

Romans 15:14-33

Study 12

Gospel Ambitions

INTRODUCTION

As Paul draws near the end of his letter to the Romans, he re-states his goals and ambitions - he's keen to remind them what he's been on about, and to re-focus their thinking along the same lines. Perhaps Paul's ambitions are rather different to our own!

PAUL - MAN WITH A MISSION

1. What are *YOUR* big ambitions in life? Be honest!

Have you achieved them? Do you expect to achieve them?

How do you think they match up with the ambitions God wants you to have?

Read Romans 15:14-22.

2. What is Paul's big ambition? (v20)

3. Who does Paul especially want to reach?

4. Are there still places where the gospel of Christ is "not known" (v20)? What can we do about it?

5. Paul has preached the gospel "by the power of signs and miracles."

Do we know what these signs and miracles were? See Acts 2:42-43

Should we expect to be doing the same today?

Look at 2 Corinthians 12:12. Who were the signs and miracles meant to mark out?

BACKGROUND BRIEFING...

The APOSTLES were special! They were the ones commissioned by Jesus himself to establish the church with his authority. They demonstrated this by doing some of the same wonders Jesus did, and speaking with his same authority. Paul was abnormal among the apostles, because Jesus commissioned him later, on the road to Damascus. Paul considered it important that HIS APOSTOLIC MINISTRY was confirmed by the same sort of signs and wonders as that of the other apostles, like Peter and John. Church leaders today DO NOT have the same authority as the apostles!

Read 15:23-33.

6. What is Paul doing in verses 25 to 28, and why?

What do you think lies behind Paul's "collection"? What effect will it have on the relations between Jews and Gentiles?

7. Why does Paul ask the Romans to support him in prayer in verses 30 to 33?

* Who can YOU be praying for in this way if you want to *join in the struggle*?

CONCLUSION

8. We're not apostles like Paul, but because of his great work in spreading the gospel, we've been included in God's family! That means we should share Paul's GOSPEL AMBITIONS.

Do you need to re-focus your own ambitions to do this?

In what ways can we - as individuals, and as a church - be more effective in reaching those where "Christ is not known"?