

Road Trip Devotion - Romans 15:24-29

by Tony Kafka, Growth Ministries Pastor

"I am planning to go to Spain, and when I do, I will stop off in Rome. And after I have enjoyed your fellowship for a little while, you can provide for my journey.

But before I come, I must go to Jerusalem to take a gift to the believers there. For you see, the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have eagerly taken up an offering for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem. They were glad to do this because they feel they owe a real debt to them. Since the Gentiles received the spiritual blessings of the Good News from the believers in Jerusalem, they feel the least they can do in return is to help them financially. As soon as I have delivered this money and completed this good deed of theirs, I will come to see you on my way to Spain. And I am sure that when I come, Christ will richly bless our time together." (Romans 15:24-29; NLT)

The unity of the church is nurtured as Christ followers "accept one another" (Romans 15:7). One practical way that unity is lived out is in sharing money with each other. This sharing is often facilitated by the offerings received in the gatherings of the church. As we read this part of this letter, we can see how comfortable Paul, as a church leader, was in talking about receiving and giving money. Can we become comfortable with the offering time? Sure we can, as we observe how sharing money is a reasonable outcome of the unity of the church.

Sharing money is comfortable when we notice two good reasons to share money: one, to help people who are in need for the basics of daily life; and two, to support those communicating the good news of Jesus to those who have not come to faith.

Sharing money is comfortable when we see how much sense it makes that those who benefit spiritually from others turn around and materially assist those who have helped them. Paul clearly stated it this way: "Since the Gentiles received the spiritual blessings of the Good News from the believers in Jerusalem, they feel the least they can do in return is to help them financially."

Sharing money is comfortable when we understand that the money will be used for a clear purpose. One offering was "for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem." The other purpose was to provide for Paul's mission journey to Spain: "I am planning to go to Spain, and when I do, I will stop off in Rome. And after I have enjoyed your fellowship for a little while, you can provide for my journey."

Sharing money is comfortable when we picture the connectedness of the church around the world. Believers from Greece were sharing with people in Palestine and believers in Rome were asked to share in the expense of preaching the gospel to people in Spain.