*divING DEEPER* **Discussion Guide**

**TEXT SUMMARY**

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This week’s sermon is the second in our series on Paul’s letter to the church in Rome. The text, 1:8-15, reveals the pastoral heart of the great Apostle. Even though he had never met most of the believers in Rome, he still thought of them with great pastoral affection.

The sermon emphasizes Paul’s pastoral concern for the believers in Rome:

1. ***Paul is grateful for the faith of the Roman believers, which was “proclaimed in all the world” (v. 8).***
2. ***Paul prays without ceasing for the church in Rome (v. 9-10).***
3. ***Paul desires wants to build up the believers in Rome and for them to build him up as well (v. 11-13).***
4. ***Paul’s ministry is centered in the gospel (v. 14-15).***

**INTRODUCTION** (observation):

As you read through the text, look for the clauses where Paul says something about both *himself* and *the Roman believers*. There are several such clauses in this passage, one in nearly every verse.

*What can we learn about Paul’s attitude toward the Roman Christians from this text?*

**DISCUSSION** (interpretation):

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1. Paul doesn’t hide the fact that he hopes to visit the Roman church so that they can support his mission to Spain. A cynic might look at Paul’s proposal as just another example of a man of God trying get money from the people of God. ***How are we to interpret Paul’s boldness in so forthrightly soliciting the help of the Roman church in his ministry?***
2. If Paul’s audience was made up of people who had already put their faith in Christ, why does Paul say he’s eager to “preach the gospel” to them? ***Why would believers need to have the gospel preached to them?***

**SO WHAT?** (application)

Why does it matter to us today, in 21st century North America, that Paul expressed pastoral concern for the believers in Rome?

1. This text helps us understand the concerns that lie heavy on a pastor’s heart.***Pray for the leaders of our fellowship as they carry the burdens of God’s people.***
2. Paul hoped not only to encourage and build up the believers in Rome; he hoped that they would be an encouragement to him. ***How can we encourage and support our the leaders of our fellowship?***