

**Sermon Title: The God Directed Plans of a Called Leader**

**Sermon Text: Romans 15:22-29**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the servants of Christ to evaluate their calling based on the providence, plans and priorities of God.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 applications the God directed leader must evaluate when serving God.**

- I. Some hindrances to our plans are caused by the **providence** of God. V.22
- II. All our **plans** must be submissive to the providential will and **plans** of God. Vv.23-24
- III. Our desired plans must not override the known plans and **priorities** of God. Vv.25-27
- IV. The fulfilling of God's providential plans, priorities, and purpose result in the **prosperity** of Christ's blessing for others. V.29

**I. Some hindrances to our plans are caused by the **providence** of God. V.22**

Definition of providence: God's sovereign control of everything exercised not through the miraculous, but through ordering all the complex natural events so that accomplishing His will is the final outcome. (Ex. Genesis 50:20; Joshua, Esther)

Therefore Paul's as well as every servant of God's personal plans are continually subject to God's direction and revisions. (1 Thessalonians 2:17-20) Satan can hinder too.

**Acts 16:7** After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.

**Jeremiah 10:23** O LORD, I know the way of man *is* not in himself; *It is* not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

**Proverbs 16:9** A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

**Proverbs 19:21** There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the LORD'S counsel-- that will stand.

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Enkopto (hindered) means to cut into or cut out. Sometimes the word was used of cutting tunnels dug across a road that hindered the march of an army. The imperfect tense in the Greek verb indicates something continuous, and the passive indicates the cause of it was from the outside. The cause for Paul was God, the reason was God's providential purposes and plans.

**II. All our plans must be submissive to the providential will and **plans** of God. Vv.23-24**

"The faithful servant of God knows that true success in the Lord's work can only be attained as they wholly accept his divine calling and unstintingly commits his heart, his mind, his time, his activities and his spiritual gifts to fulfilling that calling." [John MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Romans 9-16, p.341]

Even the travel plans of Paul were directed and controlled by the providential intentions of God. While Paul hoped and wished to do some things, they were submissive to the plans and purposes of God. Therefore, be careful and strategic in making plans. We can never be sure of our plans if we are not clear on God's purposes for our lives, thereby allowing Him to guide the circumstances, and learning to rejoice, and find contentment in His will being done.

**Luke 14:28** "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish *it*—

**Luke 14:31** "Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?"

**Luke 14:33** "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Spain included the city and region referred to in the Old Testament as Tarshish, the place referred to in the book of Jonah 1:3. Spain would eventually be evangelized in the middle of the third century.

Therefore, realize that careful, prayerful and organized planning does not conflict with dependence on God's providential guidance, nor does His providence excuse us from planning.

**III. Our desired plans must not override the known plans and priorities of God. Vv.25-27**

- A. The financial priority of raising support for the poor saints in Jerusalem. Vv.25-26  
The church began in Jerusalem. This trip was about 1000 miles the opposite direction. But the need due to persecution, poverty, and planting among believers, required others to help.
- B. The faithful priority of respect support for the Gentiles and Jews. V.27  
This was also part of the way of assuring that the divisions between the Jews and Gentiles mended by Christ who tore down the dividing wall, was not being rebuilt.  
**Ephesians 2:14** For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,  
**2 Corinthians 8:2-4** that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. **3** For I bear witness that according to *their* ability, yes, and beyond *their* ability, *they were* freely willing, **4** imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

**IV. The fulfilling of God's providential plans, priorities, and purpose result in the prosperity of Christ's blessing for others. V.29**

**(2 Corinthians 11:23-27; Philippians 1:12-14, 18)**

**Romans 15:6** that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 4:7** and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 4:12** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

**Philippians 4:19** And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.