

Romans

Always on His Mind [1:8-10]

- **In Thanksgiving [1:8]**

- To begin with, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for you all,
Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν
 - The word “First” is Πρῶτον (prōton) which means “first” or “to begin with”.
 - There is no second, third, etc., so Paul is using this word in the sense of “to being with” in that he has completed the greeting and is beginning the letter.
 - The word “thank” is from εὐχαριστέω (eucharisteō) which means “give thanks” or “express thanks”.
 - The following phrase “my God” is in the dative, so this word should be translated “give thanks to”.
 - Paul uses the phrase “my God” only six times in all of his letters in the N.T.
 - Four of the six times (including here) are in his opening thanks for the recipients of the letter [1 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 12:21; Phil 1:3; 4:19; Phlm 4].
 - Paul adds the phrase “through Jesus Christ” here in this verse.
 - The only other place he adds this phrase regarding thanksgiving is in Rom 7:25.
 - Paul then adds the phrase “for you all”.
 - This is Paul being inclusive – he is making it clear that he is thankful for all of the believers in Rome, not just a select group.
- because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.
ὅτι ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καταγγέλλεται ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ.
 - Paul then explains why he is thankful for the Roman believers – because of their faith.
 - It is clear from Rom 16:19 that Paul is talking about their ongoing faith here in this verse.
 - The phrase “is being proclaimed” is a participle of καταγγέλλω (katangellō).
 - This word means to announce something in public for all to hear and to be disseminated.
 - Paul states that their faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.
 - He means that Christian communities all over the place have heard about the believers in Rome.
- Principles of Romans 1:8
 - Paul began the main content of this letter by mentioning how he expressed thanks to God for the believers to whom he was writing.
 - He was thankful because, though he had not been to Rome, the gospel had reached the city and was believed and because the news of the faith of these believers had been spread far and wide.

- Paul specifically mentioned that he offered his thanks to God through Jesus Christ.
 - Some say that this was Paul once again asserting his authority as an apostle [see vv. 1 & 5].
 - Paul was actually teaching a lesson to the Roman believers that all access we have to God is through Jesus Christ our Lord [Heb 4:14-16; Eph 2:17-18].
- Paul wanted all of the believers in Rome – those who were born Jews and those who were born Gentiles – to know that he was thankful for them.
- Paul addressed issues with these two groups in this letter [Rom 3:29; 9:24], but he made it clear to his letter to the Galatians that, in Christ, we are all one and the same [Gal 3:28-29].
- **In Prayer [1:9-10]**
 - For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the* gospel of His Son, is my witness

μάρτυς γάρ μου ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, ᾧ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ,

 - The Greek of this verse begins with the phrase “For my witness is God”.
 - The NASB translators reordered this phrase to make it more familiar just as they did in Phil 1:8.
 - This caused them to split the phrase up because the following phrase is in reference to God.
 - As we saw in Philippians, it is very bold for Paul to call on God Himself to be his witness.
 - The word “serve” is λατρεύω (latreuō) which means “serve” as a part of worship.
 - With the dative this word indicates the manner in which service is rendered [2 Tim 1:3; Heb 12:28].
 - The phrase “in my spirit” is the dative of manner and is a reference to Paul’s human spirit.
 - In Phil 3:3 Paul taught that our service (worship) also involves the Holy Spirit.
 - Thus, the phrase “whom I serve in my spirit” tells us that our true worship of God is a spiritual function that can only be done when we are walking in the Light [1 John 1:5-10; Rom 12:1].
 - The phrase “in the *preaching of the* gospel” is actually just “in the gospel”, but the context makes it clear that this phrase is a reference to Paul’s gospel ministry [Acts 20:24; Phil 1:7, 16].
 - Paul had not been to Rome to preach to these believers, so he added the phrase “of His Son” to make sure they knew he was talking about the good news regarding Jesus Christ [Mark 1:1].
 - *as to* how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers pleading with God,

ὡς ἀδιαλείπτως μνησθῆναι ὑμῶν ποιοῦμαι πάντοτε ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν μου δεόμενος

 - The word “unceasingly” is ἀδιαλείπτως (adialeiptōs) which means “constantly”.

- Only Paul uses this word, the other 3 times in a letter to the Thessalonians [1 Th 1:2; 2:13; 5:17].
- Paul made it clear that he practiced what he preached as he reinforced the notion of “unceasingly” by adding “always” regarding his prayers for them.
- The word “mention” is from μνεΐα (mneia) which means “remembrance” or “memory”.
- This word means “mention” here in the sense of remembrance [Eph 1:6; Phil 1:3; 2 Tim 1:3].
- The phrase “making request” is from δέομαι (deomai) which means “ask for pleadingly”.
- This word carries the idea of begging [Acts 21:39; 26:3; 2 Cor 5:20; 8:4; Gal 4:12].
- if perhaps now, by the will of God, I will finally succeed in coming to you.
εἴ πως ἤδη ποτὲ εὐδοωθήσομαι ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.
 - We do not have a true “if...then” conditional clause in this sentence construction.
 - The word “perhaps” tells us that Paul views this as a 3rd class situation – maybe yes, maybe no.
 - By adding the phrase “now at last” Paul emphasizes that he has been waiting for a long time to be able to visit Rome.
 - The phrase “by the will of God” indicates that Paul would go to Rome only if God permits.
 - This shows Paul’s humility regarding God’s plan for his life [Acts 18:19-21; Rom 15:32].
 - The phrase “I may succeed” is from εὐδοῶ (euodoō) which means “prosper” or “succeed”.
 - This is a future indicative which, combined with ποτὲ (pote), means “I will finally succeed”.
- Principles of Romans 1:9-10
 - Our worship of God is accomplished through our service to Him.
 - This comes about as our human spirit functions in conjunction with the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - This is only possible for a born-again believer because our human spirit is made alive at the moment of salvation [Eph 2:4-5; Col 2:13-14].
 - Carnal believers cannot worship God through service because their minds are set on the things of the flesh [Rom 8:6-8].
 - As we walk by the Spirit He will bring people to mind that we should live in prayer.
 - In our prayers for these individuals we should boldly plead with God on their behalf.
 - As believers we should be forward thinking and make plans, but always with the mindset of yielding to God’s will [1 Cor 4:19; Jas 4:13-15].
 - If we devise plans that are not in line with God’s will, we should expect those plans to be thwarted as His plans will stand [Isa 8:10; Psalm 33:10-11].