

Debtors of the Gospel

(Rom 1:7-15)

Read introduction: Rom 1:1-15

- Dealing with things Paul says about himself

I. We have considered what Paul said about himself and his ministry:

- A) “In service”
- B) “In spirit”
- C) “In gospel”
- D) “In power”
- E) “In fellowship”

II. Rom 1:14-15- “In indebtedness”

- A) Debtor- originally and primarily “one who owes money,” but the term had come to be used to represent “obligation, to be bound by duty, or to be bound by necessity because of the nature of the thing offered”

1. “You have got to have this!”

2. A Christian must to some extent feel this

- i. What Paul is saying is true of every Christian to some extent
 - a) Not the call to be an apostle or evangelist, or even the call of being a preacher, but the desire to share the gospel
 - 1) But we are not to use this as an excuse for not sharing
 - 2) Neither are we to be driven by the devil to doubt because we are not matching the standard we see in Paul
 - (a) We have in Paul to the max extent the intensity we ought all to experience and possess to some extent

III. What Paul knows:

- A) Paul “knows” that he possesses something which can be given to others (v.11)

1. 1 Pet 3:15- “Be ready always to give an answer of the hope in you”

- i. You cannot be a Christian if you do not know why you are
- ii. Example- a friend is sick, they call you and tell you the doctor has told him his illness is not just common, but that he will not live through the night, what is your first thought?
 - a) Do you have something to give him?
 - b) He sends for you, because he doesn’t know what’s ahead and doesn’t know if he’s a Christian, can you be certain of what you have?
 - c) Do you believe it is for him also?
 - d) What will you tell him?
 - 1) He needs to get baptized and join the church?
 - 2) He needs to start living a good moral life?

- e) What could a person who calls themselves a Christian but is “hoping” or “seeking” to go to heaven tell this man?
 - 1) A Christian knows he knows and has something
 - 2) A Christian has experienced what he knows and has
 - (a) 2 Tim 1:12- “I know and am persuaded.....”
- B) Paul knows he can give this to “anybody”
 - 1. Rom 1:14- Greeks or barbarians
 - i. This includes the division of the whole world to a Greek
 - ii. Greek referred to a culture, not a nation, as the Roman world was considered “Greek”
 - a) It was western culture, philosophy, ways, etc., same as we use the word “west” today when referring to American culture, or “3rd world” when referring to barbarians (uncultured in American ways)
 - 2. Rom 1:14- Wise and unwise
 - i. This would then also divide either world into 2 parts, the educated, the intellectual, those with understanding of philosophy, etc., and those without
 - a) It’s the same manner in which we say today “learned” and “unlearned,” or the “educated and sophisticated” versus the “country or simple folk”
 - ii. Rom 3:23- Paul could say this because he saw man as all the same, sinners in need of a Savior
 - a) This would include the “moral and immoral” also
 - b) Paul basically felt, “set a soul before me and I am a debtor to that soul”
 - 1) 1 Tim 1:15- Paul “knew” what the Lord had done for him
- C) Paul is “able” to give the gospel to anybody
 - 1. Paul knows that God has and will enable him to communicate the gospel to any man not matter what class or level of learning, or even morality
 - i. 2 Cor 3:3-6- “Our sufficiency is of God”
 - ii. Look at the way in which Paul preach to the philosophers at Athens (Acts 17) and was just as effective among the barbarians of Malta (Acts 28)
 - a) We should never attempt to speak above a man’s head to make ourselves seem to be something
 - b) Whitefield did as good among the coal miners as he did while at Harvard or Yale
 - 1) Whitefield was just as useful in the fields and farms as he was at the Countess of Huntington’s meetings with royalty attending
 - (a) He preached the same gospel

- 2) 1 Cor 9:19-23- I am “made” (not “can become”) all things unto all men
- 3) “If a preacher can’t preach the gospel to everyone, I take leave to doubt whether he can preach it to anyone”- MLJ
- iii. We are also not to “pre-qualify” folks for the gospel
 - a) We do not need to know about them, the diagnosis is the exact same for every man
 - 1) Individual details will help in the form of the presentation, but will not change the message
 - (a) Modern teaching that a person must become familiar with the peoples experiences and experience them himself if he is to present the gospel effectively is completely false
 - (1) Must I commit murder to preach to a murderer?
 - (2) The power is in the gospel, not in man’s experience
 - b) A congregation can tell you a lot about a preacher (diversity)
 - 1) People are often led to believe the gospel is only for certain types because of this
 - (a) Beware of “Christian inbreeding”
 - 2) If we present the entire gospel in all its paths, the gospel has an approach to anyone, and as different personalities respond to different stimulus, the gospel covers all ranges
 - 3) Example of failing at small memorial service to get the full gospel across, and how the fault was mine
- D) Paul “must” give it to everyone
 - 1. Paul knew his commission demanded this
 - i. 1 Cor 9:16-17- “Woes is me if I preach not the gospel”
 - a) 2 Cor 5:11- Knowing the terror of the Lord
 - b) 1 Cor 3:10-15- Paul knew there is a judgment of our work
 - 2. Paul was conscience of man’s desperate need
 - i. Rom 1:16-18- Salvation or wrath
 - a) Do we realize that every person we meet is likely one breath away from eternal doom?
 - b) Or do we realize the strong delusion that is come and will come on the world?
 - 3. Paul knew what the gospel had done for him
 - i. 1 Cor 15:9-10- I am not worthy to be called an apostle
 - ii. Eph 3:8- I am the least of all saints
 - 4. Paul knew the things itself was so great, he could not keep quiet about it because of the greatness of the gospel itself
 - i. 1 Tim 1:11- The “glorious gospel”

5. 2 Cor 5:14- The love of God constrained and obligated Paul!