

Romans 15 - Spiritual Unity with Jesus Christ

SUMMARY

This chapter starts by continuing to deal with a believer's relationships with other (weak) believers on an **individual basis**, and then goes into showing the results of spirit-filled believers living in unity with Jesus Christ. The broad **context** is still to get the Gentile believers to live and behave properly so as to provoke the Jews to jealousy that they might understand that Jesus is the Messiah/Saviour and get saved.

v. 1 - Strong believer's responsibility to weak believers. - Gal. 6:2

- To "**bear the infirmities of the weak**" is to lift up the weak; to help the weak carry their load; to build up, encourage, and strengthen the weak in the faith.
- Spiritual growth takes time, patience, practice, and experience.
- Mature believers ought to seek ways to help weaker brethren grow in grace. - Heb. 5:12-14
- Maturing (spiritual growth) causes a believer not to misuse his liberty. - Gal. 5:13
- Spiritual maturity leads to **selflessness**. - John 3:30; 1 Cor. 10:24

v. 2 - In conduct with other believers, seek to please and edify others. - 2 Cor. 12:19

- Apparent contradiction in Gal. 1:10 → Context is **preaching** the gospel to the lost.
- You can compromise your **practice** on a minor and doubtful things in order to get along with the brethren without compromising your **convictions**.

v. 3 - Jesus Christ is our example of helping the weak and hopeless. - 1 Pet. 2:21-23

- This verse is a quotation of Psalms 69:9
- Jesus Christ is our perfect example of unselfishness. - Acts 10:36-38; 2 Cor. 8:9
- Jesus spent his life doing the will of God and ministering to others.-Matt. 20:25-28; Mark 10:42-45
- Jesus Christ was sold out to pleasing God the Father. - John 8:28-29
- If we obey and please the Lord, the reproach that the world has for God and Jesus Christ will fall on us. - John 15:18-25; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 John 3:13

v. 4 - The OT scriptures were written for our learning. - 1 Cor. 10:11

- We learn patience by studying the lives of the OT saints. - James 1:3-4;5:10-11
- Example of Job - Job 1:1-22
- A believer's hope comes only from the comfort of the scriptures. - Ps. 119:160

vv. 5-6 - Unity in Christ leads believers to the proper motive of glorifying God. -

1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Peter 4:11

- Believers in a local church ought to strive for unity. - 1 Cor. 1:10; Psalm 133:1
- Believers are to be of one mind. - 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27, 2:2; 1 Peter 3:8

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- v. 7 - Believers are to receive others who give a good testimony of being saved.
- Similar to Rom. 14:1, 3 (Old Hymn: "Christ Receiveth Sinful Men") So should we!
 - Just as Jesus Christ received us based on us simply believing on him, we should also receive other believers who differ with us on minor issues.
 - We are full of sin and bring nothing worthy of saving, but are saved by His grace. - Rom. 4:5, 5:1, 8; Eph. 2:8-9
 - We **do not** tolerate false gospels and perverted "bibles," we require absolute Biblical truth! - Gal. 1:6-9; Prov. 22:21; Ps. 33:4, 138:2; John 17:17; 2 Cor. 6:7; 1 Thess. 2:13; Eph. 1:12-13; Col. 1:1-6; James 1:18
- v. 8 - Important definition of **the earthly ministry** of Jesus Christ. - Rom. 3:29-30
- Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (whereby He became the atonement for sins of the whole world) was for everybody in every dispensation. - 1 John 2:2; 1 Tim. 2:1-6
 - However, Jesus Christ's earthly ministry in the four gospels is doctrinally aimed at and applicable to the Jews. - Matt. 15:24; Rom. 15:8
 - The phrase "**to confirm the promises made unto the fathers**" refers to promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons as well as all Messianic OT promises. - Deut. 18:15-22
 - Jesus did deal with certain Gentiles while he was on earth, e.g. John 12:20-33
 - Jesus' acknowledgement of "**great faith**" was to a Gentile centurion - Matt. 8:5-13
 - We must rightly divide the difference between salvation and discipleship. - compare Eph. 2:8-9 with Eph. 2:10; Matt. 4:18-20; Mark 8:34; Luke 14:27, 33
- vv. 9-23 - Paul's Gentile Commission
- vv. 9-12 - Paul quotes respectively Ps. 18:49, Deut. 32:43; Ps. 117:1, and Is. 11:1, 10
- Here in Romans, Paul takes quotations from the OT that apply doctrinally to Jesus' reign during the Millennium and makes it applicable to the present Church Age.
 - You can take passages that apply doctrinally to some other dispensation and make a practical application to the Body of Christ now in the Church Age.
- vv. 9-11 - Gentile believers should glorify God for His mercy. - Ps. 136
- Believers today ought to confess Jesus Christ and His saving grace everywhere.
 - Believers ought to be people of joy, praise, and worship.
 - Believers ought to be full-time witnesses.
- v. 12 - If believers are faithful witnesses, Gentiles are often willing to trust Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.
- After receiving opposition from the Jews, Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles. - Acts 13:46-49

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- v. 13 - God is a God of hope and fills believers with **all joy and peace**.
- The Lord is the source of a believer's **hope, patience and consolation**, to be likeminded one toward another (v. 5), **peace** (v. 33); **all grace** (1 Pet. 5:10), **love and peace** (2 Cor. 13:11), **all comfort** (2 Cor. 1:3), and **the living** (Luke 20:38).
 - These things are all provided through the power of the Holy Ghost as believers walk and grow daily in obedience to God.
 - The Holy Spirit wants these qualities to **abound** in every believer's Christian life.
- FM of "**abound**" in KJV → Prov. 28:20 → Faithfulness is absolutely essential.
- v. 14 - Paul commends the Roman believers.
- Paul acknowledges they are "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." Is this true of us? Do we know how to properly admonish (warn, caution, reprove, rebuke, correct, instruct) one another and to receive it with a right spirit?
 - This does not mean that the Roman believers possessed all available knowledge that exists, but that they knew what was necessary to be successful spiritually.
- v. 15 - Paul wrote to the Roman believers boldly by the grace of God.
- God's grace should give us a holy boldness to witness and stand up for truth, even when it is unpopular to do so. - Eph. 6:19-20; Phil. 1:14; 1 Thess. 2:1-4
- v. 16 - Paul's primary ministry was to Gentiles, but not exclusively. - Rom 11:13
- Contrast v. 8 → Jesus ministry with Acts 9:15 and Gal. 2:7-9
 - It was the Lord who sent Paul to Rome. - Acts 23:11
 - But there is no evidence that Peter ever went to Rome. - 1 Pet. 1:1
 - To whom should we witness? (the whole world)- John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:18-21
 - The Gentile believers are spoken of in this verse as being an "offering" and "sanctified by the Holy Ghost."
 - Depending on the context, **SANCTIFICATION** is both POSITIONAL (1 Cor. 6:11) and PRACTICAL for believers. - 2 Tim. 2:19-26
 - Compare the OT prerequisites for the Levites in order to serve. - Num. 8:5-16
 - Believers today are called to be a "**living sacrifice**." - Rom. 12:1-2
- vv. 17-18 - Paul glories in God for what God has done through him.
- Any obedience in word or deed calls for bringing glory to God. - Psalm 115:1; 1 Cor. 1:31; Jer. 9:23-24; 2 Cor. 10:13-17
 - Always give God the glory He is due, or else end up like Herod. - Acts 12:20-23
- v. 19 - Paul, as a Jewish apostle, was also given the apostolic signs. - 1 Cor. 14:18-19; Acts 19:11-20, 20:7-12
- Signs began with and were given to the Jews. - Ex. 4: 1-9, 28-31; 1 Cor. 1:22
 - **GOD'S PURPOSE IS GIVING SIGNS TO THE JEWS: To get them to believe** concerning the wonderful works of God! - 1 Cor. 14:22; Acts 2:1-11

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- Paul preached the gospel at Jerusalem and roundabout that area.
 - “fully” does not mean the “full gospel” of the Charismatic groups or as they sometimes call it being a “complete Christian”. These are perversions of the gospel; people are lost who believe these perverted gospels.
- v. 20 - Paul wanted to build a foundation for the gospel in Rome. - Rom. 1:13-16
- As of about 60 AD, no foundation for the gospel had yet been laid in Rome.
 - LESSON → Believers need to go wherever the gospel hasn't been established yet...locally, in our country, or on a foreign field.
 - Believers are to **strive** (fight the good fight) **lawfully** cf. 2 Tim 2:5 with 2:23-24
- v. 21 - Quote of Isa. 52:15 Context is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. - cf. v. 14
- “**So shall he sprinkle many nations**” → Christ's blood atonement. - 1 Pet. 1:2
 - This OT prophesy is of course fulfilled by Jesus Christ and secondarily fulfilled by Paul in his going to Rome. - Rom. 1:7, 14-15
- vv. 22-23 - Paul was “much hindered from coming” to Rome. - 1 Thess. 2:18
- How do we handle our hindrances? What does it take to **stop you**? Are you determined? - 1 Cor. 9:12; Gal. 5:7
 - Paul plan: Acts 19:21 We must include God in all our plans. - Prov. 3:5-6, 16:3
 - Paul had a “**great desire**” over many years to get to Rome, but it had not happened yet.
- vv. 24-25 - Paul's plan was to go to Jerusalem, then go into Spain, and stop in Rome on the way.
- Paul's plan did not come about. When he left Corinth the last time and headed for Jerusalem, he was taken into custody by the Jews and eventually appealed to Caesar and thus did make it to Rome, albeit as a prisoner. This is his first arrest. The account starts in Acts 21.
 - Paul shows us the importance of ministering unto the saints. - Gal. 6:9-10
- v. 26 - Here is one of the reasons for taking up offerings in a NT local church.
- To help out poor saints. Sadly, “poor saints” must now be carefully screened since there are now “believers” who are professional bums and mooches, (Today we also must watch out for “moochinars”!)
- v. 27 - Macedonia and Achaia had received the gospel from Jerusalem.
- As a result, these mission churches felt indebted so as to do something about it.
 - Do we understand we are debtors for the gospel and the spiritual blessings that we have received? - Rom. 1:14-15
 - Believers shouldn't be sponges, but rather channels of blessing!
 - Spiritual blessings should affect how we handle material things and money.

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- It is the duty of each member of the local church to financially support the material and physical needs of the Pastor. - Nehemiah 13:10-13; 1 Cor. 9:11
 - Giving is one of the fruits of a believer. - Rom. 12:6-8
 - God loves a cheerful giver. - 2 Cor. 9:6-8
- v. 28 - Paul was zealous about getting things done **“When therefore I have performed this,”**
- It is important to **“finish”** what God has given us to do. - Gen. 2:1 (FM); Ex. 39:32; Ex. 40:33; 1 Kings 6:9, 14, 22, 38, (Solomon building the house of the Lord); 1 Kings 7:1; John 4:34; 17:4; 19:30; Acts 20:24; 2 Tim. 4:7
- v. 29 - Knowing the true gospel of Jesus Christ is a full blessing. - Eph. 3:17-19
- Bible definition of **“BELIEVE”** → **AFTER** hearing and **changing your mind** to believe the true facts of the Gospel, **BELIEVE** is to **“TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST.”** To Biblically believe **IS NOT** just a mental assent or agreement to a set of facts which happen to be true, it is **TRUST (FAITH) IN JESUS CHRIST!** - Eph. 1:12-13
 - We are truly blessed today if we understand the true gospel of the grace of God. - 1 Cor. 15:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:3
 - Satan’s main objective today is to pervert the true gospel of the grace of God.
 - Don’t be deceived by the many false gospels being preached today. - Gal. 1:6-9
- vv. 30-32 - Paul’s three prayer requests
- Paul pleads for the prayers of the brethren, so we ought to also plead for the prayers of fellow church members.
 - Notice the ultimate goal of the prayer is for the glory of God (**for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake**) and **for the love of the Spirit.**
 - Paul uses the word **“strive”** in this context of prayer as putting forth much effort, exerting yourself with earnestness, and working hard at something, i.e. to fight the good fight of faith. - 1 Tim. 6:12
 - Request 1 (v. 31) - God said “yes” to this prayer request, when after being jailed for 2 years, God delivered him from those who wanted to kill him.
 - Request 2 (v. 31) - God said “yes” to this prayer request in Acts 21:17-26
 - Request 3 (v. 32) - God said “no” to this prayer request. Paul did finally get to go to Rome, but did not arrive **“with joy”**, rather he arrived as a prisoner after surviving a shipwreck. He was under house arrest and did not get to be refreshed with the Christians at Rome.
- v. 33 - **“God of peace”** - (5X in KJB)
- (here) - God promises to never leave us or forsake us. - Heb. 13:5
 - Phil. 4:9 - same as here (v. 33)
 - Heb. 13:20 - It was God’s power that resurrected Jesus Christ from the dead and established the everlasting covenants and promises in His word.