

A DISPENSATIONAL LESSON | ROMANS 15:8-12

Paul is giving a two-part outline in vv. 8-12. First, that of the **circumcision** (v. 8) and second that of the **gentiles** (vv. 9-12).

- Verse 8 –
 - This clarifies the ministry of Jesus: He was a **minister of the circumcision** (i.e.: the Jewish nation under the Law) and His ministry was **for the truth...to confirm the promises**. This, in essence, was the purpose of the *life* of Christ (not His death).
 - The **fathers** of the Jewish nation were given **promises** (such as a New Covenant) that were confirmed in and by Christ (such as at the Last Supper). This would give the Jewish nation ample opportunity to base their acceptance or rejection of the Messiah and His Kingdom on visible and verbal evidence.
 - Jesus repeatedly stated that His ministry was for **the circumcision** and not for the Gentiles (Matt 10:5-6, 15:24, etc.)
- Verse 9 –
 - It is vitally important that the reader recognize that this is the *second* thing that Paul is saying. Verse 8, **Now I say that...** and verse 9 **And [I also say] that...**
 - Paul speaks of a dispensational change in which now the **Gentiles** are under **his mercy** (whereas at one time they were **strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world** (Eph. 2:12)).
 - Paul quotes from Psalm 18:49, a Messianic Psalm which is prophetic of the time after the arrival of the Kingdom (compare Ps. 18:43).
 - Note: the Psalms are of three types: *revelation* [providing unknown information], *remnant* [speaking of the remnant during the coming Tribulation], and *reign* [rejoicing in the establishment of the Kingdom.] This is a Psalm of *reign*.
- Verse 10 - Paul quotes Deut. 32:43, another prophetic word about the future Kingdom.
- Verse 11 - A quote from Psalm 117:1, another Psalm of *reign*.
- Verse 12 - Paul quotes Isaiah 11:10, a prophetic word about the established Kingdom.
- Note on verses 9-12: that all four of Paul's quotes are rejoicing in the *established* Kingdom, which is why **Gentiles** today are able to **glorify God for his mercy** because God is doing something today that was *not prophesied*. All the prophesies were of post-Kingdom, not pre-Kingdom.

PAUL'S GOSPEL MINISTRY | ROMANS 15:13-19

- Verse 13 –
 - This verse speaks of the spiritual empowerment of those in the church (not Kingdom or Pentecostal) age. Those of the Kingdom age were endowed with (Lk 22:49), but those in the church age do not have the *wonder working power* of the Pentecostal era.
 - Note: The church age overlapped with the Pentecostal era. By the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, he was speaking of the passing away of the Pentecostal gifts, and said, **now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three**.
 - The spiritual empowerment of the church-age, as listed in these two verses, are:
 - **Joy and Peace in believing** -

- The word for **joy** is *χαρά* [chara], from the same root as *charis*, which is *grace*. Grace brings joy!
 - The word for **peace** is *εἰρήνη* [eirene] from which we get *irenic* and (via Latin) *serene*.
 - This is given **that you may abound in hope**. The one who has **joy and peace in believing** is able to **abound in hope**. Yet, sadly, many sermons have been preached and books written that cause a person *concern and doubt* of their faith. Why do we teach *simple, childlike faith* and then cause people to question its validity?
 - The **hope** comes **through the Holy Ghost**, who indwells us and testifies that we are His (Rom. 8:15).
- Verse 14 –
 - Where verse 13 speaks of spiritual empowerment, verse 14 speaks of the byproducts of maturity within the previous empowerment. Spiritually mature believers in the age of grace experience:
 - **Goodness** - from *αγαθος* [agathos] from which we get the name *Agatha* and the rarely used noun, *agathist* (a person who holds the philosophy that all things tend to the good).
 - **filled with knowledge** - for those living in the modern age, **knowledge** is the result of the study of the Word. In previous generations, one was not considered able to have full knowledge without a solid understanding of the Word, thus all education was theological in nature.
 - Being **able to admonish one another** takes both **goodness** and **knowledge**. The word **admonish** is *νουθετέω* [noutheteo], which is a compound of *nous* (mind/thinking) and *tithemi* (to put in order), thus, to **admonish** someone is to *help them get their thinking in order*. The term *nouthetic counseling* is built on this concept.
- Verses 15-16 –
 - Here Paul again speaks of his unique role as the Apostle to the Gentiles (literally, *to the nations*).
 - In this role, he writes **more boldly**, knowing his position requires boldness and gives him authority to be bold (compare 1 Cor. 9:18, where Paul speaks of his **power in the gospel**, using the word *authority*, and not speaking of a general power of all believers but of the authority he has as an apostle).
 - Paul was given grace, **That I should be the minister**, the translation should be understood *for my being a minister* (as in YLT). God's grace was given to Paul of God for being a **minister...to the Gentiles**. Paul's apostolic work is that an **acceptable** and **sanctified** offering might be offered to the Lord.
- Verse 17 - Paul, uniquely among believers, is able to **glory through Jesus Christ** (literally, *boast*) as the Apostle to the nations. Only Paul was given the grace of being the Apostle to the nations.
- Verses 18-19 - The evidence of Paul's boasting was secondary to the grace given, so that he **dare not speak of any of those things** which included **mighty signs and wonders** which put upon him the evidence of apostleship.

