*Northwest Bible Church – Sept. 11, 2005                Worship Service – Alan Conner***Rom. 15:22-24***Providence and Planning*

**INTRO**    Previous six characteristics of Paul:
        1- Always gave God the credit for his ministry
        2- Ministry produced obedience
        3- Consistent Christian life: word and deed
        4- Ministered in realm of the Spirit
        5- Thorough
        6 - Initiative

**1) SUBMITTING TO PROVIDENCE (v. 22).**
    A. Paul’s plans did not always come to pass. Case in point: he wanted to visit the church at Rome           but was prevented often.

The word “prevent” or “hindered” = enkopto and literally means to cut into something. Used of deep trenches sometimes dug across a road to hinder an enemy’s army from going that way. It came to be used metaphorically of any hindrance or impediment.

    B. Reason for the failure of Paul’s plans: the providence of God (v. 32).

What is the providence of God? Providence refers to God’s management and direction of all created things to accomplish His will.

        However, God often uses secondary means to accomplish His will. Consider:

            1) Satan - 1Th. 2:18
            2) Jews - 1Th. 2:16
            3) Direct intervention from the Lord - Acts 16:6-10
            4) God’s call on his ministry. Here in Romans 15:22

    C. Paul’s submission to God’s will. cf. Rom. 1:10

        This acknowledgement and submission to God’s will was a habit: see Acts 18:21; 1         Cor. 4:19; 16:7.

        The mark of a godly man like Paul is that they learn to submit and trust in God’s             providence in controlling the circumstances of their life.

            EXAMPLES:

    D. God’s hidden wisdom.

        Paul personally knew that providence often ordered difficult circumstances which             reflected His wisdom and worked for the good of God’s glory.

**2) PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE (vv. 23-24).**

    A. Paul’s future plans: Jerusalem, Rome, Spain (vv. 23-24).

        Spain – the Jonah connection. Hannibal.

    B. One reason why Paul wanted to go to Rome before Spain (v. 24).

        This word “help” (propempo) is a regular technical term for missionary support.

        Did Paul actually made it to Spain

    C. Plans vs. providence?

The overruling will of God in providence should never discourage us from planning. Neither should planning make us forget the overruling will of providence.

James 4:13-15

    D. The importance of planning.

        1) Planning helps prepare for the future.
        2) Planning helps give direction to your life.
        3) Planning makes your efforts more successful.

CONCLUSION