

# Romans

## Desire to Visit Rome [1:11-15]

### • Longing for Encouragement [1:11-12]

- For I yearn to visit you so that I may share a certain spiritual gift with you,  
ἐπιποθῶ γὰρ ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς, ἵνα τι μεταδῶ χάρισμα ὑμῖν πνευματικὸν
  - The word “long” is from ἐπιποθέω (epipothēō) which means “have a strong desire for”.
  - This word communicates the yearning [2 Cor 9:14] that Paul had to visit Rome.
  - The word “see” is from εἶδον (eidon) which means “see” or “perceive”.
  - Here this word means “see” in the sense of seeing someone face-to-face [1 Thess 2:17; 3:10].
  - The word “impart” is from μεταδίδωμι (metadidōmi) which means “give”, “impart” or “share”.
  - Other N.T. uses suggest that “share” would be a better translation [Lk 3:11; Eph 4:28; 1 Thess 2:8].
  - The phrase “to you” is the dative plural ὑμῖν (humin).
  - This can mean “to you” or “with you” – “with you” makes more sense here with the verb “share”.
  - The word “some” is τι (ti) which means “some”, “any” or “a certain one”.
  - Here, Paul is referring to a certain spiritual gift that he wants to share.
  - The phrase “spiritual gift” is χάρισμα πνευματικὸν (charisma pneumatikon).
  - Interestingly, this is the only place in the N.T. where these two terms are combined.
  - Typically, spiritual gifts are simply referred to by the word χάρισμα (charisma) [Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim 4:14; 1 Pet 4:10].
  - Some suggest that this gift could be a blessing (a financial gift?), but this is specifically a spiritual gift.
  - Paul is referring to the spiritual gift of apostleship which he will use to establish the church in Rome.
- to the end that you may be established;  
εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς,
  - The word “that” is εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward”.
  - Here this word is describing a goal which Paul had in mind and should be translated “to the end that”.
  - The word “established” is from στηρίζω (stērizō) which means “confirm”, “establish” or “strengthen”.
  - Here Paul is speaking of his goal of helping to establish the church in Rome through his visit which will result in the strengthening of their faith.

- that is, that I may be encouraged together with you *while* among you, τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν συμπαρακληθῆναι ἐν ὑμῖν
  - The phrase “that is” is a lead-in to Paul describing what would come about as a result of the church in Rome being established.
  - The phrase “that I may be encouraged together with you” is from συμπαρακαλέω (sumparakaleō) which means “encourage together with”.
  - Paul expects the Roman believers to participate in the role of encouraging one another (and him).
  - The phrase “while among you” is ἐν ὑμῖν (en humin) which means “in you” or “among you”.
  - The translators added the word “while” because it fits given the “together with you” idea.
- through each other’s faith, both yours and mine διὰ τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως ὑμῶν τε καὶ ἐμοῦ.
  - The phrase “each of us by the other’s faith” is literally “through the in-one-another faith”.
  - This is a bit awkward to translate, but should be worded as “through each other’s faith”.
  - By adding “both yours and mine” Paul states that, even though he is an apostle, he does expect to be the only one who will have his faith on display when he comes to visit the church in Rome.
- Principles of Romans 1:11-12
  - The church in Rome had been formed apart from apostolic authority.
  - During the early church when there was no completed canon of Scripture, it was critical to be established under apostolic authority to ensure the validity of the doctrines being taught.
  - A good example of this was when a new church formed at Antioch [Acts 11:19-26].
  - Paul told the Roman believers that he was looking forward to sharing his gift of apostleship with them in order to establish their church.
  - Paul stated this knowing full well that it is God who establishes believers in their faith [Rom 16:25].
  - This strengthening of our faith will be evident in our works and our words [2 Thess 2:17].
  - Our strength of faith also provides protection from the schemes of the evil one [2 Thess 3:3].
  - In establishing the Roman church, Paul would likely appoint elders [Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:4-5].
  - As an established church, the Roman believers would be thoroughly engaged in edifying one another [Rom 14:19; 15:2; cf. 1 Thess 5:11].
  - There is a true fellowship of faith [Phlm 6] in a body of believers that are growing in Christ.
  - This fellowship is a source of encouragement for one another within the body [Col 2:1-3].

## • **Obstacles and Obligations [1:13-14]**

- I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have intended to come to you, οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι πολλάκις προεθέμην ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς,
  - The phrase “I do not want you to be unaware, brethren” is a phrase Paul often uses to express his desire to keep people well informed [Rom 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13].
  - The word “planned” is from προτίθημι (protithēmi) which means “have in mind beforehand”.
  - This word carries the idea of intent or purpose.
- (but have been hindered until now) καὶ ἐκωλύθην ἄχρι τοῦ δεῦρο,
  - The word “and” is καὶ (kai) which is the common conjunction which almost always means “and”.
  - However, it is obvious that what follows describes contrary circumstances, so this word should be translated “but” here.
  - The word “prevented” is from κωλύω (kōluō) which means “hinder”, “prevent” or “forbid”.
  - Here Paul is referring to the various circumstances which have hindered him from being able to come to Rome.
  - The phrase “so far” is literally “until now” which is a translation that better expresses how Paul believed that his opportunity to visit Rome was coming very soon.
- so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the people. ἵνα τινὰ καρπὸν σχῶ καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν καθὼς καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν.
  - After the parenthetical statement about being hindered from coming to Rome, Paul spelled out one of his reasons for coming.
  - The word “fruit” is καρπὸν (karpon) which simply means “fruit”, but as is common in the N.T. this is a reference to spiritual fruit [John 15:1-5; Gal 5:22-23], in particular the fruit of the gospel [Col 1:3-6].
  - As we saw in verse 5, the word “Gentiles” is ἔθνος (ethnos) which means “nation”, “people” or “Gentiles” and should be translated “people” here.
- I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. Ἐλλησίν τε καὶ βαρβάρους, σοφοῖς τε καὶ ἀνοήτοις ὀφειλέτης εἰμί,
  - The phrase “under obligation” is ὀφειλέτης (opheiletēs) which means “debtor”, but is used here to describe having a debt in the moral sense [Rom 8:12; Gal 5:3].
  - The phrase “to Greeks and to barbarians” is idiomatic.
  - The meaning of the idiom is to civilized and uncivilized people.
  - The phrase “to the wise and to the foolish” is literally “to the wise and the unintelligent”.
  - Paul is making it clear that he is under obligation to give the gospel to all sorts of people.

- Principles of Romans 1:13-14
  - Though Paul had long intended to go to Rome, he had been hindered from doing so for a long time.
  - Paul was willing to wait for God's timing to visit the church in Rome.
  - His desire was to bear spiritual fruit among the believers in Rome and maximum fruit bearing would occur under God's sovereign timing.
  - Paul knew that much fruit would be borne when he preached the gospel to the believers in Rome.
  - He had seen the power of God's word at work in all sorts of people during his many travels [2 Cor 2:14; 1 Thess 1:9-10; 2:13].
  - Paul was under obligation to preach the gospel to all people, even the "undesirables" [Col 3:11].
  - He knew that the gospel would have an impact on those who are educated and those who were not.
  - Paul knew that he himself had been a fool (although wise in his own eyes) who had been saved by the grace of God [Titus 3:3-7].
  - He did not know the people at the church in Rome, but they would hear the gospel [1 Cor 9:16].

- **Eager to Preach the Gospel [1:15]**

- So, as far as it depends on me, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. οὕτως τὸ κατ' ἐμὲ πρόθυμον καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι.
  - The word “So” is οὕτως (houtōs) which is a word which builds on what came before – Paul desiring to obtain spiritual fruit in Rome, his being under obligation to preach the gospel to all people, etc.
  - The phrase “for my part” is literally “according to me”.
  - Here Paul is using this expression to say, “so far as it depends on me”.
  - The word “eager” is from πρόθυμος (prothumos) which means “ready”, “willing” or “eager”.
  - It involves being eager to be of service, in particular to the Lord [Matt 26:41 || Mark 14:38].
  - The phrase “preach the gospel” is from εὐαγγελίζω (euangelizō) which means “bring good news” [1 Th 3:6], but is used mostly regarding the gospel of Christ [Rom 10:13-16; 1 Cor 1:17-18].
  - Paul adds the word “also” because he had preached the gospel in many places to many people and now wanted to do the same in Rome.
- Principles of Romans 1:15
  - Paul was under obligation, even compelled, to preach the gospel to all sorts of people.
  - Even given that, he was ready, willing and eager to preach the gospel to the church in Rome also.
  - As ambassadors for Christ we ourselves are under obligation to spread the gospel, but should be eager to do so [Isa 6:8; 1 Cor 9:17; John 4:34-36].
  - In fact, we should be ready and willing to do whatever the Lord asks us to do, even if it results in physical death [Acts 21:13].
  - Our desire to see the gospel spread to those who are lost should motivate us to pray for God to send evangelists to reap the harvest [Matt 9:36-38].