



Sermon Growth Guide

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THE FULL MEASURE | Romans 15:23-29

October 18, 2026

Key Verse: Romans 15:29. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Big Idea: Paul's ministry included generous, sacrificial giving. He knew the spiritual must touch the material to experience the fullness of God's blessing.

Foundations

In these seven verses, we see Paul's vision of the church—a unique whole—a Kingdom presence at work in the world. Macedonia, Corinth, Jerusalem, Rome, Spain. We are reminded of his body metaphor in I Corinthians 12. "The body is a unit, though it is made of many parts...So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other...If one part suffers, every part suffers with it."

He acknowledges that his pioneering work is done in this part of the world. He laid the foundation and now it is for others to go further. But, before he can head to Rome and onto Spain, he must go to Jerusalem to bring financial "fruit" from the wealthier Greek churches. Fruit, not simply money, but something produced from the committed faith of the Gentiles.

In II Corinthians 8:14 Paul writes, "At the present time your plenty will supply what they need so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need." Might the plenty of the Jerusalem Christians be the "spiritual blessing" Paul refers to when saying, "For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jew's spiritual blessing, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessing."

In this conclusion, Paul shifts from a theologian writing a comprehensive doctrinal essay to a pastor who longs to be with fellow believers to give and receive encouragement and support.

Paul understands that God's kingdom is made of a spiritual world and a physical world and Paul addresses the needs of both. Paul brings the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Understanding God's Word

Read together Romans 15:23-29, II Corinthians 9:6-11, Acts 20:32-35

Paul longed to go to Rome for years and then to Spain. What kept him from going? He was an evangelist first and foremost. Why would he include fund raising for the Messianic Jews in Jerusalem as part of his mission? What spiritual connection does Paul make to the material gifts given by the Greeks?

Applying God's Word

R. G. LeTourneau led a phenomenally successful company but what makes him noteworthy is his commitment to live on 10% and give 90% to build God's kingdom. He paraphrases Malachi 3:10 this way "I shovel out the money, and God shovels it back – but God has a bigger shovel."

God has big shovel. What can you trust him with? Are you missing out on the full blessing?

Witnessing God's Word

The world sits up and takes notice when we are generous. Not just generous but sacrificially generous. With our time, skills, and money. Paul makes it clear that the generosity of the Greeks will bring praise and glory to God. Is your generosity bringing glory to God. How might it increase?