

## GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH

### **Part VII: God's Righteousness Exemplified In Paul's Personal Messages, Romans 15:14-16:27**

#### **A. The Basis For Paul's Boldness In His Exemplary Ministry (Romans 15:14-22)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. God's righteousness as seen in Paul's ministry is worth noting, for since he is the greatest missionary in Church History, his ministry offers an excellent example of the **kind** of *spiritual* ministry God wants **us** to have.
- B. God's righteousness was exemplified in Paul's great boldness in his ministry, and his explanation of that boldness in Romans 15:14-22 is worth noting for our insight and application (as follows):

##### **II. The Basis For Paul's Boldness In His Exemplary Ministry, Romans 15:14-22.**

- A. Paul knew he was under God's authority to minister authoritatively to Gentiles, Romans 15:15b-16: Paul realized that God in grace had called and spiritually gifted him as an apostle to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of God's gospel, that the Gentiles might believe and be made a spiritual offering to the Lord, acceptable and sanctified by the Holy Spirit's sanctifying ministry, Romans 15:15b-16.
- B. Paul also knew from experience that God had mightily worked in him to evangelize Gentiles, Rom. 15:17-19:
  1. Paul explained to his Christian Roman readers that he could glory through Jesus Christ in those things that pertain to God in his ministry, Romans 15:17. Specifically, he could speak of those things that Christ had worked in him to make the Gentiles obedient to the faith, whether it be by word or by deed, Rom. 15:18.
  2. To explain, Paul reported that by the Holy Spirit's power, he had wrought mighty signs and wonders so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ, an enormous feat for just one person to accomplish, Romans 15:19; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Romans 15:19.
  3. Paul had accordingly sought to evangelize unreached areas of the Gentile world in full confidence that God would make his ministry effective and fulfill God's calling to reach the Gentiles, Romans 15:20-21. Confident in God's power in his apostolic ministry, and armed with the Isaiah 52:15 concept that God wanted to reveal Himself to people who had not been told that they might see the truth and that they who had not heard of Him might hear and understand (Romans 15:21), Paul had sought to evangelize in realms where no one else had already evangelized, Romans 15:20.
- C. Accordingly, Paul ministered with unusual **boldness** to the Christian readers of his Epistle to the Romans:
  1. Paul did several things in this passage that were unusually **bold** even in his era of dramatic boldness:
    - a. He acknowledged that his readers were mature, fully capable of admonishing one another, v. 14. To such mature people, a writer would tend not to be highly instructional as that might seem too dictatorial.
    - b. Also, Paul had never met his readers, so it could seem insensitive for him to be instructional with them lest they defensively resist his authoritative approach that lacked his past rapport with them, Roman 15:23.
    - c. Nevertheless, writing to mature readers he had never met, Paul had written with great boldness on some points to remind them of the truth of those points, unconcerned over their possibly human negative reaction to his writing with such boldness, Romans 15:15a.
    - d. In addition, Paul explained that he had been delayed from coming to them because of the evangelizing ministry he had been given to reach unreached Gentiles as a priority over ministering to them, Romans 15:22. In other words, he clarified that they were second in priority to his reaching unreached people!
  2. However, the divine **authority** of his ministry had led Paul to be so bold and **unconcerned** about a possible negative response to his boldness from such readers in faith that **God** would make his words effective!

**Lesson:** Realizing he was under GOD'S authority to minister to Gentiles and recalling that GOD had equipped him by gifting and calling to evangelize a huge area of the Roman Empire by many demonstrations of supernatural power and noting he could thus be confident that GOD would make his work a success, Paul was BOLD in writing to believers he knew were mature whom he had also never met, confident GOD would make his effort effective.

**Application:** (1) May we realize that when GOD saves and gifts us for ministry, that ministry is SUPERNATURAL, that we can thus have great boldness, knowing GOD will make us successful in ministry. (2) Like Paul, we should be able to look over the past history of God's use of us and see evidence of His powerful work in us as the basis of serving the Lord in boldness now. (3) Like Paul, we should ALSO be able to discern from God's PAST precedents in our ministries what He plans to do with us NOW and in the FUTURE!