26-1025sc Transcript

26-1025sc - *The Book of Romans, Steve Cain*

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26-1025 - The Book of Romans 15:14-33, part2

Transcript of class (0:04 - 44:22), Teacher: Steve Cain

(0:04) We're in the 15th chapter of Romans. This is Paul's wrap-up of his letter to Rome. Then (0:15) chapter 16 is salutations and well wishes for the church, and he does have a couple of words of (0:25) wisdom for us in chapter 16 also.

But we're going to look at 15, and it is a wrap-up of the thing. (0:35) So let's pick up with verse 14 again and read down through the end of the chapter, (0:41) and then we'll pick up where we left off last week. Reading from the New International Version, (0:50) I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, (0:56) filled with knowledge, and competent to instruct one another.

Yet I have written you quite boldly (1:06) on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister (1:14) of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God (1:22) so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. (1:31) Therefore, I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

I will not venture to speak of anything (1:39) except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I (1:46) have said and done, by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. (1:55) So from Jerusalem all the way around Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. (2:02) It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known so that I (2:11) would not be building on someone else's foundation.

Rather, as it is written, (2:18) those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand. (2:24) This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. But now there is no more place for me to (2:32) work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do (2:39) so when I go to Spain.

I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my (2:48) journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. Now, however, I am on my way to (2:56) Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to (3:04) make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem.

They were pleased to do it, (3:12) and indeed they owed it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual (3:19) blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material

blessings. So after I have (3:26) completed this task and have made sure that they have received this contribution, I will go to Spain (3:33) and visit you on the way.

I know that when I come to you, I will come in full measure of the (3:41) blessing of Christ. I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the (3:47) love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be kept (3:56) safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably (4:04) received by the Lord's people there, so that I may come to you with joy.

By God's will and in (4:13) your company be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

So, obviously, as I pointed (4:24) out last week, Paul's writing to the Romans. We don't know who established that church. (4:32) We know that the various apostles have been credited with going to certain regions, (4:39) being assigned to them, and that they did the work solely in that particular region.

(4:46) Paul is pointing out to us that basically his region was dealing with Gentiles. (4:53) But in the meantime, the church in Rome, if it has not been established by an elder (5:00) or an apostle, then who established it and how were they being spiritually fed? (5:09) And the question then is, basically, the Holy Spirit was inspiring them, (5:17) and they did not have the benefit of an apostle to teach them. They did not have the benefit of (5:25) an elder to teach them.

So as they were, what I can see here is Paul's saying to them, (5:35) when I get there, I will share with you what I know and what I've experienced. And that way, (5:43) you and I will both be blessed. And I will be doing the work that God has asked me to do, (5:50) since quite a bit of the church in Rome is comprised of Gentiles.

And I'm thinking, (6:01) too, here, that when he's talking there in chapter 14, and I pointed this out last week, (6:08) in verse 16, he says, "...gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. (6:16) He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might (6:23) become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." So, in other words, he's (6:34) trying to help us to appreciate the differences of the Gentiles basically being uneducated as far (6:44) as the experiences that Jews had with God. And we know that Paul points out in this letter (6:54) how the Jews were really greatly blessed by God.

He provided them with the Word. He provided them (7:02) with prophets and so on. But the Gentiles didn't have that benefit.

And so you can almost look at (7:16) them as being uneducated, especially in the knowledge of God. But what Paul is trying to (7:23) point out to us is that when he went in to teach the Gentiles, he did not cheat them of education. (7:36) In other words, he gave them the benefit of his teaching, his ability to know.

Just like we go to (7:46) go to college, we have a professor who sits there and expounds to us, like I'm doing right now, (7:53) only I'm not a professor, but he expounds to them what they need to know. And I've had the (8:03) benefit of that, of sitting in the class and having a teacher, a preacher who had education and was (8:13) educated, and he's sharing with me and he's teaching me and providing me with what I need to know. (8:21) And so Paul is pointing out that, look, just because they're Gentiles and they have not been (8:27) educated or had the lifestyle that you have, Jews, they are not second-class citizens.

(8:36) They have been taught everything they need to know in order to become a Christian, (8:41) everything they needed to know about God, and therefore the Gentiles might become an (8:52) offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. So what happens when a person is (9:01) baptized? They're being sanctified by God, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. (9:10) Because when they're baptized, what happens to them? Acts 2 38, they receive the gift of the (9:19) Holy Spirit.

And so the Holy Spirit then is working within them, and what is the job of the Holy (9:26) Spirit? We see the job classification given by Jesus in the Gospel of John chapter 16, that He (9:38) is to remind us of all the things that we are supposed to know, and He is providing us with the (9:46) mind of God. And so we have, at this point, what did they have to lean on? We got a lot to lean on. (9:57) They didn't have.

They didn't have the Gospel. They didn't have the Bible. (10:05) The letters didn't exist until, that's 50 or 60 AD, mainly because those letters were not being (10:13) written, and Paul was one of the first ones to start using letters to support the churches that (10:21) he established.

And that's the reason why we have a lot of his letters, because those letters were (10:27) being preserved and conserved. And so they would pass them on from one church to another, and so we (10:34) would have the benefit of their letters. We have the benefits of their letters, but how were they (10:43) being fed until 50 AD, until Paul started writing the letters, until an apostle came by and shared (10:54) with them, or another person who had the benefit of being sitting in the audience, an apostle? (11:02) That's the only way they would have, unless it be the Holy Spirit.

(11:24) The Holy Spirit would want to be an apostle, not a pastor, and so they would have a different gift of power, but the Spirit would provide the most powerful gift, and be able to understand the Scriptures. (11:45) Right. So, just with the given information we find in Acts 2, we find that the people that were there on the Day of Pentecost didn't just be there on the Day of Pentecost and then go home.

(12:04) What is the evidence that we have that they stayed around? (12:09) three thousand of them were baptized, and they received both spiritual gifts and prophecy. (12:19) But, we see that there was need for them to collect money so that they could support the (12:27) people who stayed around to hear the apostles, and to study. And so Barnabas is one of those (12:35) individuals who sells a piece of property to provide the money that was necessary to support (12:42) the people while they stayed behind, and they went from house to house daily.

And so the books were, (12:51) what books did they have to open at that time to study? The Old Testament. So that's the only thing (13:00) they had, from Genesis to Malachi. So when Paul goes into the synagogue to convince them that (13:10) Jesus is the Christ, and the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, what did he use? (13:18) He used the Old Testament.

He used their Scriptures. And he was successful. He was very (13:26) knowledgeable in the Old Testament, and so he was able to use the Scriptures to convince them (13:31) that Jesus was to Christ, the Son of the living God.

And so Paul is pointing out that when I get (13:37) to you in Rome, we're going to have a sit down, and I'm going to stay with you for a while, (13:44) and I'm actually going to study with you. What does Paul say to the Corinthians in chapter 15? (13:53) You might want to take a look at that. What does Paul say in Corinthians, the 15th chapter, (13:59) in the very first few verses? I'll read to you.

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you (14:11) of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. (14:20) By this gospel you are saved if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you, (14:26) otherwise you haven't believed in vain. How long did Paul stay in Corinth? I don't know, (14:36) but he was there for quite some time, wasn't he? So he's telling them, (14:47) I shared with you everything you needed to know.

Stay on it. Don't depart from it. (14:54) And so that's what he's wanting to do with the church in Rome.

(15:00) And so we pick up with Rome, 15th chapter, one more time. So let's go on. (15:09) Now, verse 17.

Any other comments? Any thoughts? Okay. Verse 17, (15:20) Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything (15:28) except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have (15:37) said and done.

So Paul is saying, basically, the work, the growth of the church is not because (15:54) of my charismatic presentation. I'm not a Joel Osteen. How do you pronounce his last name? I'm (16:07) not a Billy Graham.

That's what he's saying. He says in the Corinthian letter, I think he points (16:16) out to them, I did not come to you with eloquent speaking. I only chose to know Jesus Christ and him (16:24) crucified.

And that's what he's saying here too. The work that I did and how much I accomplished (16:31) is not because of me, it's because God has been working through me. And I am so proud to be able (16:41) to present Jesus Christ the crucified.

Why is he? Because of the grace that has been shown to him. (16:50) What is the grace that has been shown to him? (16:59) You got his eyesight back. He was corrected on the road of a bad education, of a bad (17:13) perception of what God wanted him to do.

He thought at that time when he was going to Damascus (17:20) and wherever he was, when he was witnessing Stephen's stoning, he thought they were (17:28) accomplishing what God wanted them to accomplish. And God corrected his thinking on the road to (17:37) Damascus, and Jesus corrected that line of thinking, and that's the reason why he is so adamantly (17:45) grateful for the grace that God gave him, unmerited favor. God's grace reached out to him, (17:56) corrected his thinking, corrected the direction in which he was going, and now all of a sudden (18:04) he is so proud instead of beating down Christians, he is glorifying Christians, and he wants Jesus (18:15) to be the message, the gospel of what Jesus is accomplishing for us.

He wants that. (18:22) So, therefore, I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. That's the reason why he's so, (18:32) because Jesus corrected him.

Jesus showed him mercy. Jesus showed him grace and mercy. (18:39) I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me (18:46) in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done.

And so he is not talking about (18:56) what the Holy Spirit or God has done through him, and God and the Holy Spirit has (19:06) verified his message by the power of signs and wonders through the

power of the Spirit of God. (19:15) So, from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of (19:23) Christ. So, Paul has been blessed to be able to use signs, wonders, and miracles to confirm the (19:33) message and the messenger.

And that's what the signs, wonders, and miracles were all about, (19:39) to confirm the message and the messenger. So, we don't need to do those today, (19:46) because once the message has been confirmed, it doesn't need to be reconfirmed. So, (19:53) we don't need to have signs, wonders, and miracles to bring people into the fellowship of God (20:05) and the miracles.

God will do whatever he has to do in order to accomplish that, (20:11) but we don't need it. So, we're not going to be using that. Yes? (20:21) When people understand that the inspiration of Scripture is through the Holy Spirit, (20:29) what we have here is a first-hand account of everything that happened back then.

(20:37) You know, it's like a first-hand eyewitness. The Holy Spirit is telling us all that Paul did, (20:45) all that the church went through, regardless for 2,000 years, how he would make an epiphany. (20:56) 2,000 years of eyewitnesses, no way.

No, it's first-hand eyewitnesses. (21:06) And that's actually important. It explains the unbelief. (21:11)

(21:11) Right. And I think, too, that we need to recognize that the Scriptures alone are powerful, (21:20) and that an individual just reading them is receiving information that the Holy Spirit wants (21:29) to use to get them to thinking straight. Yesterday, I was up in Michigan visiting my son, (21:39) and they were having one of those trunk or treat, and a lot of activity up there.

(21:48) Sat down with a sister in Christ, and she pointed out that she had been raised a Catholic, (21:56) and she had the opportunity to sit down with a gospel preacher, and he pointed out to them (22:08) what the Bible had said about salvation and so on, and she says, (22:16) really? I want to be baptized tonight. The Bible itself can bring about the conversion, (22:30) because that's what words are all about. That's what the Holy Spirit's all about, (22:35) and He's working with us.

And so we can rest on the fact that all we've got to do is to teach (22:44) and use the Scriptures, because that's what the Holy Spirit is going to be using (22:51) to help bring the person's thinking around, and to realize and to convict them that they are (22:58) out of step with God and need to do something about it. (23:10) Right. In the 13th chapter, yeah, yeah, 1 Corinthians 13, when that which is more perfect (23:22) comes, and so Paul's letters are being inspired by the Holy Spirit, and so Paul is writing with (23:33) the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is giving him the permission to use his (23:38) own language or his own verbiage to bring about the message that he wants. That's one of the (23:43) reasons why Peter points out in 2 Peter that Paul writes very difficult things to understand, (23:54) and people will wrestle with it to their own damnation. So that's the reason why I ask, (24:01) especially in my prayer like I did today, to help us understand Paul's (24:08) message, what he's trying to get across, because we don't know exactly.

We need the understanding. (24:17) We need the insight. We need the wisdom.

So it helps us. So, therefore, I glory in Christ (24:25) in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished (24:32) through me in leading the Gentiles to obey

God by what I have said and done.

So he's reinforcing (24:41) what he's saying about the Gentiles becoming an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the (24:48) Holy Spirit. They have had the benefit of his teaching and what I've said and done by the (24:54) power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way (25:01) around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

So if a person, a Gentile, (25:11) comes to you and says he's a Christian and he's received the Holy Spirit, he is just as (25:18) well informed and just in a good relationship with God as you are. So if a brother, if an individual (25:27) walks through that door and says he's a brother in Christ and he's been baptized for the remission (25:31) of sins and he's been reconciled to God, he's just as good as we are. Doesn't matter.

So he could be a bum. (25:45) And that's what James is trying to point out. You know, if a person comes into our (25:50) our assembly who is dressed like a bum and so on, and we say to him, you could sit over there, (25:58) but another person who comes in dressed nice, sit down here.

(26:05) I know there's a time when I was growing up and young in the faith. (26:13) We were building buildings and we were going in debt. We were borrowing money.

Here and there, (26:21) the best things we could do, selling stock and what have you, hoping that we could get enough (26:26) money. Then we found out that we had to pay it back. And so we had a monthly payment that we had (26:35) to make, and we were doing all we could do to make that payment.

So when a new person came in, (26:44) oh, bring him in. We need his donation. We need his contribution.

(26:50) That was the incentive more than anything else. (26:59) So we've got to have a better incentive than that, don't we? (27:06) So he's pointing, it has always, verse 20, (27:12) verse 20, it has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, (27:19) so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. Rather, it is written, (27:27) those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.

(27:35) This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. So Paul realizes that (27:41) even though he had a desire to see certain churches of certain territories, (27:47) he realized that Rome already had the gospel there. He wanted to preach like in Macedonia, (27:56) when he got the Macedonian vision, come to me, come to us.

He was answering the (28:08) thing that nobody's been there yet, and he's going to go there, and he's going to preach to them. (28:14) He wants to preach to new ears. He wants to preach to new people.

(28:19) And so he wants to give them all the opportunity to hear the gospel. Someone, and it wasn't me, (28:27) one of the teachers or one of the preachers that I've sat under (28:34) had this saying, everybody has a right to hear the gospel once, at least once. (28:44) And so Paul basically is saying that everybody has the right to hear the gospel once.

So he's (28:51) going wherever the Spirit will lead him, and the Spirit did lead him. And this is one of the things (28:59) that I believe that the Spirit leads you and me, and that might be the reason

why I'm here. I don't (29:07) know.

I really don't know. I don't know why I stayed in this area in the first place. (29:16) When I got fired in 98, there was no other place to go.

(29:22) And then my wife was sick, and there was no way that I could leave her or take her out of this (29:30) area because she had all the insurance we had. So why am I here? God may have an answer for that. (29:37) I don't know.

I'm just going along with the flow, and perhaps you are too. (29:47) So, but Paul definitely was being led by the Holy Spirit. And we know that Jesus was led by (29:52) the Holy Spirit.

So when he was baptized and came up out of the water, the Spirit led him into the (29:59) wilderness, and there he was, tempted for 40 days and 40 nights. And so we know that the Spirit was leading him. (30:09) Any other comments concerning him? So Paul will tell us, and I think in the Thessalonian letter, (30:18) he points out the fact that he had signs and wonders that he used to help establish the (30:26) church there in Thessalonica, get it out.

So I still have plenty of time. So let's go on to verse 23. (30:46) And he says, But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, (30:53) and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain.

(31:04) You, while passing through, and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have (31:14) enjoyed your company for a while. Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem, (31:21) and in the service of the Lord's people there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make (31:29) a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem.

(31:34) They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owed it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared (31:41) in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. (31:49) So after I have completed this task, and have made sure that they have received the contribution, (31:57) I will go to Spain and visit you on the way.

I know that when I come to you, I will come in the (32:05) full measure of the blessing of Christ. And I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus (32:11) Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. (32:18) Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea, and the contribution (32:25) I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, (32:31) so that I may come to you with joy by God's will, and in your company be refreshed.

(32:39) The God of peace be with you all. Amen. (32:44) I'm here, and this is one of the reasons why I don't question why I'm here.

(32:51) Divine intervention, providence, preservation of God. Now it isn't through with Paul yet. (33:00) Paul, God doesn't want Paul to go to Rome just yet, does he? Paul thinks I have an (33:08) inkling that there's going to be some problems in Jerusalem when he gets there.

(33:15) And so he's pointing out to them that, I want to come see you on my way to Spain. (33:24) Well, he isn't going to Spain voluntarily on his own volition. He is being warned (33:34) several times about this trip to Jerusalem to give this money to the Christians there.

(33:43) What was it? Do you remember? (33:58) Don't go to Jerusalem. This is what's going to happen to you. (34:03) And even the daughters do the same thing, don't they? He has a warning.

Don't go to Jerusalem. (34:13) This is what's going to happen to you. And I think he has that in the back of his mind, (34:19) because when he says, I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the love of Christ, (34:23) to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

Pray that I may be kept safe (34:30) from the unbelievers in Judea, and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably (34:40) received by the Lord's people there, so that I may come to you with joy. (34:47) He has some reservation about whether or not they're going to accept his contribution. (34:58) What does that imply to you? What do you see there? (35:05) There's still a lot of animosity.

And what's that got to do with the contribution and them (35:16) receiving it? We're not going to accept that money from the Macedonians in Achaia. We're (35:50) going to give it to the Jews. What does that imply to us? (35:59) Think a little bit.

I have been approached many times with the concept, just the concept. (36:09) Nobody has ever approached me with the actual situation. Suppose I find a lottery ticket on (36:18) the ground, and it's a winning lottery ticket, and I cash it in, and I want to give it to you, (36:28) or portions of it to you.

Do you accept it? Do you accept it? Let me throw in another example. (36:43) Hell's Angels. You know them, or heard of them anyway.

Motorcycle guys. Salvation Army has (36:53) a real deep need for some money so that they can meet the needs of the poor and so on. And (37:00) they know it's a very real need.

So the Hell's Angels goes out, and they went out and set up (37:07) roadblocks and what have you, and asked for donations, collected money for people, and they (37:13) got the money, and they brought it to the Salvation Army, and they presented it to the (37:18) Salvation Army. And what do you think the Salvation Army did? They rejected it. They rejected it.

(37:31) Why? Because it meant that they implied, it was an implication that they were going to (37:39) have fellowship, or condone how they come up with the money, (37:46) and what they were going to do with the money. So if a well-meaning brother or sister finds a (37:59) lottery ticket and wants to give the proceeds to the church, what do you do with it? (38:11) Go on a little bit. (38:16) What do we know about God? God sustains His work.

God will see to it that His work has (38:32) the money that is necessary, and He wants it to be gotten gainfully, properly, through industry. (38:44) He doesn't want us to go out and play the lottery tickets. He doesn't want us to go out and gamble (38:50) at the casino.

He doesn't want us to go out and do these various things, does He? (38:57) He doesn't want us to get our money that way. He wants us to get our money gainfully, (39:04) and it keeps telling us, through His divine intervention, providence, and preservation, (39:09) that He will meet our needs as we see Him. You know what Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, (39:18) Matthew 6? Do not concern yourself with what you're going to eat, or what you're going to wear, (39:26) where you're going to live.

God knows what you need before you need it. So He's telling us, (39:37) let's trust God. Trust God.

And so, Paul, I was waiting for this, (39:47) just for this little moment to preach Cainism. (39:54) This is what I truly believe about God, and He wants us to get our money gainfully (40:03) through industry. He wants to bless us with our own ability, our own skills, (40:10) and wants us to get it the way honorably.

Let's put it this way. He does not want to share (40:22) glory with Satan, or what ifs. Circumstances, that's the word I was looking for.

He doesn't (40:36) share His glory with circumstances, or happenstance. He wants the glory. He wants (40:47) us to acknowledge the fact that what we have and what we've done has come through His blessings.

(40:56) Any comments on that? I had someone, I was reading an article, and one of the (41:10) people, a man, a brother in the brotherhood said something to the effect that the proceeds from a (41:21) lottery ticket, if someone got it and wanted to put it in through the church, he said, (41:34) he would rather for it to be put in where good would come from it. He said, (41:41) because you know that a lot of times good doesn't come from the lottery tickets. I'm not afraid of (41:55) bad words, or some instances of bad things going on.

He said, it should, you know, (42:07) why not accept it? He said, what is usually, you know, used for evil, he said, (42:18) can be used for blessing. Like Joseph said, you meant for me evil, but God meant (42:30) work for good, to save many people. So what do you think? Yeah, and because they sold him into (42:42) the Ishmaelites, took him to Egypt and sold him to the Egyptians.

What's that got to do with it? (42:57) They meant evil, but that wasn't the contribution. That wasn't money gained from (43:04) Lady Luck. God does not want to share his glory with Lady Luck.

(43:13) He doesn't. What you read was rationalization. And you know what my attitude is about (43:21) rationalization.

You can rationalize anything. God wants us to trust him. (43:30) Well, one lady at work, when I was working in Barrington, she told me, (43:41) pray for me that I have a winning lottery ticket.

I told her, I said, God's not in the lottery (43:50) ticket business. That's right. Well, my time is up.

Five minutes passed. So we can take this up (44:00) next week and get into chapter 16 and finish out the book of Romans at this time. But (44:12) Paul definitely wants us to pray for God's work.

(44:18) He's asking for divine intervention and providence. He's looking for that. (44:22)