

Paul's Manifesto, Mission, & Message!

I. Slide #1(blank) **Announce:**

- A. So I show a Movie before I left...**except** I have **Nate** do it for me; then I fly 2500 miles away & leave & make **Kel** come up & apologize for me. **I love being in charge!** :)
- B. **Slide #2,3 Belize: My Sabbatical** - rest, reading, prayer walks, staring into Rainforest, thinking, tripping out on bird noises I've never heard before, taking photos, smashed a firefly(bioluminescent beetle) on cabin floor to see how long his rearend would glow(day & 1/2)
 - 1. **What God is doing at Machaca at the camp** - You know about the kids camps in summer. But year long?...its about **Discipleship**.
 - a) **Explain** OxyContin/heroin/opiates **problem!** [Redlands High, aka Heroin High]
 - b) Only **last stage** (after their clean, detoxed, rehab'd) to help not return home to old friends/ways. 2 years to draw close to Jesus. **We also have some of our youths & Belizean youths in the Discipleship program** (not drug issues).
- C. **Slide #4** As MLK said, **Darkness** cannot drive out darkness: only **light** can do that. **Hate** cannot drive out hate: only **love** can do that. **Prayer: Jesus be our light & love.**

II. Slide #5 **Romans Book Intro:** Back to the Blackboard! *Why Romans?*

- A. **Romans is special to me** - 1st book I ever read [Fell in love with. Exp the Word coming alive]
 - 1. It has also been special to many other "*greater*" saints, way before me.
 - 2. **Intro to Romans in, Geneva Study Bible** - Romans is Paul's fullest, grandest, most comprehensive statement of the gospel. Its compressed declarations of vast truths are like **coiled springs** - once loosed, they leap through mind & heart to fill one's horizon & shape one's life. (Geneva Study Bible, Romans Intro, pg.1764)
 - 3. **Martin Luther** - He loved his wife *Catherine Von Bora*. He said of the Book of Romans..."*It is my Catherine Von Bora*".
 - a) It was where his heart 1st found religious peace!
 - 4. **Augustine, Luther, & Wesley** - all came to assured faith through the impact of Romans.
 - 5. **John Chrysostom**(5th cent greatest preacher) had Romans read aloud to him once a week.
 - 6. **Chuck Swindoll** - "Romans is **no light snack** for the soul. It's a **full-course meal** meant to be savored over time."
- B. **Romans is important to CM at this time** - Did back in 2004.
 - 1. My philosophy of learning is from my understanding like Paul's. In that it is very "open" nothing to fear(within reason of course). But some of you have been right in asking, "**Brian, as you recommend certain books or readings, what about new**

believers who don't have the foundations, the Essentials?" Thus, I think it is always important to keep coming back to **biblical alignment**, the bible basics.

- a) We will hit on what is: Faith, Condemnation, the Flesh, Foreknowledge, Glorification, Gospel, Grace, Justification, Law, Predestination, Propitiation, Righteousness, Salvation, Sanctification, Sin, Works, & many more.
2. **Slide #6** 2 Tim.3:16,17 **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine** (what is right), **for reproof** (what is not right), **for correction** (how to get right), **for instruction in righteousness** (how to stay right), **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**
- C. **Romans** has been called a **Constitution** (a body of fundamental principles or established precedents); **And** a **Manifesto** (a public declaration of policy).
 1. It's **personal yet** a **well-developed** presentation of **grace-filled, God exalting** theology.
 - a) It beckons the **mind** to **stretch**, the **heart** to **soar**, & the **soul** to **sing!** (*Swindoll*, Intro to Romans)
- D. **Slide #7** **Its place in the bible** - After the **Gospels**(Jesus' life/ministry) & **Acts**(birth of the Church), Romans begins a new section known as the **Epistles** or **Letters**.
 1. These cover all the books from **Romans to Jude**.
 2. Epistles set forth the **implications & out-workings** of the **Christian life**.
 3. **They deal with issues crucial to the life of the church.**
 4. Of the **21 Epistles**, Paul wrote **13** (pos.14, if Hebrews is his).
- E. **The theme of Romans in 2 sentences?** - "Through faith in Christ alone, a 'righteousness from God' is imparted to sinners. Through Christ's atoning sacrifice, God removes His holy wrath towards us & brings us into loving relationship with Himself forever."¹
- F. Romans is *no light snack* for the soul. It's a *full-course meal* meant to be savored over time.
 1. **Not like last week**, somewhere ½ way through Belize, I pulled into a shell station & grabbed some quick snacks of a **Mr. Villa Peanut Shake, Crunchy Cheetos**, & my favorite **Maria's** shortbread cookies for a quick snack on the road.
 2. **No way, Romans will be a Thanksgiving Feast for our souls.**
- G. **Book Outline:** Introduction (1:1-17); **Doctrine** (1:18-8:39); **National** (9-11); **Practical** (12-15.13); **Conclusion** (15:14-16:27).
- H. **Outline:** **Paul's Manifesto, Mission, & Message.**

III. **Slide #8 PAUL'S MANIFESTO! (1-7)**

- A. **Slide 9,10,11** (1)**Bondservant**-All slaves have masters, & Paul's is Christ!(also communicates *humility*)
 1. Ex.21:5,6 **If the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' "then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also**

¹ Swindoll, A Study of Romans, pg.3

bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.

- B. **Apostle** - God initiated this process. Paul didn't choose the role for himself.
- C. **Separated** - He was *set apart* for God to serve the interests of the gospel of God.
- D. (2) Salvation in Christ has been God's **great plan**...from the beginning.
1. This isn't some newfangled message opposed to Judaism.
- E. (3-6) **Paul's Manifesto** - Paul's written declaration of principles, policies, and objectives.
1. **What a mini-sermon of a greeting!**
- F. (7) **Paul's relationship to the church in Rome, Italy?**
1. Paul had not **planted**, or yet even **visited** the church in Rome, **though** was very aware of their impact & growth (vs.8).
 2. It's likely the church in Rome began shortly after **Acts 2**, at **Pentecost**.
 - a) Acts 2:10,11 "...visitors from **Rome**, both Jews and proselytes,...we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."
 3. Paul's actually been in the **East evangelizing**, doing **church plants**, & **training leaders** from **Judea to Macedonia** for about **10 yrs** now.
 4. Paul set his sights on **Spain** (funny, we have a **Paul setting his sights** on Spain as we speak, possible Lucianni's next grand adventure).
 - a) **Slide #12** Paul gets on-line & Googles **Hotwire.com** and starts making *his travel plans* from **Corinth**(where he writes this letter, prob. Winter ad 57); **then** to **Jerusalem** to drop off \$; **then** sail to **Spain**, & on the way there, plans on stopping in **Rome** when he cruises by.
 - b) This way Paul can give them the **clear, concise** *Essentials of the Faith*. **Not** so they could just **learn about them**, **but also** to be a **light with them**, to the rest of the empire.
- G. **Back to Rome: Rome Paul, really?** – The seat of paganism, idolatry, materialism, & growing hostility toward Christianity?
1. Yet, in the midst of this debauchery the light of Christ is burning bright enough for the **whole empire** to see.
 2. We say, "**but in America we have it so hard, America seems post-Christian!**" *Imagine a culture, never once touched by Christianity?* I've been in a few (sp. Warfare/creepiness).
 - a) **Do we compare to Rome?** - **Take** all U.S. churches & turn them into Pagan Shrines. **Take** all just laws off the books. **Make** our President a Christian hater & destroyer...**then** we can start to compare!
- H. **Grace & Peace** – combine Greek & Hebrew greetings.
1. **Grace** is what we **receive**; **Peace** is what we **experience** as a result of the activities of God, on our behalf.

IV. **Slide #13 PAUL'S MISSION! (8-15)**

- A. (8,9) **It was their faith!** - Not their **church size**, not their **wealth**, nor their **busyness...but** their vibrant & steadfast **faith!**
- B. (10-13) His **Longing** – He had many friends in Rome. (ch.16 gives 27 names & intimate details of their family relationships 7 christian service)
1. He longed to visit, & this letter would prepare the way.
- C. (14,15) **Debtor to all** – People of all ethnic groups(vs.5 ἔθνος); income & educational levels; cultural distinctives; ages; & of both genders.
- D. **Debtor** – There was a **binding obligation** placed upon debtors in the ancient world.
1. As believers we are free from the **debt** of **sin**, **but** we are **debtors** to **witness** to a lost world. **Are you paying your spiritual debts?**
 2. **Slide #14** Listen carefully to this quote...*you won't believe who this is from!* “Every Christian--as he explores the historical record of Scripture and tradition and comes to a deep, abiding faith - experiences that Christ is the risen one and that he is therefore the eternally living one. It is a deep, life-changing experience. No true Christian can keep it hidden as a personal matter. For such an encounter with the living God cries out to be **shared** - **like the light** that shines, **like the yeast** that leavens the whole mass of dough.” **Slide #15** (Pope John Paul II, in Breakfast with the Pope. Christianity Today, Vol.39, no.13)
 - a) J.P. almost sounded like an *Evangelical* there!
 3. I think we are safe to say, “**Paul was gripped by the gospel!**”
 - a) **Have you been gripped w/the gospel & its wonderful message?**
 - b) **Are you sharing it & living it?** (remember, **Proclamation & Demonstration**)

V. **Slide #16 PAUL'S MESSAGE! (16,17)**

- A. **Ashamed?** – Of course, your an Apostle, your not ashamed.
1. Thats like **Steve Jobs** saying **he's not ashamed of Apple products!**
 2. But think of the **resistance, ridicule** of Paul's day.
 - a) **The Jews hated it** – it undermined their system of *self achieved-righteousness*.
 - b) **The Gentiles hated it** – How dare these Christian's teach there is only **one God!**
 - c) **The Emperors hated it** – Nero, the 1st of the Christian persecutors was on the throne.
 - (1) **Paul says the Gospel is nothing to be embarrassed about or hidden.**
- B. **The Gospel** – God has good news!
1. It was **Promised**(2); It was **Purchased**(4); It is **Preached**(15); It has **Power**(16).
 2. (E. Stanley Jones) “**Religions** are man's search for God; **the gospel** is God's search for man. **There are many religions, but one gospel.**”

- C. **Slide #17,18 Beachhead** - a defended position on a beach taken from the enemy by landing forces, from which an attack can be launched.
1. **God** knew to take this world back He'd need a **beachhead** – He choose the shore of the Mediterranean...**Israel**.
 2. **Jesus** knew to take this world He'd need a **beachhead** – He choose the shore of the Sea of Galilee...**Capernaum**.
 3. **Paul** knew to take this world he'd need a **beachhead** – He choose the shore of the Mediterranean also...**Antioch**.
 4. **C.M.** was asked in 1985, by a small struggling congregation called, “**Murrieta Union Church**” to set up a *Calvary Style* **beachhead** in...Murrieta.
 5. **Where has God placed you to set up a beachhead in His world?**
 - a) Might be a **work place**.
 - b) Might be a **country** that He's placed on your heart. [Teri Ferro/**Peru**]
 6. We as a church have a wonderful **beachhead** in **Belize**.
 7. As a church, looks like God's set up our next **beachhead** in **Cambodia**.
 8. **We need to plant many more beachheads in schools, work places, neighborhoods, countries.**
 - a) We are in a war & God is a war strategist! Ex.15:3 **The LORD is a man of war; The LORD is His name.** You need to seek God's strategy for you!
 - b) **What beachhead does he have for you this week?**
 - (1) I had the privilege to make a **beachhead** in a sweet lady's life named Kim, whom I sat next to on the plane from Houston to LA.
 - (2) **She was on a Yoga Retreat.** I asked what one does on one. I asked her about the spiritual side to it. She let me read the introduction to a book she just purchased on what Yoga was. *Fascinating.* Asked, in her pursuit of spiritual matters would she do me a favor, find a bible & read just 1 book of it...**John.** Asking Jesus to reveal Himself to her. (She told me of her dad bicycling ½ way around Australia & read part of the bible out of every place he stayed...And loved it!...**Go Gideon's!**)
 - c) **Slide #19,20** “Saving knowledge is diffused over the earth, **not like sunlight but like torchlight, which is passed** from hand to hand.”
 - (1) But instead, **how often are we guilty of going home at the end of our day, & praying for the unbelievers that we safely avoided all day?**
 - (a) **Ouch, guilty as charged.** [I was guilty of not wanting to share with Kim. I don't think I was **ashamed** of the gospel, but I think **fearing rejection** in some form]
 - (b) Maybe fearing her **laughing** at it. Maybe fearing her **questions.** **Embarrassment.**
- D. **For it is the power!** - **It** is powerful...**Not you!**

1. You cannot domesticate the gospel! – It is **Not** like a **domesticated dog**, but more like a **mountain lion**!
 2. **Sometimes we treat the gospel like a domesticated canine.** We **dock** its tail, **crop** its ears, take it through our own personal **obedience training**, place a **bow** in its hair, **perfume** it, **pamper** it, & **Voilà!** **But now our domesticated gospel hound has no teeth!**
 - a) The idea is not to "**get**" the word out, but to "**let**" the Word out.
 - b) Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "**Do not defend** God's word, but **testify** to it."
- E. **To salvation** – While other **institutions** can provide *services*, **only the church** offers a *gospel* that can transform a life from the inside out.
1. The gospel can **save us, forgive us, & bring us** into the family of God!
 2. "One can't inhale its fragrance **and** be content to leave everything the way it is!" :)
- F. (17) The term **Righteousness** (35x's in Romans) - is defined by Paul as **inward & outward** conformity to God's Law.
1. **Inward** - comes from God Himself; **Outward** - it flows out of us, because of what flowed into us.
- G. **The "Just"** – This is the basic theme throughout Romans.
1. What it means to be "justified" & what it means to live a "righteous" life!
 2. **Justification** is God's gracious act by which He declares the believing sinner righteous in J.C. because of the work of Christ on the cross. (www)"
 3. A **righteous** standing before God leads to a holy life before men.
- H. **By faith** – as opposed to "by *works*"!
1. It's been said, "**We are not saved by works or by faith plus works; we are saved by a faith that works.**"
 2. And **on this very verse Martin Luther** realized that all his efforts to **work** his way to God had been futile. **He found the very righteousness of God granted to him in Christ!**
- I. **End:** Read ahead. Wet your appetite. Ask the hard questions about theology. **And** anticipate the tastes of the meals ahead!