Paul’s Gospel Meetings in Rome
(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from an outline by Mark Copeland)

Introduction: Acts 28:17-31
A. When Paul arrived at Rome following an eventful sea voyage, he was immediately placed under house arrest - Acts 28:16
B. He waited two years to make his appeal to Caesar - Acts 25:9-12, 28:30
C. However, he was quite active during that time
   1. He met with the Jewish leaders in Rome
   2. He received and taught many visitors, including his guards
   3. He wrote four epistles (Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians)
   4. Even when restricted, Paul was productive in the Kingdom

I. PAUL’S MEETINGS WITH JEWISH LEADERS
A. The first meeting, Paul called for the leaders of the Jews in Rome - Acts 28:17
   1. He explained the reason for his appeal to Caesar - Acts 28:17-20
      a. He had done nothing against the Jews or their customs. Roman officials wanted to let him go, but Jews in Jerusalem opposed it, forcing him to appeal to Caesar
      b. It was for the hope of Israel he was bound in chains - Acts 26:6-8
   2. The Jewish leaders wanted to hear more - Acts 28:21-22
      a. In over two years, there is not record of the Jews in Jerusalem contacting the Jews in Rome regarding Paul.
      b. Could it be that they knew they had no standing?
      c. They just wanted to hear more about the Kingdom of Christ that they mistakenly believed to be a new “sect” of the Jews
   3. Paul accomplished a great deal in this first meeting
      a. He established his credentials as a credible witness for Christ.
      b. He made a connection between his preaching of the Gospel of Christ with the prophesied hope of the Jews.
      c. He captured their interest in hearing more of his message.
B. In second meeting, even more came to hear Paul - Acts 28:23
   1. He taught from morning to evening - Acts 28:23
   2. He taught about Jesus and the kingdom of God - Acts 8:12
   4. Their reaction was mixed; some were persuaded, while others disbelieved, the same reactions of hearers today - Acts 28:24
   5. Paul concluded with a solemn warning, the same kind of warning given to hearers today - Acts 28:25-28
      a. He warned them about being hard of hearing and closing their eyes to truth - Isa. 6:9-10
      b. If they will not hear the Gospel, God will find people who will - Isa. 42:1, 6
   6. They left disputing among themselves - Acts 28:29
   7. Paul had multiple repeat meetings in Rome - Acts 28:30-31
   8. Paul’s Gospel meetings in Rome are little different than our own.
II. PAUL’S CHARACTER IN ROME
   A. He rejoiced in his sufferings - Col. 1:24; Phil. 2:16-18
   B. He magnified Christ in his sufferings - Phil. 1:20
   C. He was given the opportunity to practice what he preached - Rom. 5:3-5

III. PAUL’S CONFIDENCE IN ROME
   A. He fully expected to be released from prison
      1. He made plans to visit Philemon - Philemon 22
      2. He wanted to visit the Philippians - Phil. 1:23-27, 2:24
      3. He was released briefly and traveled for a while
         a. By references made in 1st & 2nd Timothy, & Titus
         b. By the testimony of those who came along later: Chrysostom, Jerome, Eusebius, and even Clement of Rome, who lived in the latter part of the first century A.D.
   B. J.W. McGarvey notes in his commentary on Acts: “No two years of Paul's life were better filled with earnest labor than these two spent in his Roman prison”
      1. Phil. 1:12-14
   C. Paul didn’t need to be free to travel to be effective; God wants us to grow where we are planted and to produce fruit regardless of our condition
      1. We learn from Paul that good can flourish in the soil of hardship if we glorify God regardless of the circumstances - Phil 4:11-13