



# Going Deeper

Romans 15:14–21

## Big Idea

Because of the gospel, every believer is called to function as a living priest and a pioneer — consecrating their life to God and carrying the gospel where it has not yet gone, because Christ's sacrifice has already done everything required to make us and others acceptable to God.

## Sermon Recap

### Grace Before Boldness (Romans 15:14–15)

Paul opens not with commands but with confidence in his readers — full of goodness, filled with knowledge. His boldness is not self-generated. It is rooted entirely in the grace God gave him. Every act of ministry flows from a divine appointment, not personal ambition. This is the pattern for every believer: what God initiates, we carry.

### The Priestly Metaphor — and Why It Isn't Heresy (Romans 15:16)

Paul describes his ministry in full temple language — he is a liturgical servant (leitourgon) performing priestly work (hierourgounta), presenting the Gentiles as an offering (prosphora) to God. This is not a second atonement. The Levitical system had two kinds of sacrifice: expiatory (atoning — finished forever by Christ on the Cross) and dedicatory (consecrating — declaring that something belongs to God). The Gentiles are the second kind — a firstfruits harvest presented to God, made holy not by ritual but by the Holy Spirit. The Cross accomplished it; the Spirit applied it; Paul announced it.

### Boasting That Points Away From Self (Romans 15:17–18)

Paul has genuine reason to glory — but every claim is immediately filtered through one phrase: “what Christ has accomplished through me.” The story belongs to Christ. Paul is the instrument. This is the model for every believer's testimony: name what God has done, refuse to subtract Christ from the story.

### From Jerusalem to Illyricum (Romans 15:19)

Paul traces an arc from Jerusalem all the way to modern-day Albania. He has not reached every person — he has established a representative witness in every major hub. His language echoes the Exodus: signs and wonders, the word going out from Zion. He is not freelancing — he is living inside God's prophetic script.

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## Holy Ambition — Go Where No One Has Gone (Romans 15:20–21)

Paul's "aim" is the Greek *philotimoumenon* — competitive, honor-seeking ambition, fully redeemed. His drive has been captured by one goal: pioneer gospel advance. He quotes Isaiah 52:15 — the chapter immediately before "he was wounded for our transgressions" — to show that bringing the gospel to those who have never heard is not a human strategy. It is the fulfillment of God's ancient promise.

## How to Go Deeper This Week

### Day 1 — Grace Creates Commission

**Read:** Romans 15:14–15; Ephesians 2:8–10

**Reflect:** Do you see your ministry and daily life as flowing from grace given to you, or from your own effort and ambition?

**Pray:** Ask God to help you act boldly — not in your own confidence, but because of the grace he has placed on your life.

### Day 2 — The Cross Is Enough

**Read:** Romans 15:16; Hebrews 10:10–14

**Reflect:** Do you live as someone who has been fully accepted by God through Christ — or do you still feel like you have to earn your standing?

**Pray:** Thank God that the atoning sacrifice is finished. Ask the Spirit to help you live as one who is already consecrated and set apart.

### Day 3 — Give Christ the Credit

**Read:** Romans 15:17–18; 1 Corinthians 1:30–31

**Reflect:** When you share what God has done in your life, do you point people to Christ — or do you quietly take credit?

**Pray:** Ask God to make you an instrument who tells his story faithfully, giving him all the glory.

### Day 4 — Word and Deed Together

**Read:** Romans 15:18–19; James 2:14–17

**Reflect:** Are your words about the gospel backed up by the way you actually live among your neighbors?

**Pray:** Ask God to show you one specific way to back your words with action this week.

**Practice:** Take one step this week toward a neighbor you haven't met yet.

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## Day 5 — Find Your Frontier

**Read:** Romans 15:20–21; Isaiah 52:15

**Reflect:** Who in your neighborhood has never truly heard the gospel? Who are the “those who have not heard” in your life?

**Pray:** Ask God to give you holy ambition — a drive to take the gospel to people who have not yet encountered it, starting with Peralta Canyon and Entrada Del Oro.

## Practical Applications

- **Go because grace sent you:** You were brought near to God by the Spirit through the finished work of Christ — not by anything you did. That gift creates a commission. Let grace be your fuel, not guilt.
- **Present yourself as the offering:** Romans 12:1 calls believers to present their bodies as a living sacrifice — not to atone, but to consecrate. Give your ordinary life, your neighborhood, your daily routine to God as an act of worship.
- **Let Christ get the credit:** Filter every testimony and every act of ministry through this question: am I pointing to what Christ has done, or to what I have done? Boast only in him.
- **Go where the gospel hasn't gone:** Paul's pioneer principle is not just for missionaries. Peralta Canyon and Entrada Del Oro are full of families who have no gospel roots yet. Half a mile from this church is your frontier.
- **Deed before word:** In 2026, young families are watching before they are listening. Show up. Serve. Love without an agenda. The life you live will open the door for the gospel you proclaim.

## Reflection and Discussion

1. Paul says his boldness comes from “the grace given to me by God” (v. 15). What would it look like for your boldness in faith to flow from grace rather than self-confidence?
2. Why does it matter that the Gentiles as “offering” in verse 16 is a dedicatory sacrifice and not an atoning one? How does that distinction protect the gospel?
3. Paul filters every claim about his ministry through what “Christ has accomplished through me” (v. 18). How does that challenge the way you talk about your own spiritual life?

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4. Paul had a pioneer strategy — go where Christ has not been named. Where is your personal frontier? Who in your life has never truly heard?
5. Peralta Canyon and Entrada Del Oro are half a mile from this church. What is one concrete step you can take this week to be a gospel presence in those communities?

## Scriptures for Further Study

- **Romans 12:1–2** – Presenting yourself as a living sacrifice
- **Hebrews 10:10–14** – The once-for-all offering of Christ
- **Isaiah 52:13–15** – The Servant and the nations who have not heard
- **Deuteronomy 26:1–11** – The firstfruits offering — background for Paul’s image
- **Ephesians 3:1–13** – Paul’s understanding of his own pioneer calling
- **Matthew 28:18–20** – The Great Commission — the same pioneer mandate

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