is what we consider, a lot of people consider, the gifts of the Spirit are listed. Well that is what they are; they are the gifts of the Spirit. These are the capacities and the abilities that God's Spirit has. Every time He ministers, every time He expresses himself, it is an expression of God's grace. But the Bible does not say that a believer is limited to one gift. We have one gift: the Holy Spirit, but He has many capacities, He has many abilities; and every time He ministers to us and through us it is a gift from God. But it is not something that is given to us personally to take and develop and exercise ourselves. That is not true. But rather an expression of God's grace in the spirit.

Remember Paul had said earlier, **God whom I serve in my spirit.** So he says, **My passion is to come to you that while we are fellowshiping together I might impart some spiritual gift:** some expression of God's grace that will be spiritual, not fleshly. It will be spiritual not human. But as we serve God in our spirit and we come together and God's Spirit expresses himself and ministers from me to you and you to me, he says, "My passion is to come and to really have God share through me the expression of His grace to minister to your life." That is what he is saying.

And the purpose for this, the cause for this passion is: **that you might be established.** It is the word for *strengthen*.

We have been studying on Tuesday night on the Christians in Thessalonica and how Paul told them that their love and their faith is very strong but he was praying that they would increase. That is, they would become more established in the things of Christ. Not just be settled with the fact that they were strong in love and faith, but that they would become more

solid and stronger in the things of Christ. Paul is always looking for people to be established in the things of the Lord. That was the cause that motivated him to want to come and impart some spiritual gift. Not so the people could be blessed in general but specifically for growth, for establishment in the things of Christ.

And just in general, let me say this in summary, that is the message of the whole New Testament. If a believer is going to stand successful against the attacks of Satan they must become solid with respect to the faith. What that means is solid in our trust. Remember our position.

We shared with you the first hour that that we are not called to fight Satan, he has already been defeated. That is a trick of Satan to say, "Let's fight!" and Christians fight with him all day long. But in reality that is a distraction because he has already been defeated. We are told in James chapter 4 verse 7 to **Submit ourselves to God and resist the devil and he will flee from you. Resist him.** That is what growing strong in the faith does. It gives people the trust, "I'm going to trust the Lord and I'm going to resist Satan. I'm not going to give him the time of day and I'm going to trust the Lord, the Lord is going to take care of it. I'm not going to fight with him."

Like Michael the Archangel, that Jude said. Michael the Archangel said, "The Lord deal with you. I'm not going to take the time." Resist him.

Ephesians chapter 6, the armor of God. The people of God are encouraged to put on the armor of God so that they can stand and resist the devil. They are not offensive weapons, they are defensive, because we are already in Christ. We are already seated with Him at the right hand of the throne of God. Where are we going? What do we have to fight for? We are already there. The fight is to stand.

And that is also in Jude chapter 1 verse 3 when he says, to encourage us, **To contend for the faith.** It is a defensive effort. Do not let false teaching take you away from what you already have. You already have victory, what you need to do is trust the Lord for that victory. Is it true or is it not? Why in your mind, not spiritually, but why in your mind do you have to remove yourself from the position that Christ has put you on in the spirit and humanly and psychologically and emotionally fight the devil? You have already won the victory. "Well he is bugging me." You know, resist him. That is what he does, he bugs us, bzzzzzzz, you know? He likes to bother us all day long and that is the best he can do. Of course he does a good job of it.

But verse 12 he says, **That I might impart to you some spiritual gift for your establishment that is** - he now describes it in more detail - **that I might be comforted with you** (two ways) **among you and through the faith that is among one another.** That is how it is literally translated. The word *mutual* means *among one another*. The faith that is among one another. Every genuine Christian and believer who has the Spirit of God abiding in him fits in to this expression of faith.

Now remember what we have taught you over the years and some studies became quite lengthy. Remember on Tuesday night we had twenty-six studies, twenty-six weeks of just

studying the word faith, to the point where I forgot where it was found in the Bible. But faith in the Bible is different than what is taught in our culture. It is not religious faith. It is not even human. Though we produce a human faith that is not the faith that the Bible is talking about.

Galatians 5:22 says that faith produced by the Holy Spirit, that God gives faith. The word *faith* in Greek **πίστις** (pistis) comes from the Greek word **πείθω** (peithō) that means *persuasion*. And that is a word that describes the presence and the activity of God's Spirit in a person's life. When I surrender to and submit to the persuasion of God's Spirit to trust Christ. **Be still and know that I am God**, God's Spirit will say sometimes as He relates Scripture to us. As emotionally and psychologically we are panicking, "What are we going to do?"

Psalms 46:10 is one that God's Spirit uses often with me. **Be still and know that I am God**. You are mentally and emotionally running around back and forth. Stop. Stand still. Trust the Lord. Let Him go before you. Let Him take care of things.

So in the New Testament, the New Testament writers, especially the apostle Paul, he will say to the believers that I want to impart some spiritual gift, some expression of God's grace from His Spirit coming from my life I want God's Spirit through me to touch your life. That is, as we gather together for fellowship the faith that is among us will be shared so that people will become more established in the things of Christ. So he is recognizing that not only does he have the Spirit of God but so does a genuine Christian. And that he wants to receive too. I want to receive from God's Spirit expressing Himself, persuading through you to me as God's Spirit ministers His grace.

Because that is what he says at the end of verse 12. He says not only this mutual faith - that is this faith that is among one another, reciprocal, both of you and of me, all of us, he says. That when God's Spirit ministers he says, "I want to get ministered too." It will be spiritual and it will be ministered in my spirit. It will not be fleshly. It would not be for the flesh. That last little phrase *both of you and of me* is the explanation of what he means by *mutual* or *among one another*. When we all get together there is a reciprocal faith that is moving and ministering. And he says, "That is my passion."

Next in verse 13 his plan. **Brothers, I do not intend for you to be ignorant, that many times or often times, I purposed to come to you, but was hindered until now. I wanted to come to you that I might have some fruit amongst you also, even as among other Gentiles**. Remember he is the apostle to the Gentiles and he has been ministering to the Gentiles. And so basically he is going to tell us here in a minute, "I am indebted to come to you and minister to you. I have ministered to all the other Gentiles. I have not ministered to the political capital of the then known inhabitable world, the Gentiles in Rome." So he says, "I don't want you to be ignorant I want you to know about the history of my effort to come to you. But I was hindered until the present time."

In first Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 18 he says that he was hindered by Satan. In Acts chapter 16 verses 6 and 7 he says he was hindered by God. That is hindered by Satan in I Thessalonians 2:18 and hindered by God in Acts 16:6-7. But when he mentioned that Satan was

hindering him he did not mention it in the sense of he is defeating me, or that he has to do anything about it. He has accepted it. He has prayed about it. And Satan has been allowed to bring about circumstances to hinder him from going to Rome at that time. Satan also is a tool of God in the life of the believer. That tool happens to bring difficulty and hardship in our circumstances and against our flesh. But he is still a tool because he cannot do anything against a believer without God's permission.

But then God himself can stop as Paul explains. Actually Paul wrote this letter still having never met the Christians in Rome. He had never been there to see them, to minister to them, and his desire was to go. It is kind of interesting what God's plan was for him to go. He made it to Rome as a prisoner. Maybe for expense free trip or something at the hands of the Roman government. But he went as a prisoner. Not the way he expected to go. He wanted to just show up and minister to them. Satan hindered him. God hindered him. So he says, "Well, I was waiting to see how the Lord is going to do this." Well, he got arrested, shipped off to Rome. Free travel at the expense of the Roman government.

But he says, "I want you to know the history, I have been struggling. My passion has been to come and to see you, for God's Spirit to minister through me to you and from you to me. But I have been hindered." Because remember he said, "I prayed for a prosperous journey in the will of God." So whenever God's timing is to come and see you. The purpose: **in order that I might have some fruit among you also according as also amongst the rest of the Gentiles.**

Again notice these words. These words are very important if you are connecting the message here. He serves God in his spirit, in verse 9. He is praying that his journey would be in the will of God, according to God's will, so that when he gets there he might impart some spiritual gift. Not human, not fleshly. In verse 12 he explains this, **that we will be comforted together by the mutual faith.** The reciprocal faith that is flowing from me to you and you to me. Still spiritual. And then even my trip to you I am in surrender to the Lord's will. Satan has hindered me and God himself has hindered me. But when I come there my whole motive is to bear fruit. That is another spiritual term, not a human term. Fruit is produced by God's Spirit. Works, human effort, is produced by man. So he is still emphasizing the spiritual side of things.

Jesus said, **By their fruit you shall know them.** Not human works or religious works. When God's Spirit lives inside of a believer there is a cultivating process of watering, weeding. As the relationship with Christ grows and it comes to the point of bearing fruit just like a fruit tree. If you go down and buy a brand-new fruit tree it does not bear fruit right away after you plant it. You have to water it and take care of it. Some trees can take up to three years or four years before they start bearing fruit naturally. But just because you buy the tree and plant it and you go, "Well this tree must be a bad tree because it is not bearing fruit." No there is time, it has to mature to the point that is bearing fruit. Same with a believer. Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruit." We are not supposed to judge one another. We are supposed to, though, be fruit inspectors looking for the Spirit of God. What Spirit is ministering to me? **Test the spirits,** Peter says, **whether they are of God or not.** But what Paul wanted to accomplish amongst them was fruit. Fruit amongst them. Spiritual growth. Spiritual expression that their life would be bearing fruit and not fleshly endeavors. And he says, "Just like the rest of the Gentiles," he says, "I am indebted to come to you."

Verse 14 the Prompting of Paul. **I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians.** Interesting first group there: *the Greeks and the Barbarians*. The word *barbarian* is a Greek term. **βάρβαρος** (barbaros), you can hear *barbarian* in there. But to the Greeks if you did not know Greek to them you were just saying, "bar, bar," absolutely nothing. "Bar, bar, bar, bar, bar, bar, bar, bar," you know. Yeah, like "blah, blah" but to them it is "bar, bar." And so if you were not a Greek speaking person you were a barbarian to them. That is how much they felt about their language and their culture.

He says, **Both to the wise and to the unperceptive.** Notice how that last translation comes in. The word *wise* is the word **σοφός** (sophos), the normal word for wisdom in the Bible. He is talking about the intellects of the world. But he also mentions about these intellects that they have no perception. This is from the word **νοέω** (noeō) as the perceptive processes of the mind. There are many Greek words that describe the various functions of the brain. This one is the perceptive process. He says to the Greeks, and to the barbarians, and to the intellectuals of his day, and to the unperceptive. In other words just because you are intellectual does not mean that you have spiritual perception. So he says, "I am a debtor. I am indebted. God has called me. I owe it to you to come and minister to you in Rome as well."

And lastly verse 15 his preparedness. **So that as much as is in me** (that is, according to me, right now, my abilities) **I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also.** I am prepared to come right now according to me, right now, who I am right now, I am prepared also to preach the gospel also to you in Rome. He is not talking about salvation message. He is talking about sharing the gospel, which he claimed in verse 9, the gospel of His Son. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ, both for salvation and for growth. The gospel is all about Jesus. It is all about Him for salvation, growth, maturity, relationship. The word of God is both for preaching and for teaching. Preaching for the unsaved, teaching for the believers.

II Peter chapter 3 verse 18 says, **We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** As God's grace, the expression of His Spirit comes and ministers to us, He ministers to us about the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Knowing Him. He takes His word and makes it alive. Some people read the Bible and get nothing out of it, it is just a textbook to them. It is a religious book for the Christians. And yet there are others that can open up this book, it comes alive by the Spirit of God as Christ is manifested to us, as our lives become changed. That is the whole purpose for studying the word of God: the transformation of the mind; that we have our minds renewed and we become new people.

Next week we will take the final part of the introduction verses 16 and 17. Let me just read it to you. **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; both to Jew first, and also to Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it has been written, "The just (or the righteous man) shall live by faith," or more literally, "shall live from out of faith as a source."**

That is the heart of the gospel right there. Verses 16 and 17 open up the rest of the book to us. It is the premise for everything that he is going to share. And remember the book of Romans is laid out and designed much like a legal brief. And the first 11 chapters give us and

present to us The Doctrine of the Christian Faith. And then from chapters 12 through 16 we have the transformation and exhortations about how a believer is to respond to those truths. So we are in for a treat as we continue to go through.

And as you can already see just by taking the introduction he is sharing established truth. What we just talked about today and put it all together, we serve Christ in the spirit not the flesh. You want correct Christian doctrine? That is it. That it is God's Spirit ministering His grace, His favor, His blessing upon us because we need it, not because we deserve it. And when His grace is ministered it is from faith to faith. When God's Spirit is ministering He is persuading us. Most of the time it is because we are so hard on ourselves and we think of ourselves as no good. We would be surprised if the Holy Spirit were able to speak in a human voice, He would probably say, "You are right but let's move on." You are right, you are no good. Now the truth of Christ is Christ saved you, now you are not worthless, you are worthy. It is Christ in you now. And while you are sitting around feeling sorry for yourself the very value of the universe, Jesus Christ Himself is inside of you ready to minister to you and manifest Himself through you if you can ever get over yourself.

The Lord uses imperfect vessels. He uses sinners who are saved by grace. Imperfect people. So that when anything is done by the spirit of God He gets the glory for it. He does it that way on purpose. Sometimes we get so focused on ourselves. It has nothing to do with our humanness. It is in our spirit and it is to minister to others to bear fruit. The first fruit is salvation. And then the growth, and the processes of bringing about fruit bearing in a person's life. It is not about human performance. It is all spiritual. And that sets the foundation for us as we get into the rest of the letter.

Let's close with prayer.