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.”

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).


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
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 ἑθνός); 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 placed 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!