

Satisfied and Ambitious

Text: Romans 15:14-21;

Preached on June 6, 2010

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OPENING PRAYER:

Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word, that it does show us where to stand and where to walk. We thank you that all of it is breathed out by you and is useful to us for teaching us and rebuking us For correcting us for transforming and training us. And we pray as we come to you tonight that you will find us through Your Word by your Spirit. Instruct us in your word, by your Spirit, and bring us, we pray by that same Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, to love him more fully, and to serve him more obediently. So, show us our need and show us Jesus Christ. Show us the truth and power of your word, and call deeply into our hearts, that without reservation our lives, maybe his to do as he pleases, to go where he chooses to live in his resources, and to rejoice in his marvelous grace. Teach us, therefore we pray, Our Father, for your servants are listening to your voice. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen. Please be seated.

SCRIPTURE READING:

Now, as our studies in Paul's letter to the Romans continue, we come this evening to chapter 15 and verse 14 through 21. Which you'll find on the Pew Bible. There should be a copy of that in the pew rack in front of you. Beginning on page 949. And moving into page 950. And again, it will be helpful for us and for me, as well as for you, if you have the Bible open before you at that place.

Paul has been speaking in the previous section, about the ministry of Jesus Christ, how he became a servant to the circumcised, that is the Jews in order to confirm the promises of God given in the Old Testament scriptures, that, in turn, the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. And he had cited Old Testament evidence for that, which underlines for us as we saw last time, that the gospel going to the Gentiles should never have been a surprise to the Jews. It was because as Paul says in Second Corinthians three and four there was a veil over their eyes, as they read the Old Testament Scriptures that they didn't see that the Old Testament scriptures were pointing to Christ, as the savior of the world. And now, Paul moves into what is really the final section of his letter.

I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another. But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the

Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience — by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God — so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illycium I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him we'll see, and those who have never heard will understand.

SERMON:

I checked up earlier this week just to make sure that the facts were correct, but on some on the evening, August the 17th 2008, I said that we would study Paul's letter to the Romans for 18 months. Three weeks later I said, I didn't mean 18 consecutive months. But I meant 18 months in totality, to study the letter to the Romans. And by my calculation, under ordinary circumstances, 18 months qualifies as 78 Sundays. This Sunday, I believe is Sunday number 74. And so God willing, I am anticipating that that prophecy I uttered on August the 17th 2008, will not result in you taking me outside and stoning me as a false prophet. But we have for our blessing, and I guess also, with some sadness moved into this evening, the final section of Paul's letter, actually, in some senses, you will see that he is bookending his exposition of what he had called in chapter two, and we'll call again in chapter 16, my gospel, and he had opened this letter with a number of personal comments as to why it was that he had never himself managed to visit Rome, although he had often longed to do so. And now, as he comes to the end of his letter, he is bookending his exposition of the gospel he preachers, because, as we will see, finally, God willing, next Lord's day, it is his plan, as it were to refuel in the city of Rome, as he makes his way westwards towards Spain, in order that he may press out the borders of the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel to the west of Rome. And he is essentially looking to the Roman Christians for encouragement and support, probably even material support. And therefore it's incumbent upon him to explain to them the gospel that he preaches, and because he knows that everywhere, false accounts of that gospel, have been spread abroad by those who have been his enemies and detractors. He is concerned that they understand the gospel he preaches, is the gospel that was taught in the Old Testament Scriptures, and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, how God has revealed in the Gospel, his glorious righteousness, how that righteousness has come to men and women who lack it, and taken them in Jesus Christ out of Adam, and sin and death, and the threat of the wrath of God, and brought them into all the riches of God's grace treasured up in Jesus Christ, for all who believe delivering them from the wrath of God and bringing them peace, delivering them from the dominion of sin, and enabling them to battle against it. And granting them the power and grace of the Holy Spirit, to live between the ages in such a way that there is heavenly expectation, hope, certainty, born in their hearts, that nothing will ever be able to condemn them. And he has gone on your remember to show how that righteousness has manifested in the way in which God has dealt with Jew and Gentile, in the way in which he has brought the Gentiles into His kingdom. And then, as he has appealed to us to give ourselves without reserve, to the Lord Jesus Christ, how the gospel works everywhere. And this is such a great thing to learn, and he's gone into some detail about it.

There is nowhere, that the gospel does not work. There are only a few 1000 Christians in Turkey. Does the gospel work in Turkey? Does the gospel work in Turkey? There is no barrier that can be put up to the power of the gospel. There are no threats, no imprisonments, no difficult circumstances into which

the gospel is unable to come. Because the Gospel is the power of God for salvation. Not only there and then, but the power of God to transform and save lives here and now, under every conceivable circumstance. The Gospel works everywhere.

The fascinating thing that Paul has been emphasizing, in what turns out to be one of the longest subsections of his letter is to say, surprise, surprise, one of the places the gospel works is in the church. In the church? Isn't the gospel for the world? Well, you only need to belong to a Christian church for a little time to discover if there's anywhere that needs the gospel. It's the Christian church. Believers need the gospel. Because the gospel is not the power of God for justification only. The Gospel is the power of God for salvation. Paul's burden, obviously, in these last sections from chapter 14, into chapter 15, has been that this group of Jews and Gentiles, totally different races, in the eyes of the first century, that these Jews and Gentiles might become a truly saved community in which the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who welcomes sinners, is released into the community of the gospel. So that saved sinners welcome one another.

So, the great challenge of all this, this passage that Paul has been dealing with is, if there is a fellow believer, no matter how weak he may be, in the exercise of his freedom, or a fellow believer, who is fully developed in the exercises of all her biblical freedoms, if there is a single one that I do not welcome in Jesus Christ, because he has welcomed me. There, I become a stubborn obstacle, not merely to them, but to the gospel. And to the demonstration of the power of the gospel, and in essence, I say to the Lord Jesus Christ: Lord Jesus, you can have prayed with all your might, and main on the evening of your crucifixion, that we would be one in fellowship, as you and the Father are one and fellowship. But I don't care about that!

And so what he has been dealing with here — you know, it's very often true people come to the end of Romans eight, and they think I've, I've had the really important things, and Romans eight, if you stop at Romans eight, you missed the whole point of this book. Which is that the gospel doesn't totally produce saved individuals who live at arm's length from one another. But why the gospel makes such an impact on the world is because it produces a community where believers welcome one another, for the sake of Jesus Christ. And so in that community, the reconciling work of Jesus Christ is proven and demonstrated to the world. And that's why Paul — Paul could have said this just in a few words. That's why he's, he has taken so long in chapter 14 and 15, because this isn't incidental to the gospel. My dear friends, if we are alienated, in any way from a fellow Christian brother or sister, we are denying the gospel. So you can see that this magnificent exposition of God's saving Grace has teeth and it has feet and walks right into our lives.

And perhaps, therefore, it's not surprising that the apostle Paul, as it were, just pauses at the beginning of this new section, and says a number of very personal things to the Romans. And the first is a word of reassurance. That's a relief. It's a word of reassurance that he thinks of them with deep satisfaction. I — this is wonderful, actually, he's not saying, Oh, dear, I messed up there. I here and now I take back chapter 14 verse one through chapter 15, verse 13. Scrub it out! No he's saying all these things I've said are true, because we have still so far to go. But it's also true, my dear Roman Christians that when I think of you, I think of you with deep satisfaction. Verse 14. I am satisfied about you. Really I am persuaded about you. I have confidence in the integrity of your spiritual condition.

Now, what is it that gives the apostle Paul such confidence about the Roman church? What would give you confidence or me confidence when we were speaking to somebody about First Presbyterian

Church? And we were able to say, I have, I have confidence in First Presbyterian Church. I've deep satisfaction in First Presbyterian Church.

Well, you see, he speaks about three marks here. The first is moral. And it's got to do with character. They are full of goodness. "I am satisfied about you my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness". Do you remember how earlier on he had said in a statement, but commentators have always found somewhat enigmatic — scarcely would anyone die for a righteous man. But perhaps for a good man, somebody would dare to die. And many of the commentators suggest that the difference there is between somebody who is righteous in a metallic kind of way. Right, but cold. And somebody who is good. And Paul is saying, one of the things that satisfies me about you is I know that you are full of goodness. That's uh, you know that's one of those trivial, throwaway words isn't it? But he's saying, that's one of the things that should make Christian Fellowship stand out. Sheer — unadulterated — goodness. That quality of reflecting the goodness of God, who is generous, to the righteous, and to the unrighteous.

I love that hymn of Cecil Francis Alexander's. In some ways, although it was written, I think for children, it should never be consigned simply to a trivial Christianity for children. "There is a green hill far away outside a city wall, where the dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all. He died, that we might go to heaven. He died to make us good." That's why he died. He died to justify us before God that we might be forgiven. But...but by His Spirit, he might make us good. You remember that priceless line? How did she think of these lines? "We may not know. We cannot tell what pains he had to bear. But we believe it was for us. He hung and suffered there. To make us good." That's not unimportant. Paul is satisfied that the Christians in Rome are not only good, but they're, they're full of goodness. Goodness, oozes out of the pores of their character.

So there's a moral mark. A character mark what gives him satisfaction. And there's a mental mark or an intellectual mark, that gives him satisfaction. They're not only full of goodness, but they're filled with all knowledge. What does he mean by that? He means he doesn't mean that they're walking encyclopedias. He means that they have the true knowledge of God in Jesus Christ and they understand the gospel. And they become a stable community in an unstable world. Remember how he speaks to the Ephesians about this same thing. And says how it's — it's so often tragically true in churches that, that Christians are blown about by every wind of doctrine. You only need to, I hate to say this again, but you only need to turn on religious television or listen to all that pours out of the radio to realize that people who are professing Christians are often blown about by every wind of doctrine. They're chasing after the new thing. They lack discernment to tell the difference between what is biblical and what is unbiblical. And so, as you remember, Hosea says, "God's people perish for lack of knowledge."

My wife said to me the other day in an interesting context, "You should never be impressed merely by somebody's ability to preach." Should you? Jesus said that didn't. He said, you need to look at the fruits. Does it stabilize? Does it build Christian character? My dear friends at the end of the day, that's all that lasts. That's all that's going to be able to stand for all eternity is the character, the gospel has built into me. Does it have a sense of weight.

There was a great expression sometimes used in 19th century Scotland, about Christians. "He's a man of weight." And they didn't mean that. They meant a sense of the stability and strength of his character.

Immovability - in movable times. And goodness. Isn't that interesting. That great knowledge is to be combined with great goodness, says the Apostle Paul.

And then there's this spiritual mark. That is to say, there is a mark of Paul's satisfaction in the Roman church that he believes is seen, not simply in their character, as it stands on its own — their understanding of the gospel in its fullness, but how they relate to one another. Notice the language you use is at the end of verse 14, able to instruct one another.

Now, something kind of strange about the English Standard Version at this point as far as I can see, and that is, I think this is the only place in all of Paul's letters, where the English Standard Version translates the verb Paul uses here, as instruct. Because that communicates at least at first glance, the idea of teaching and educating. That's - that's not simply the idea. Characteristically, the English Standard Version translates Paul's verb here as — warning. As admonition. Able to admonish one another. That's a different thing, isn't it? I mean, it's one it's one thing to — you can teach somebody, something without any personal cost. But you can't as a Christian, admonish a brother or sister without great personal cost. And Paul is saying that's actually a mark of the the growth and maturity of this fellowship, that they not only understand the gospel, but they have an eye open to each other. And they, they're coming alongside one another and, and saying, dear brother there's something here you and I need to speak about, in our lives, and in your life. That's not easy. If you find this easily forget about doing it. You're in no fit spiritual condition to admonish a brother or a sister if you find it easy. And it's almost certainly a sign there's a big plank in your own eye. And you go bang, bang, bang. Let me take the mote out of your eye. But it was one of the great things Paul's seem to know about the Roman fellowship, that they were, they're able to come alongside one another. And let me put it simply, they were able to be honest and open with one another.

My life is punctuated by regrets of the opportunities I've had to admonish fellow believers — failed to do so. And the consequences of disaster in their lives are almost a mark of public record. And you see, at the end of the day, when I see that, and I don't come alongside my brother, even with the fear of rebirth, and if I don't come alongside in the humility of grace, the searching of my own heart and much prayerfulness, really a sign I care about myself more than I care about their spiritual welfare.

So this, this — you know, when you come to this verse, at this speed we'll be on to 24 months, but when you come to this verse, you go (Dr Ferguson makes a rushing quick sound) through this verse, But everything's in this verse for the fellowship, isn't it? This is why — I wonder if you've ever noticed it. That those of us who are elders, and leaders in churches have noticed that, and my guess, as almost everybody has noticed it: the single greatest reason why church discipline is done so badly in Christian churches, is because it's not normally done in Christian churches. Informally, personally, any sense of mutual accountability. You see. And Paul is saying is — this is just a wonderful thing. He is not taking back that there are struggles and difficulties in Rome. That there are weak and strong in Rome. That some of the Roman Christians haven't worked through their full entitlement to the liberty of grace in Jesus Christ. But he is looking at them with a deep, deep, deep, deep satisfaction. Oh to be such a fellowship. How did Paul know all this? He'd never been there. Well. There are people who have never been here who know a great deal about First Presbyterian Church, why? Shhhhhh! (In a whisper) Because you told them.

That's how he knew. You just need to turn over the page, if you need to turn over a page to chapter 16, same page in my Bible, and the Pew Bible. And you see almost 30 names apart from all the other

individuals who seem to be connected to them. The reason Paul was able to say this, not because it was the right thing to say, saying number 416 in the little manual for apostles. When writing to a church you have never visited, be sure to say nice things about them. And how they're full of goodness and understanding. And they admonish one another. No, because he'd heard. He was interested in the church. By God's grace, those of us who have never been interested in the church in Izmir tonight, get interested in the church in Izmir. Why?! (Whispers: Because somebody's told us about the church in Izmir.) And it was no different for the Apostle Paul.

So he thinks of them with deep satisfaction. But then secondly, notice, and this is just as wonderful, I think, although it will need to be dealt with much more briefly. Although, if we don't do that, we'll never get to singing the final hymn and my wife's last words to me before I left the house was, "Sinclair, Please let us sing the final hymn tonight."

He thinks of them with deep satisfaction. And he writes to them with great boldness. "On some points I have written to you very boldLY". By way of reminder, isn't that terrific? Isn't that isn't that that's that is the crafting of a pastoral genius. Boldly! But these are things you knew. Now, what I want to know is which parts of Romans did Paul think were the bold parts of Romans? Well, there are one or two parts where it's fairly obvious. I think. When he says, you know, he leans over the pulpit, and he says, Don't you know this? How long have you been Christians? Don't you know this? Surely you know this! And there's a kind of implication. I'm a little concerned that you might not know this. And then it must, it must have been, it must have been a testing experience for those in the Roman church Paul puts in the category of the weak. That is those who continued to observe the, the Jewish calendar of holy days and ordinary days, and continue to observe the kosher food laws. When Paul placed himself among the strong and therefore implied, I don't, I don't see there is any difference between these days now that Jesus Christ has fulfilled the old mosaic calendar. And Jesus has declared all meats clean. Some of them must have been shocked out of their minds.

I couldn't help thinking as I was reading this during the course of the week, those of you who were here last Lord's day evening, remember that quotation I read from Calvin's Institute's about those who if they are if they're sensitive about drinking sweet wine won't even drink dirty wine. And I thought to myself, it would be possible to read that quotation now in certain circumstances. It was, it was John Calvin. And people would say, I don't think John Calvin could have been a Christian. It would have shocked them.

I remember in seminary, using an illustration in a lecture — always a mistake. Never try and make things clearer. In a lecture to seminary students, I used an illustration of Jack Nicklaus. Next thing I knew I was being accused of being a blasphemer. Why? Because Jack Nicklaus played golf. Was his job to play golf on Sunday afternoons. So it was I — I was a Sabbath breaker this this fellow just so astonished that a Christian teacher would even mention - mention, he was shocked, horrified. And so for some of these Christians, especially what Paul has just been saying, must have sounded amazingly bold! Because he was a Jew, as they were Jews. He's been a Pharisee of the Pharisees. But he had written to them with boldness. He says, now look at these words, "because of the grace given me by God, to be a minister of Christ Jesus, to the Gentiles, in the priestly service of the gospel of God."

Now, here's something you know. This is my experience. It may not be your experience. My experience is that we evangelical Christians love boldness. Until that boldness stands on one of our own toes. Isn't that true? We love boldness until that boldness begins to expose our own sinfulness.

I think about 25 years ago, I had the great privilege of speaking at a conference with Dr. John White. The Christian psychiatrist. He is with the Lord now. Wrote many books for InterVarsity. Some of you will have read them. The Masks of Melancholy. The Fight. Many other books. And he gave one address at this conference in which what essentially he did was to take 55 minutes to expose the reality of evangelical Christians duplicity, sinfulness, inconsistency. And there was almost a riot of protest. Because when he had been bald in his other addresses, the heads had nodded. But in this address, the finger was pointing at our hearts.

So why is Paul able to do this? He's able to be bold. Now this is so, this is so important, I think for us to understand as a fellowship. He is able to be bold because of the grace God has given to him and because of the grace God has wrought into them.

Now most of us in this room — Actually a good number of us in this room are preachers. But most of us in this room are not preachers, and therefore we may not quite grasp the fact that what comes out of this little box is incredibly dependent on you. The more grace there is in the congregation, the more boldness there can be in the pulpit. And the more grace there is in the congregation, because of that boldness, the bolder the ministry of God's word can be. And Paul obviously felt that that was true in the church in Rome. That they could take the boldness, because of the grace. And this of course, this brings us back to the underlying principle we've seen again and again in Romans, that the imperative of the gospel works fruitfully only when it's planted in the soil of the indicatives of the gospel. And so the Word of God flows in the ministry of the word for Paul, when the Spirit of God has been working among the people who are receiving the ministry of the word. And so, there is — there's an enormous dialogue takes place. People who say to me, what we need and preaching today is not monologue and dialogue have obviously never experienced what preaching is, or what true church or what true worship is. You have more dialogue in this room during the ministry of the word, then you have most of the week, don't you? Because you dialogue with God as God dialogues with you. If we had those big screens, that Leo Schuster was speaking about this morning, that need to be octagonal in shape, to show all the dialogues that were going on in the room as God's word was being preached, because of God's grace in your life. So Paul, rejoices in this, that he's able to be bald. And so he gives them this marvelous picture of what he's doing. He said, not just let me give you a word picture of how I see what I'm doing here. And he uses a picture from the temple, and the priests bringing the sacrifice. Perhaps the thank offering. And presenting it to the Lord, a sweet smelling savor. And he's saying, that's how I see my ministry. I see my ministry is offered to the Lord, as I bring to him those to whom I minister. Of course, he's thinking here about Gentiles in particular. A beautiful picture of all ministry, isn't it? What are you doing when you teach on Sunday school, the little ones? Or when you're working among the youth. Or when you teach adults in the adult Sunday school. And when you speak on some occasion. When you have the privilege of ministering God's word. When you are beside somebody who is in need. What are you doing? Paul says, think about it this way, think that you are a servant of the Lord, and you're bringing your ministry and service to the Lord and those to whom you minister. You're saying, Lord, what I want to do is that these ones to whom I minister might be my sacrifice of praise to You. That you might receive it and bless them. What a beautiful picture of ministry.

So -- he thinks of them with deep satisfaction. He writes to them with great boldness. And he shares with them his vision for ministry. Now, he says, verse 18, he says, "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me." Verse 17, and Christ Jesus, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. But he says not because it's my work, but because it's his work through my work, "for I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished

through me." I wonder if you think about your the fruit of your ministry in that way? You know we get very edgy about pride. Oh, no, don't poooo how — you know this must be a mistranslation. Paul would never have said he was proud of anything. No, no, he says he's proud of his work -- because he knows it's Christ's work in him. It's almost as though he's saying, did I do that? How did that happen through me?! Because of God's purposes in Christ to bring the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed.

And then he uses this little expression, it's important for us, however briefly just to put it in its context "by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Now, let me say two things about that very quickly. First of all, that is the characteristic phrase in the Old Testament used to describe what happened at the Exodus. By signs and wonders God brought about this new Exodus. He didn't actually keep doing signs and wonders every week from that point until the coming of Christ. There are only a few very short seasons in the rest of Old Testament history where you get any kind of signs and wonders. And when Paul speaks about these signs and wonders being done, he is really saying, and you'll see this, if you look at the context in which this expression appears, he is really saying: These are the marks of an apostle who is a witness to Jesus Christ. To confirm the revelatory word that he speaks: God gives confirmatory signs and wonders.

And that's why this expression is tied to the ministry of the apostle. We don't all have that ministry. Indeed, given Paul's understanding of what it means to be an apostle, in this sense, none of us has this ministry. And so, I say this over against much that is made of this phrase, signs and wonders in the Bible are confined to those who belong to that tight knit community from which new revelation emerges. And they're always confirmatory evidences of the power of the truth that is spoken. Does that mean God doesn't do wonderful things? My, my God does amazing wonderful things. But let's view those things biblically and not unbiblical.

And then you notice this, as we come to a close, he's beginning to say to them, they don't know this. You know what, what David was saying earlier on — I wonder if at the beginning Paul was bursting to say to them, I want to go to Rome. And then I want to go to Spain. He said absolutely nothing about it. And he's still not said anything about it. But he's preparing the way for it. He says from Jerusalem, all round to Illyricum, the former Yugoslavia, just the tip of the former Yugoslavia, all the way around, he says — Now this is how the ESV puts it, "I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel". But what Paul actually says as "I fulfilled the gospel". And since my ambition is to preach the gospel, where it's not already been preached, not to build on somebody else's foundation, he says, I'm wanting to go further. So that —and he quotes from the last words of Isaiah 52: "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard, will understand." Had Paul preached everywhere? No, he'd not preached everywhere. But he had fulfilled the gospel in the sense that he had planted and then seen grow to maturity churches that in turn had planted like the creation of a great spider's web all over this area. Planted other churches that then planted other churches, that planted other churches. And Paul realized as he'd established Christian witness in the great centers of this area, that his particular calling had come to a fulfillment in that area and therefore that he must press on with the gospel.

Now he didn't think of going to a retirement home in Florida. He said to the Lord, what else is there for me to do, Lord? And the answer to that was Spain. I said these words in verse 21 come from Isaiah 52. You might be thinking, I wish it been Isaiah 53 because I know that's the suffering servant passage. No, no. The suffering servant passage begins at the end of Isaiah 52. This is the suffering servant passage. These words are about the suffering servant, through whom the Gospel comes to the ends of the earth. Kings shut their mouths, because of Him, He sprinkles the nation's. So why is Paul quoting words that

he jolly well knows our words about the Lord Jesus Christ? Because he understands that he is Christ's instrument to bring the gospel to those nations and those individuals for whom Jesus has died?

Ahhh Is that where you and I find ourselves tonight? My colleague, David Lawton and I were talking briefly, just the other day about a situation and I asked him a question. And he gave me an answer that he's given me two or three times. And I love him for it. He looked me in the eye. And he said, "My hand is to the plow." Now where's your hand? Where is your hand?

To me, the overwhelming thing about this passage is that Paul knew exactly where his hand should be. And that's where his hand was. And that's the only safe way to live. And if your hands not to the plow, I beg you get it there. And if you don't know where the plow is, pray that His Word will shine upon your way. And that you'll see a plow that will enable you to bring the gospel to a needy world.

Interesting, isn't it? That after all this doctrine, what Paul is passionate about is world evangelism. And if we're not becoming passionate about world evangelism, there's a sense in which we've missed the whole point of the 15 chapters that we've studied. So, brothers and sisters, hands to the plow! That God may lead us on and enabled us to bear fruit.