

Transformed!

How God Renews the Lives of His People

Get Personal

Part 21: *Beyond Our Best Intentions*

A Note from Pastor Keith...

The Apostle Paul pulls no punches! Spiritual transformation doesn't happen while we're busy concentrating on something else. It requires focus and sustained intensity, and Paul knows this. So even when writing to people he has never met—the Roman Christians, you and me—Paul is faithful to tell us exactly what we need to hear. Why is such hard-hitting talk so necessary? Because most of us never get beyond our best intentions.

Who are you? ***Be MORE!***

1. Got a fresh start? Set a new direction? Great!

¹⁴I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Romans 15:14 (all references are NIV)

2. ***Get on with it! Be who God made you to be! Do what God made you to do! Accept nothing less!***

¹⁵I have written you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again because of the grace God gave me ¹⁶to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:15-16

3. This work of God should be pursued ***with abandon!***

¹⁷Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. ¹⁸I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— ¹⁹by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

Romans 15:17-19

4. You have a role to play in building God's Kingdom. ***Be ambitious for it!***

²⁰It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

²¹Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

Romans 15:20-21 (quoting Isaiah 52:15)

What are your plans? ***Dream MORE!***

1. Do you have a godly passion? ***Pursue it!***

²²This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. ²³But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, ²⁴I plan to do so when I go

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How would you describe your spiritual foundation? What good things are in place that God can build on?

How would you describe your recent spiritual condition: Losing ground? Struggling? Stagnant? Growing gradually? Growing like crazy? How would you describe it?

"Abandon" and "ambition": Do these words describe you? Why or why not?

to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

Romans 15:23-24

2. Do you have a godly responsibility? ***Fulfill it!***

²⁵Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. ²⁶For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. ²⁷They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

Romans 15:25-27

3. But expect God to ***overrule*** and ***redirect***.

²⁸So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Romans 15:28-29

In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

Proverbs 16:9 (see also Jeremiah 10:23)

²³If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; ²⁴though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

Psalms 37:23-24

Do you pray? ***Pray MORE!***

1. Do you pray? ***Pray harder!***

³⁰I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ³¹Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed.

Romans 15:30-32

2. And while we're at it...***Pray bigger!***

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father.... ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14, 16-19

¹⁹Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:19-20

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21

³³The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Romans 15:33

Get Personal!

What are your plans spiritually?
What passions will you pursue?
What responsibilities will you fulfill? What HUGE EXCITING THINGS do you have coming up?

How prepared are you for God to overrule and redirect?

Think again about all that God is calling you to be and do. If that's ever going to happen, how vitally important is it that God be involved?

Does your current commitment to prayer reflect that importance?

If not, what will you do about it?