

Saturday Celebration (3-18-06)

Romans 15:22-33

"Praying to God, While Letting God be God"

PAUL'S DESIRE ... Rom 15:23-24, 28-29 ... also Rom 1:8-13

– Paraphrase: "I'm wrapping up the ministry in Asia Minor (from Jerusalem to Illyricum), I've got one thing left to do, to take this offering to the church in Jerusalem, and then I'm planning on coming to you in Rome and then on to Spain for the next chapter of ministry for my life."

Rom 15:30-33 ... **Paul's Appeal for Prayer**

Prayer Request #1 ... that he may be delivered from unbelievers in Jerusalem

Prayer Request #2 ... that his service to the saints in Jerusalem would be acceptable

Prayer Request #3 ... that he would come to Rome (on his way to Spain - v. 24) with joy and be refreshed

WE PRAY WHILE WE KNOW IN PART 1Co 12:9, 12

How Did He Ask Them to Pray "STRIVE TOGETHER in Prayer"

Gal 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, (KJV)

Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

agonizomai – denotes (a) **"to contend" in the public games**, <1 Cor. 9:25> ("striveth in the games," RV); (b) **"to fight, engage in conflict,"** <John 18:36>; **to strive as in a contest for a prize, straining every nerve to attain to the object** <Luke 13:24>; **to put forth every effort, involving toil**, (from Vine's Expository Dictionary)

Men of all ages have prayed (quite correctly) with the sense that there were difficulties in the heavenly world to overcome. As they pleaded with God for the removal of the unknown obstacles and in that persevering supplication were brought into a state of utter brokenness and helplessness, they became entirely resigned to Him, in union with His will, with the faith that could take hold of Him. Then, the hindrance in themselves and in heaven were together overcome." Andrew Murray, Ministry of Intercession, p40

Paul's FULL Theology— ***Paul's Teaching on DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY in Rom 8-11 in no way Minimizes His APPEAL For HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY***

2 Cor 1:8-11 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; 10 who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our

hope. And He will yet deliver us, 11 you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many.

Philem 22 At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you.

Can You Contend & Strive ("agonizmai") in Prayer, When We're Not Completely Clear on God's Will?

Matt 6:9-10 Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10' Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Mark 14:35-39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 "Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words.

James 4:13-15 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

2 Sam 15:25-26 The king said to Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the sight of the LORD, then He will bring me back again and show me both it and His habitation. 26 "But if He should say thus, 'I have no delight in you,' behold, here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him."

Acts 18:19-21 They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent, 21 but taking leave of them and saying, "I will return to you again if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.

1 Cor 4:19-20 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power.

— A Biblical TENTATIVENESS

– Paul Prayed One Way, but was Prepared for Things to Go Another Way ... Rom 15
— Acts 21:10-14 Paul was ready to be imprisoned or die in Jerusalem

... Consider How The Events that Followed Unfolded

- (1) he was delivered from lynching, flogging, and two plots to kill him; but he was not delivered from being arrested, tried, and imprisoned for two years
- (2) it appears that the Offering was Both Delivered & Accepted
- (3) he does end up coming to Rome, but not as he thought and not on to Spain? After nearly losing his life at sea, he ends up in a ROMAN PRISON for two more years

PAUL'S DESIRE & GOD'S DESIGN

- Paul had often entertained thoughts and plans for Rome and Spain **Rom 15:22-24, 28-29**

Acts 19:21 Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, 'After I have been there I must also see Rome.'

- What's MOST INSPIRING is although Paul's Plan is Not Unfolding, Paul is Fully Functioning in God's Plan that is—

.... Paul has been Praying, Planning, and asking Others to STRIVE with Him in Prayer for something that didn't turn out the Way He Was Asking. YET— he continues in the Purpose of God for His Life

Acts 28:30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance."

Php 1:12-14 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."

Whatever Plan I'm Convinced is in My Future, it May Turn Out Differently

... Will I Become Dysfunctional in That Moment? Will I SLOW UP, Ponder Often MY Dreams, Respond to God's Unfolded Purpose with Grief & Tolerance & Perhaps DISILLUSIONMENT or ANGER— Or will I Embrace the Tentativeness of Personal Plans and the Providence of God's Better Wisdom and Plan