

How Does Christ Transform My Work?

Romans 15:14-21

(black Bible page 950; Children's Bible page 1420)

"In this overlooked passage, Paul pivots from teaching doctrine to discussing personal matters. He speaks personally, vocationally, and tactically."

PiVoT: We see Paul in this passage pivot from teaching the Roman believers to personal matters. We'll see in this passage that Paul is **Personal, Vocational, and Tactical**

Personal (15:14-15)

- Don't forget the highly personal, relational closing to this very doctrinal book. The Book of Romans = Doctrinal + Personal. Doesn't this reflect Jesus and the gospel?
- Paul admits he has been "very bold" in some parts this letter, "as a reminder."
 - Here are two examples: 2:21-14 (to Jews), 11:17-24 (to Gentiles)

Vocational (15:15-19)

- Paul can be misunderstood in these verses!
- First, why were you so bold in some places, Paul? Read his answer carefully, it has everything to do with his ministry to the Gentiles (see Acts 22:21).
 - But are churches safe for Gentiles? And will the Gentile Christians accept the believing Jews?! This is why Paul was "very bold" on matters related to this!
- Vocation, the old definition: vocation is from the Latin root vocare = to call. It's not just a job, God is calling you to it!

How does Paul see his labors? He speaks of it two ways:

1. Paul says it is "my work." (v17. He was even "proud" of it!?)
2. Paul also says it is Christ's work (v18). See the Holy Spirit in this passage.
 - Isn't seeing it as "Christ's work" the only one that is important?
 - The sleepwalking analogy. We don't do our work unconsciously. We are called to 'own' it, to be fully engaged, to care. It's 'your' garden, like Adam had.
 - "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me..." (v18) What? Why only talk about yourself?
 - One reason: to avoid unnecessary comparisons and competition with others. See 1 Cor 1:12, 2 Cor 11:1-6.

Tactical (15:20-21)

- Paul is strategic in his ministry, wanting to preach "not where Christ has already been named." This is smart – although it takes a big and dangerous commitment!
- If you are fully, consciously, passionately engaged, you will end up being tactical, to make your work the most effective possible.

To the Lord's Supper!

- To understand our work, we must understand His work first. His finished work.
- And Christ's work was Personal, Vocational, Tactical.