

Famous Faith Romans 1:8-10

Paul wrote to the Church because he wanted to travel to Rome and hoped that the Church in Rome would become a sending Church for him to get to Spain. Paul understood that a person's greatest need is to hear, understand and respond to the gospel. Paul had not been to Rome, but he was heavily invested in Rome because these were his brothers and sisters in Christ, and he had spent much time praying for them.

Very important side note:

When something is ascribed to Jesus that only belongs to God, that's an affirmation of deity.

The phrases, Gospel of God and Gospel of Jesus (or Gospel of His Son) are used interchangeably. Gospel of God = Gospel of Jesus. This usage ascribes deity to Jesus. (You can also see this in Romans 15:16, 15:19)

When the gospel is defined as belonging to God and then the gospel is described as belonging to Jesus, that is an ***affirmation of the deity of Jesus***. This is not the strongest affirmation of deity that we have in Scripture. This adds to the teachings in the Bible that have even more clarity and more weight.

Paul had not been to Rome and had not met these Christians. Yet he prays for them.

There are times when you don't need to meet people or know people well in order to pray for them. So much of our praying is response to some type of problem in our own lives...I have found that praying for Christians in other countries helps to diminish my natural pull toward self-centeredness.

Paul's praying is driven by his sense of purpose in life: "obedience that comes from faith"
That's not keeping a set of rules. That's enjoying new life in Christ.

This is what Paul wants for the Christians in Rome:

Life with Christ. Empowered by the Holy Spirit. Hatred of sin. Love for God, love for people.

People with that type of experience in Christ will make His name famous.

Home Group Discussion Questions:

1. Is there a work of God that you see or have seen for which you praise God?
2. Do you have any apprehensions or concerns as we begin our journey through Romans?
3. In what ways have you heard or seen evidence of "famous faith" in the presence of Christians scattered throughout our world?
4. Do you have any idea who was praying for you during that time before you became a Christian?
5. What are some ways you would like to make Jesus known?

For further study and enrichment, try these books:

The Insanity of God, Nik Ripken

The Turquoise Table: Finding Community and Connection in Your Own Front Yard, Kristen Schell

From Every Nation

“... before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne” Rev 7:9

Global

- Every day approx 40,000 people across the globe come to faith in Christ.
- An average of 3,500 new churches open every week around the world.
- Evangelicals numbered 89 million (2.9%) in 1960, but by 2010 they were 546 million (7.9%)!

Turkey

One-third of the converts to Christianity in Turkey say they came to Christ because He appeared to them in a dream. God is at work even where there are no missionaries!

Israel / Jews

More Jews have embraced Jesus / Yeshua as Messiah since 1967 when the Jews took control of Jerusalem than in all the years between 100 AD and 1967. Check out Luke 21:24!

Iran

More Iranians came to Christ between 1980 and 2010 than the previous 1,000 years combined.

China

In 1950, when China closed to missionaries, there were about one million Chinese believers. Today some estimate over 75 million believers and over 10,000 new Christians in China every day! There are more followers of Christ in China than in North America.

Korea

Once deemed "impossible to penetrate" by missionaries, Korea has experienced dramatic church growth in the last century. Today Korea is 30% Christian with over 3,000 churches in Seoul alone. Several of these churches have over one million members each.

Nepal

In the early 1980s there were only 75 known Nepali believers. Today there are an estimated 850,000 believers. From almost no churches 20 years ago to nearly 10,000 churches and house fellowships today.

India

In east India many of Nagaland's three million people confess Jesus as Lord. The Nagaland church recently vowed to send out 10,000 new missionaries to India and beyond. Those once unreached are now becoming senders.

Afghanistan

Until very recently becoming a Christian was close to a death sentence. Now missionaries in Kabul report unprecedented openness and many new believers in the last several years.

Southern Sudan

In 1960 only about 5% of southern Sudan was Christian. Today, after decades of terrible warfare and persecution, the primary religion in South Sudan is Christianity.

Brazil

From 2 million in 1960 to 51.2 million in 2010, now one of the largest evangelical populations in the world. Over 100 mission agencies have emerged, sending over 2,000 Brazilian missionaries to 85 countries.

Sources:

2020 Vision – Stearns
ISBN: 076420016X
Operation World – Mandryk
ISBN: 0830857249

Southern Africa

20,000 new African believers every day. 3% Christian in 1900, today Africa is more than 50% Christian in some countries. The church in Africa is growing 4x faster than the general population. Sub-Saharan Africa is becoming a sending base for missionaries to Islamic North Africa.

For more information see:
www.joshuaproject.net