

## “The Culture of a Missions-minded Church”

**Text: Romans 15:26-32** “For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed...”

**Purpose:** This section is Paul’s final word to the church regarding his expectation of their role in his ministry to Spain.

**Proposition:** God wants this church to steward its resources with these Biblical expectations.

**Interrogative:** How can we do this?

**Truth 1: A missions-minded church has a culture of blessing those in need: 15:26-28** “It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit...”

### Five Facts about this Gift:

- **It was a delight to the givers:** “It pleased them...”
- **It was focused in its intent:** “To make a certain contribution for the poor saints...”
- **It was the result of a heartfelt conviction:** “It pleased them their debtors they are...”
- **It was logically appropriate:** “For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things...”
- **It was produced in a healthy church culture:** “Sealed to them this fruit...”

**Truth 2: A missions-minded church has a heart to financially partner with church planters: 15:28** “I will come by you into Spain...”

**Paul’s desire:** I want you to financially partner with me. **15:24** “Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company...”

### Three Ways Paul’s Needs Were Met:

- **Missions Support:** Paul was supported by churches that He had previously started: **2 Corinthians 11:8-9** “I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself...”
- **Pastoral Support:** Paul was supported by the churches with whom he was working: **1 Corinthians 9:13-15** “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of

the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel..

- **Self-support:** Paul supported himself both out of need and to not hinder his ministry effectiveness: **9:16** “**But** I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void...” **Acts 18:3** “And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers...”

### **Why is missions support needed?**

- It allows church planters to devote their energies exclusively to the work of church planting.
- It allows the local church to extend its ministry to cultures and portions of the world were it cannot physically go.
- It keeps the heart of the church properly focused on the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

**Truth 3: A missions-minded church has a praying culture: 15:30-31** “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints. That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God...”

**Paul's Desire:** I want you to partner with me in prayer.

### **The Details of this Prayer Partnership:**

- **It was a cooperative labor:** “Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me...”
- **It was for protection from enemies to the gospel:** “That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea...”
- **It was for effectiveness in the ministry:** “That my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints...”
- **It was for encouragement in the work:** “That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God...”
- **It was for spiritual refreshment:** “And may with you be refreshed...”

**Truth 4: A missions-minded church has an encouraging culture: 15:32** “and may with you be refreshed...”

**Paul's Desire:** I want us to have a mutually refreshing relationship.

### **What are ways that the church brings refreshment to missionaries?**

- We enjoy a common faith in Christ that bonds us.
- We are partnered together and rejoice together as God blesses our labors together
- We support one another by bearing each others burdens.
- Our affections are stirred up together for one another and the Lord's work as we exchange stories of God's goodness.
- We express love through our giving and reminders of our prayer support.

**Four practical ways to pray for our church:**

- Let's pray that God would provide opportunity and ability to bless others in need through this church.
- Let's pray that God will allow us to increase our mission's giving in the coming year so we can increase our mission's partnerships.
- Let's pray that God will enlarge our hearts and deepen our prayer support in the coming year.
- Let's pray that our church will continue to enlarge our hearts to encourage His servants!

**A practical encouragement to our church family:**

- Set aside some time to calculate your actual involvement in missions this year.
- Prayerfully, consider what God would have you to do in the coming year.
- Write down what you are purposed to do, and to the best of your ability, follow through.
- Keep your commitment in perspective. If every family unit in our church were to increase their mission's giving by just \$5 a month, we could responsibly take on a new missionary this coming year.
- May God enlarge our hearts and create a wonderful mission's-minded culture in this church for His glory!