

Strong Foundations: The Romans 15 Blueprint for Local Church Life

Romans 15 gives an extraordinary overview and insight into the mission, practices, principles, and priorities of Paul, his team, and the local churches working with him. In this session, we will begin to draw up a list of what they did, how they did it, and what made them so fruitful. We will develop some of these themes more fully in later sessions. The goal in this session is to grasp in broad terms what we can learn from their example and apply it to 21st century local church life.

Mike Betts leads Relational Mission, a network of churches which is part of the global Newfrontiers family. He is the author of *From the Inside Out, Relational Mission: A Way of Life*, and *The Prayers of Many*. Mike is passionate about the church enjoying her inheritance in Christ, involving church planting, gospel expansion, corporate prayer, and seeing the next generation grow into all that God has for them. Mike is married to Sue, and they live in Lowestoft, Suffolk, UK. He is part of the eldership team at Lowestoft Community Church, which he, Sue, and a number of others planted over 30 years ago. At that time Mike and Sue sought help and advice from Terry Virgo, who had begun to serve emerging churches. Terry's work and relationships with churches became the start of Newfrontiers. In 2011, Terry handed over responsibility for Newfrontiers to a number of his spiritual sons, and Mike began to lead the network that is now Relational Mission. Relational Mission works predominantly in the UK and mainland Europe but with growing connections across the world. Its network includes some 70 churches of which 30 are church plant and pioneering situations.

I. Unity and Maturity

- A. Writing as the mature to the mature
- B. Not arrogant but servant-hearted
- C. Attitude of blessing
- D. Not about we are right & you are wrong

II. God's Global Purposes (v8-12)

- A. One new man in Christ
- B. The goal – 'a new tribe on the earth'
- C. Nations in our hearts
- D. He and we will spread out as far as the relationships go (v24)
- E. We do it together – one agenda (v24)

- III. Making disciples not just converts (v14-15)
 - A. Character, Knowledge & Skills (v14)
 - B. Write boldly on some points (v15)
 - C. Disciples self-motivate, but Ephesian 4 ministries are about equipping.

- IV. Breaking new ground with the gospel
 - A. Jerusalem to Illyricum (v19)
 - B. Priority is gospel and people coming to Christ (v22)
 - C. When Gospel and planting done – He will come (v23)

- V. Gospel Advance (v18-19)
 - A. Words, Works and Wonders

- VI. Empowering the poor (v25-28)
 - A. Apostolic function/mandate not a department
 - B. Jesus empowered people
 - C. Gospel is the greatest empowerment – Jesus cared for the whole person

- VII. Friends on the journey (v24)
 - A. Not a headquarters visit – it was friendship
 - B. Mutual helping and encouragement
 - C. Church is a family not a business

Suggested Readings: See Session 1 Notes