

“concerning” [the ESV paraphrases a bit with “to show”]; in this instance the action is concerning “truth of God”) ... **in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs**, (the Greek text uses a preposition for “to” or “for” that can express purpose; the infinitive that follows can be “to confirm” or “to secure”; “the promises” are modified as “of the fathers”, but the ESV arguably correctly paraphrases the sense of God’s having given those promises “to the patriarchs”; *TLSB* notes that the Old Testament promises to the Jews are fulfilled in Jesus and suggests the promises to all nations are treated in vv.9-12, though the promises to the patriarchs arguably already were in some sense promises to all nations) ... **V.9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.** (the Greek conjunction can be “and” or “but”; next is the “Gentiles” or “nations” [in some contrast to those of the circumcision in v.8; next in the Greek text is the same preposition for “on behalf of” or for the sake of” or “concerning” only this time followed by “mercy”; there is no second “for”, though the second infinitive “to glorify” could be taken as parallel to the infinitive “to confirm” in v.8 [and the glorifying goes back to vv.7 and 6; Sanday-Headlam suggests that the call of the Gentiles is shown to be equally with the fulfilment of the promise to the Jews, dependent on the covenant made with Abraham, but compare Cranfield on the solution to the difficult construction, and see also Grothe]; in this instance, “God” is the object of their glorifying; *CSSB* summarizes well, “From the beginning, God’s redemptive work in and for Israel had in view the redemption of the Gentiles [see Ge 12:3]. They would both see God’s mighty and gracious acts for his people and hear the praises of God’s people as they celebrated what God had done for them...Thus they would come to know the true God and glorify him for his mercy...God’s greatest and climactic act for Israel’s salvation was the sending of the Messiah to fulfill the promises made to the patriarchs and so to gather in the great harvest of the Gentiles.”) ... **As it is written**, (the Greek subordinating comparative conjunction “just as” introduces the usual third-person singular perfect-tense passive-voice indicative verb “it has been written” with the ongoing result in the present that “it stands written” [we might discuss to what extent the passages that follow support the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s preceding claim]; in this instance, what follows appears to be from Greek translations of the Hebrew of Psalm 18:49 with further reference to David’s song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:50) ... **“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles**, (the reason behind “therefore” does not seem clear in the excerpt; the verb might be more-literally say-out-the-same-thing [the root is often translated “confess”; we might discuss hymns as sung confessions of the faith]; “you” is singular of the Triune God; “in” can be “among” [so the AV translates it some 117 of its 2782 uses]; the “Gentiles” or “the nations”) ... **and sing to your name.”** (perhaps more-literally the clause could be rendered, “and to the name of You I will play”; God and His Name can be used interchangeably in some cases; the Greek verb is the root of the noun for “Psalm” and has to do first with plucking strings or striking chords, playing or singing to a stringed instrument such as a harp [so much for speaking the psalms or not using instruments?])

... **V.10 And again it is said**, (“and again” we might better translate “he is saying” [the ESV changes the active voice to passive; Cranfield says the Scriptures could be the supplied subject or Moses, better than God]; what follows is essentially a quotation of a Greek translation of the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 32:43) ... **“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”** (the ESV text note indicates that the reading used is reflected in the Masoretic Text; “people” is a usual reference to God’s people of Israel) ... **V.11 And again**, (“and again” is followed in some manuscripts by “he is saying”, as was found in v.10; in this case what follows is from Psalm 117:1) ... **“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”** (again “Gentiles” can be “nations”, and “the peoples” would seem to be the Israelites) ... **V.12 And again Isaiah says**, (the “again” is referring to another passage, not another passage from Isaiah; in this case Isaiah 11:10 from a Greek translation of the Hebrew [confer also Revelation 5:5; 22:16]) ... **“The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”** (if Jesus’s service to the Gentiles was unexpressed in vv.7-9, it is more explicit in this verse; the reference to God the Son is followed by references to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, for a nice Trinitarian reference; Cranfield notes that the fourfold testimony given, there is at least one passage from the Law, Prophets, and Writings) ... **V.13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing**, (first in the Greek text is the conjunction that can be translated “and” or “but”, which the ESV omits; next is “the God of hope”; “hope” was just mentioned in vv.12 and 4 and is mentioned again in v.13b [Sanday-Headlam says the special attribute and the whole benediction is suggested by the concluding words of the previous quotation]; the verb “fill” is optative again [confer v.5]; “you” is a plural “all-y’all”; there is no preposition in the Greek text behind the ESV’s “with”, but the Greek genitive case can be used in reference to a content that fills and so is translated “with”; Sanday-Headlam refers to joy and peace as the result of true faith in the Christian’s heart, and we might think of the Lord’s greeting of “peace” on Easter Evening and the disciples’ reaction of joy [John 20:19-20]; more-literally we might translate “in the to-believe”) ... **so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.** (again the preposition usually translated “to” or “for” gives the purpose more-literally translated “for the to-abound”; “you” is a plural “all-y’all”; again “hope” had just been mentioned in vv.4, 12, and 13a; “in” or “by” or “with”; “power” or “might” or “Strength”; “of the Holy Spirit” [again with the Father earlier in this verse and the Son at the end of the preceding verse, this is a nice Trinitarian reference; reference is made to Romans 14:17 where Paul mentions peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; Roehrs-Franzmann comments that by believing, by receiving from God, both strong and weak can receive the joy and peace they need for living and worshiping together, that by God’s working, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they can abound in hope and meet the severest demands made on their love with kindly evenness of mind) ...

15:14-33 – Conclusion:

After an “Introduction”, including the theme of God’s righteousness (Romans 1:1-17, to which the present section in some ways returns with what Grothe calls a new perspective), the Divinely-inspired St. Paul at this point has in major sections addressed the universal need for that righteousness of God (Romans 1:18-3:20), that righteousness’s being at least universally offered in order to be received by faith (Romans 3:21-5:21), that righteousness’s being lived out (Romans 6:1-8:39), that righteousness’s being vindicated in regards to the seeming problem of its large-scale rejection by the ethnic/religious Jews, and that righteousness’s being practiced (Romans 12:1-15:13). What remains for us to consider is first what can be regarded as the epistle’s “Conclusion” (15:14-33) and then St. Paul’s “Commendation and Greetings” (16:1-27). While Grothe sees 15:14-33 as “Support for Paul as Missionary”, a subsection of the continuing section “Specific Encouragements to Christians in Rome about Relationships to Other Christians” (14:1-16:20; a placement that Grothe argues for with some persuasive reasons), most other commentators see 15:14-33 as a part of, if not all of, an independent section of some sort. For example, Franzmann 1961 book *The Word of the Lord Grows* sees 15:14-33 as “Paul’s Plans for Missionary Work in the West”, and Franzmann’s 1968 commentary labels 15:14-16:27 as a “Conclusion”, the first part of which is 15:14-33 and labeled as “The Apostle’s Plans: From Jerusalem to Rome to Spain”. Likewise, *TLSB* sees 15:14-16:27 as a “Conclusion”, with the first subsection’s being 15:14-33 and subheaded “Paul’s Travel Plans”. (Cranfield and Middendorf and Schuler simply label 15:14-16:27 “Conclusion”, while *CSSB* labels only 15:14-33 as “Conclusion”.) Similarly, Sanday-Headlam considers 15:14-33 as the first half of an “Epilogue”, which half includes personal explanations, the motive of the Epistle, and a proposal to visit Rome, though those hardly function as subheadings for what amounts to be three subdivisions. To be sure, the critical edition of the Greek text that I usually use divides 15:14-33 into three paragraphs (as does the ESV, though the ESV puts the three paragraphs into two separate sections). The somewhat-overlapping contents of the three paragraphs may be acknowledged well with the following three subheadings that we use in what follows: “Past Actions” (vv.14-21), “Future Plans” (vv.22-29), and “Prayer Request” (vv.30-33). For the sake of completeness, we note here that *Lutheran Service Book’s* Three-Year Lectionary appoints no passages from this section of Romans and that no passages from this section of Romans are listed in the *LSB: Hymn Selection Guide* as being associated with any *LSB* hymns.

- 15:14-21 – Past Actions: As outlined immediately above, we are beginning what can be regarded as the Conclusion to the epistle of Romans, with its first paragraph that we have given the subheading “Past Actions”. These “Past Actions” arguably are the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s assessment of the Roman Christians, a statement of his purpose in having written the epistle, what Christ has done through him, and his past practice regarding where he has worked as an apostle. ... **V.14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers**, (the word order of the Greek clause is quite different, and the ESV seems to simplify and reduce as it paraphrases; there is the weaker coordinating continuative conjunction “and” or “but” somewhat connecting what precedes with what follows; the verb “I have been persuaded” or “have confidence” is first person singular referring to St. Paul;

the verb's perfect tense usually refers to past action with a present ongoing result [with reference to Burton, Grothe refers to this instance as an intensive perfect]; the passive voice leaves unexpressed the one doing the persuading [we probably can think of it as a Divine passive, where the Holy Spirit has given St. Paul the confidence, the Holy Spirit has done the persuading; Luther refers back to St. Paul's being persuaded in the Lord Jesus back in 14:14, and we can add St. Paul's being convinced that nothing separates us from the love of God in Christ Jesus back in 8:38]; the vocative "brothers of me" indicates whom St. Paul is addressing, and, as we ended the previous section seeing St. Paul's addressing weak/strong Jew/Gentile, so we likely should think of the address of Paul's "brothers" here as broadly including all the Christians in Rome [the ESV text note indicates that the masculine "brothers" here and in v.30 can also include "sisters"; Grothe says the more usual "brothers" address is strengthened by the addition of "my" and that the relationship remains important in the present section]; what comes next in the Greek perhaps is more-literally translated "even myself I", perhaps emphasizing the contrast with the following "about you-all", perhaps as if the letter might have left the hearer/reader doubtful that the Divinely-inspired St. Paul thinks very much positive about the Roman Christians, especially after the immediately preceding rebuke of the weak and the strong for each's respective treatment of the other; in the body of their commentary, Sanday-Headlam title vv.14-21 "Apology for Admonitions"; Cranfield says St. Paul "emphasizes his confidence in their Christian maturity, so as to prevent possible misinterpretation of the boldness which he is conscious of having shown in part of the letter") ... **that you yourselves are full of goodness**, (again the ESV seems to simplify or reduce what could be more-literally translated "that even you-all full you-all are of goodness"; the Greek word order puts the emphatic contrasting references to Paul and to the Roman Christians closer together than the English does [Cranfield notes an emphasis on the Roman Christians independent of St. Paul]; the adjective "full" in this clause is a different expression than that which follows in the next phrase; the predication of the Roman Christians with goodness uses a present-tense verb, the specific goodness may be what follows [Sanday-Headlam refers back to the Roman Christians' positive reputation mentioned in 1:8 and also says that the combination of goodness and knowledge represent the qualities demanded by the discussion in chapter 14; Luther draws attention to the sequence, commenting that knowledge without goodness/love which edifies puffs a man up and that without both one cannot instruct another]) ... **filled with all knowledge** (as noted above, the expression "filled" in this phrase is different from the preceding expression for "full"; this perfect-passive participle again refers to past action with present result and leaves unspecified who filled them [again we probably can think of it as a Divine passive, where the Holy Spirit has filled the Roman Christians]; the specific "knowledge" in view would seem to be that of the content or object of the Christian faith [Sanday-Headlam says, "the true knowledge which consists in a deep and comprehensive grasp of the real principles of Christianity"; Grothe remarks not "every kind of knowledge" but "all the knowledge", the entirety of knowledge every Christian has of the gospel; Luther says the knowledge comes from faith, presumably as trust in the object of

faith], which knowledge is perhaps a necessary but not in and of itself sufficient circumstance for the instruction that follows in the next clause [for example, knowing what needs to be taught is not the same as the ability to teach it) ... **and able to instruct one another.** (the present-participle “being able” comes first in the Greek phrase [confer the related word for power twice in v.19]; the coordinating copulative conjunction that comes next, somewhat out of position, is usually “and” but also can be “even” [as I have suggested twice already in this verse above]; “one another” could continue the contrast between the Roman Christians and St. Paul [who is about to state his purpose for writing the epistle, though there he does not say that the epistle was to instruct them as much as to remind them]; “to warn” or “admonish” or “exhort” [the infinitive is of neither the usual verb for “teach” nor the usual verb for “encourage”; the particular verb is used only 8 times in the New Testament, all on Paul’s lips or pen, as it were]; *TLSB* comments, “All who have received the words of this Letter are competent to instruct” and says “There may be some hyperbole here” [on the hyperbole, confer Cranfield], however Franzmann says St. Paul’s words “are more than urbane tact or gracious modesty; they are genuinely apostolic” [Luther remarks that we must always assume better things regarding our neighbor; we might think of the need for the strong to teach the weak more about Christian freedom, for example; v.14 as the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s assessment of the Roman Christians quite naturally leads to vv.15-16’s statement of his purpose in having written the epistle [for his part, Luther somewhat contrasts their teaching one another and St. Paul’s reminding them, that is, not teaching them) ... **V.15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder,** (the Greek coordinating conjunction usually is “and” or “but”, with the adversative sense “but” seeming best here, though it is not the strong adversative “but”; the Greek comparative adverb has the sense more “boldly” or “daringly” or “audaciously” [confer the related verb in v.18; Sanday-Headlam refer to not sentiment but manner of writing; Cranfield suggests the adverb may be rendered “somewhat boldly” or “rather boldly”, and, in that vein, confer the ESV’s “very boldly”; Grothe comments “more boldly than one might have expected”]; the verb is simple past tense “I wrote”, with the subject “I” entailed in the verb and no contrasting or emphatic pronouns [with reference to Burton, Grothe says the past-tense is from the point of view of the reader when he reads the letter; St. Paul’s not mentioning the inspiration of the Holy Spirit should not be taken as a rejection of the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, as the immediately surrounding context makes clear]; the recipients are “you-all”; in the Greek next is “from” or “away from” a singular “part” [Cranfield notes that it could be part of St. Paul’s intention but more naturally connects with the writing; confer and compare the ESV’s “on some points”; Sanday-Headlam lists a number of parts of the epistle suggested as instances; Grothe perhaps better reflects the singular form of the Greek with “in part”]; the Greek comparative particle “as” the ESV apparently paraphrases “by way of”; the following present-participle is a “reminding” [perhaps with the added sense of “again”], and the Greek has a the pronoun “you-all” as the objects of that reminding, essentially translated out by the ESV; Grothe says St. Paul writes as one not directly involved; Franzmann comments, “Only a man wholly

selfless in his authority could designate the huge theological riches of his letter as a ‘reminder’ of what the saints in Rome already knew”; *CSSB* comments, “Since Paul had never preached or taught in Rome, he may be referring to Christian doctrine generally known in the church”; *TLSB* comments, “Particularly needed in Rome was the reminder of the equal place of Jews and Gentiles under both Law and Gospel, as well as within the Church”; Sanday-Headlam say St. Paul is “putting more clearly and definitely the recognized principles and commands of the Gospel”) ... **because of the grace given me by God** (after the Greek preposition translated “because of” is “the grace”, which is modified by the simple past-tense aorist-passive participle “having been given” and the pronoun “to me” and the propositional phrase “by God” [the purpose of the not saving-grace but additional-grace that God gave to St. Paul is arguably expressed in what follows in v.16; confer and compare St. Paul’s mention in 1:11 about imparting to the Roman Christians some spiritual gift]; we might confer and compare the Roman Christians’ in v.14 being full of goodness and knowledge and able to instruct one another; we also might reflect on the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s rhetorical purpose and style in this regard, remembering that he did not previously work in Rome or found the various congregations that are there; Cranfield discusses whether the “because” relates to the reminding or the writing, and he prefers the reminding, but the distinction would seem to be without a difference, as the writing is to remind) ... **V.16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles** (the Greek text might be translated more literally “for the to be me”, but the idea certainly is, as the ESV generally renders it, for the purpose of St. Paul’s being a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles [confer “Christ Jesus” in v.17; Cranfield discusses how we might expect the ministry to be directed to God and how St. Paul’s ministry might be being described as subordinate and auxiliary to that of Christ the Priest]; the particular Greek word used for “minister” refers to one who performs a public service, particularly a religious public service [the particular Greek word appears to be the root of our English word “liturgist”; Cranfield notes it was used back in 13:6]; while the Greek word translated “Gentiles” can be “nations” and have the sense of unbelievers, “Gentiles” does seem to be the sense in this verse in contrast to the ethnic/religious Jews [confer again later in the verse and in v.18], though the case is certainly not that St. Paul’s primary service to the Gentiles completely ruled out his work among the ethnic/religious Jews, with whom he often started in each new place that he went, as we repeatedly saw in our Midweek Bible Study of the book of Acts [confer *TLSB*; to some extent St. Paul returns to the topic of the Jews in 15:26 ff.]; for his part, Luther thinks St. Paul is starting to assert some authority over the congregations in Rome by his being the apostle to the Gentiles, with reference to Galatians 2:7 and 1 Timothy 2:7) ... **in the priestly service of the gospel of God**, (the Greek present-tense participle has the meaning of performing sacred rites [the verb is used in the New Testament only the one time in this verse]; the participle and the following “the gospel of God” are both grammatically in the accusative [object] case, arguably going back to the also accusative-case “me” and “minister/liturgist” earlier in the verse [the Gospel of the free gift of the righteousness of God has been emphasized throughout Romans as for Jew and

Gentile; we might wonder if it is too fanciful to see the verse's essentially mentioning a liturgist and priest as referring, respectively, to service in both the Divine Service's Service of the Word and Service of the Sacrament? [confer. 18's Word and Deed?]; *CSSB* says "Paul's priestly function was different from that of the Levitical priests. They were involved with the rituals of the temple, whereas he preached the gospel", but the Zondervan reformed bias may be showing through the *CSSB*, as St. Paul also baptized and celebrated the Lord's Supper, what might be considered "rituals" of the new "temples") ... **so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable**, ("so that" can introduce purpose and result, especially where God is involved and people do not get in the way; the verb "it might be" is in the subjunctive mood appropriate for purpose and result that may or may not be accomplished; "the offering of the Gentiles" is not an expiatory or propitiatory offering in order to satisfy God's wrath, as Christ's offering was and did, but the word can be a "bringing to" [offerings of all sorts are appropriate to those involved in priestly service, of course; *CSSB* refers to St. Paul's bringing the offering, but St. Paul himself does not say that; Franzmann refers back to 12:1 and the call to offer bodies as living sacrifices; Cranfield says that that there is also a sacrifice of the Jews "goes without saying"]; the predicated adjective is "pleasing" or "acceptable" or "well-received", presumably to or by God, and not by the work itself but arguably because of the faith that God Himself worked in those so brought [confer *TLSB*'s citation of Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV:34, though *TLSB* also says the reference is perhaps also to the collection being gathered for Jerusalem and refers to 15:25, though that collection hardly seems to be in view at this point in the Conclusion], as what follows would seem to indicate) ... **sanctified by the Holy Spirit**. (the Greek "having been sanctified" [or set apart for Divine purposes; Sanday-Headlam refers to sacrifices' being without spot or blemish] is a perfect-passive participle, again with action completed in the past and ongoing result [though we might think of both complete and variable being made holy in this lifetime {complete in justification and progressing in sanctification, sometimes more and sometimes less}]; in this instance the agent of the passive form is expressed with the prepositional phrase "in" or "by" the Holy Spirit [confer the power of the Spirit mentioned in v.19; and we should think of the work of St. Paul and others in the Office of the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacraments as how the Holy Spirit is given and through which the Holy Spirit works]; note well the Trinitarian nature of v.16 [confer Franzmann] that mentions Christ, God arguably as the Father, and the Holy Spirit [though compare "the gospel of Christ" in v.19]; with vv.15-16 having stated the Divinely-inspired St. Paul's purpose in having written the epistle, including the work of the Holy Spirit, we can see how he flows into what Christ has done through him in vv.17-19) ... **V.17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God**. (essentially first in the Greek text is the coordinating inferential conjunction "therefore", seemingly drawing a conclusion from what has just been said about God's working through St. Paul; next is the present-tense verb "I am having", followed by the direct-object noun "the boasting" [the same word for the "boasting" that was excluded back in Romans 3:27 {confer *TLSB*}; compare the ESV's paraphrase "reason to be proud"; Cranfield says the definite

article before boasting in the Greek text points back to what was said in v.16]; then is the prepositional phrase “in Christ Jesus” [confer the mention of Christ Jesus in v.16]; next is “the things” in the same accusative case as the direct-object “boasting”, followed by the prepositional phrase “to God”, apparently modifying “the things” and not necessarily the direction of the boasting [Luther refers to the things that pertain to God; compare the ESV’s paraphrase “my work for God”, especially as in the Greek text St. Paul does not seem to claim the work as his own but perhaps rather is boasting in Christ Jesus of the work the Spirit, as seems more explicit in vv.18-19 that follow]) ... **V.18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed**, (the Greek text essentially begins with the coordinating explanatory conjunction “for” [Cranfield suggests the vv.18-19a explain how the glorying in v.16 is a glorying in Christ as described in v.17]; then comes the negative particle “no” for qualified negations, modifying the future-tense verb “will be bold” or “will dare” [confer/compare the related adverb in v.15 {that the ESV does not reflect the connection is unfortunate}; the Divinely-inspired St. Paul was bold enough to write but not to boast, except as follows]; the verb is only “to speak”, but Luther thinks “to do” is included based on what follows; next is the indefinite pronoun “what”, followed by the infinitive “to speak”; the following relative pronoun “of which” is essentially filled-in by “not He accomplished Christ through me for obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed” [the ESV paraphrases the sense of “not accomplished” with the “except what”, though there would have been a way to say that in Greek words, if desired {Cranfield calls St. Paul’s sentence as is “clumsy” and says one of the other ways of expressing the idea would have been more straightforward, though we might refrain from such criticism of the Holy Spirit and find in ourselves any problem of proper understanding}]; the phrase “by word and deed” arguably could modify Christ’s working through St. Paul [confer the ministry of Word and Sacrament in v.16? confer what follows in v.19?] or it could modify the obedience of the Gentiles [in which case, we might be inclined to add also “thought” before “word and deed”?]) ... **V.19 by the power of signs and wonders**, (“in” or “by” seems most naturally to refer to the immediately preceding “word and deed” but could go back to what Christ accomplished through St. Paul; the “power” [confer later in v.19 and the related word in v.14] seems to be in some sense “intermediate” power of “signs and wonders” [in other words, of the “miracles” themselves] not necessarily the final or ultimate power behind the signs and wonders, that is, the power of the Spirit as mentioned in what follows in the verse; Franzmann sees as significant the mention of “signs” first pointing to God and then as supernatural or startling “wonders” and says the New Testament never speaks of Jesus’s or His apostles’ deeds merely as “Wonders”; Grothe notes that false christs and Satan have imitation signs and wonders but that the genuine ones attest to the truth of the accompanying spoken word of God; Luther seems to think that because of the false signs the following phrase is added) ... **by the power of the Spirit of God** (again “in” or “by” could go back to the immediately preceding “signs and wonders” or the work of Christ through St. Paul [which seems less-likely, given its somewhat obvious redundancy?]; on the “power” confer earlier in v.19 and the

related word in v.14; in this case the power is that of the “Spirit of God” [the “of God” is textually less certain, but the meaning is clear even without the word; confer the sanctifying of the Holy Spirit already mentioned in v.16]) ... —**so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;** (the subordinating conjunction “so that” introduces a result [Cranfield considers whether it looks back to the latter part of v.15 or v.18]; next in the Greek text is “me”, which will function as the subject “I” of the infinitive that comes later; next in the Greek text is “from Jerusalem” [we might reflect on the sense in which St. Paul started from Jerusalem, especially since his “sending agency” was arguably the church in Syrian Antioch; *TLSB* refers to Jerusalem as an “Early location of Paul’s ministry”, but the Acts 26:20 passage to which *TLSB* refers is later than the writing of Romans; with reference to Acts 1:8, *CSSB* says of Jerusalem, “The home of the mother church, where the gospel originated and its dissemination began”]; then is “and in a circle as far as Illyricum” [the idea in the word “circle” is said to be that of a complete circle of nations around the Mediterranean Sea, though Illyricum hardly completes the circle or entails the extent of St. Paul’s travels to that point {if he even got there; confer *TLSB*’s “Exactly when Paul was there is uncertain”; *CSSB* says, “Acts mentions nothing of his ministry there, and perhaps all he means is that he reached the border”; Sanday-Headlam suggests Jerusalem and Illyria as two limits of the area St. Paul covered, though Sanday-Headlam also notes that different senses of Illyria than the Roman province might fit Paul’s statement better; Cranfield suggests, among other things, that St. Paul has gone from one point to another by a circuitous route and many journeys in various directions from various centers}; Franzmann suggests Paul is not interested in a strict chronology or minute chronicle but indicates the unity of his work and that of the other apostles, referring to Luke 24:47; Grothe connects St. Paul’s work with the ends of the earth and the thematic statement of Acts , and Grothe notes that drawing a line from Jerusalem to Antioch to Galatia to Macedonia does describe an arc that, if continued, would lead toward Rome and Spain; Luther seems to think Illyricum is the route St. Paul is going to take to Rome and then on to Spain]; next in the Greek text is the perfect-tense infinitive “to have filled up” [said to be as if the space lacking in preaching the gospel where others had not; obviously St. Paul does not think that he has completely fulfilled it, since there are places such as Spain where he still wants to go {*TLSB* glosses “Carried out the tasks Christ assigned him”}]; the ESV completely paraphrases in “the ministry”; with “the gospel of Christ” compare “the Gospel of God” in v.16; vv.17-19’s statement of what Christ has done through St. Paul naturally leads him to express his past practice regarding where he has worked as an apostle [we at least can recognize that, both in writing the letter to the Roman Christians and in planning even a passing visit in Rome on his way further west, St. Paul is in some sense breaking with his past-practice {Cranfield discusses the matter of inconsistency and suggests that St. Paul’s earnest desire and endeavor was not a rigid legalistic rule}, so that we can anticipate his future plans that were first mentioned in 1:8-15 but described again in 15:22-29) ... **V.20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel,** (the coordinating conjunction can be “and” or “but”, with the

continuing sense “and” best here [compare Cranfield, who thinks the adversative force is better]; the Greek adverb translated “thus” seems to closely connect the example that the Divinely-inspired St. Paul just gave with the general principle he is about to state [though Cranfield thinks the adverb refers to what follows, specifically the evangelizing not where Christ is named]; the Greek present-tense participle at its compound roots refers to loving or seeking honor but can have the sense of making an aim or ambition [presumably the “my” is implicit; Luther notes that the desire for honor or glory was, in fact, the shame of preaching the Gospel, being insulted, reproached, persecuted, *et cetera*, where Christ is not already known but at least less-so where He is already known, but still being a benefit to others, and so also having a good conscience before God]; the present-tense infinitive “to evangelize” is not the usual word for “preach” nor does the Greek text use the usual word for “gospel” but uses essentially a verbal form of the noun for “gospel”; the ESV puts a comma where the Greek text lacks one, and perhaps rightly lacks one, as the ambition is to evangelize where Christ has not been named, as is stated next) ... **not where Christ has already been named**, (the negative particle “not” is used for qualified negation [arguably modifying the “naming”, not the “where”]; the subordinating locational conjunction “where” is next in the Greek text, followed by the verb “has been named”, a simple past-tense aorist [Cranfield says equivalent in this verse to an English pluperfect] passive-voice indicative in the third-person singular form with “Christ” as the subject of the verb, but the ones doing the “naming” left unexpressed [presumably the ones who live “there”, wherever “where” is, who have been evangelized and so come to faith]; the ESV paraphrases in “already”; Franzmann refers to “naming” as being known, worshipped, and obeyed; Grothe mentions senses of invoked and confessed) ... **lest I build on someone else’s foundation**, (the Greek subordinating final conjunction “in order that” or “so that” indicates purpose; the negative particle “not” is used for qualified negation [the ESV essentially takes the conjunction and the particle together with “lest”]; the preposition “upon” begins the phrase that includes the adjective for “belonging to another” and the object noun “foundation”; the verb “I might build” is present-tense subjunctive-mood, again appropriate for the purpose construction; we might reflect on the figure of speech of the church as a building, which Christ Jesus the chief cornerstone, *et cetera* [as, for example, in Ephesians 2:20 and, near to our Midweek Bible Study heart, Revelation 21’s vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem {confer Luther}]) ... **V.21 but as it is written**, (the Greek coordinating conjunction is the strong adversative “but” and is followed by the subordinating comparative conjunction “just as”; the verb “it has been written” is again a perfect tense for past action with present results, and the passive voice leaves unexpressed the identity of the writer, though in this case we also would call this a Divine passive and say that ultimately God is the writer, even if through Isaiah, as the following verse would appear to come from a Greek translation of Isaiah 52:15, part of the Suffering Servant Song that we probably most-closely associate with Good Friday, which, as Sanday-Headlam characterizes it, “describes the astonishment of the nations and kings at the suffering of the servant of Jehovah”) ... **“Those who have never been told of him will see**, (the Greek text perhaps is

more-literally translated, “to the ones not having been announced about him will see”, with the relative pronoun also serving as the subject of the seeing but having the grammatical case as first the indirect objects of the telling; the ESV paraphrases in the “never”, though it captures the sense; the verb for the “announcing” is related to the verb for the “evangelizing”; the Divinely-inspired St. Paul clearly understands the “him” in Isaiah to be Christ, as the reference to Christ and His gospel in vv.19-20 make clear; the people’s “seeing” is the result presumably of their being told, though one might expect might expect “hearing”, which is used in what follows) ... **and those who have never heard will understand.**” (the Greek has the usual coordinating copulative conjunction “and” for what amounts to poetic parallelism; “the ones not having heard” again lacks a Greek direct equivalent for the ESV’s “never”; the “understanding” again follows as a result presumably of their hearing; their “understanding” seems to be deeper than their simply “seeing”) ... though placed at the beginning of the next subsection, v.22 arguably could have placed at the end of this subsection, serving, as it does, as a hinge between St. Paul’s “Past Actions” and His ”Future Plans” to go to Rome, which are treated in the next subsection (which plans, as we noted at the end of the discussion of v.19, in some sense break with his past practice and general principle just mentioned) ...