

ROMANS

From Wretchedness to Righteousness

Study 22

How It Changes Us on the Outside

Romans 15:1-32, 16:1-27

How the Gospel Empowers Us

Recap

Romans 14 talks about two types of Christians, the strong and the weak. Romans 15 pleads for the Jews and Gentiles to accept each other and be united to build each other up. Paul's plan to visit the Gentile Christians in Rome, and the exhortation to be passionate in evangelism and the obligation to the poor. Romans 16 is a farewell greeting that shows how a church is led by a multitude of people with different backgrounds.

Part 1 of 5: Building up Each Other in Hope (Romans 15:1-4)

Verse 1-4

Romans 15:1-4

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

1) a) Objective question. Choose the most appropriate answer. Based on the video lecture, what does "bear with the failings of the weak" in verse one mean?

A. We must *tahan* (tolerate) the weak, and let them be

B. We must bear the burdens of the weak, help them in their weak areas

b) Objective question. Choose the most appropriate answer(s), which can be more than one. When we find it difficult, tiring, and hopeless when we are trying to 'please our neighbours', how does the Scripture help us?

A. endurance

B. encouragement

C. entitlement

D. entertainment

E. enumeration

F. endorphins

Part 2 of 5: Unity Despite Diversity (Romans 15:5-13)

Verse 5-13

Romans 15:5-13

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing the praises of your name."

Again, it says,
"Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

And again,
"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him."

And again, Isaiah says,
"The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2) Comprehension question. Which verses point to 'unity' in Christianity, and which verses point to 'diversity' in Christianity? Write down the reasons.

| | Unity verses | Diversity verses |
|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Verses | V.5-7 | V.8-12 |
| Reasons | Key words: same attitude, | talks about Jews and Gentiles |

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| | one mind, one voice, accept one another | (both saved) |
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Part 3 of 5: Passion in Evangelism (Romans 15:14-24)

Verse 14-16a

Romans 15:14-16a
 I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another. Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles.

3) Practical question. Paul thought that the Roman Christians were “full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another” yet, they still need to be reminded. How should you handle a situation when a Christian leader you are reminding gets upset at you and says “they already know”?

Verse 16b-19

Romans 15:16b-19
 He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

4) Reflection question. Paul seems to be passionate about his “duty” (v.16) and “service” (v.17) to God. He also said “I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me”. Rate on the scale below on language you tend to use on your accomplishments at this point in your life:



| “What I accomplish by my own strength” | | | “What I accomplished through Christ” | | | | “What Christ has accomplished through me” | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------------|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Verse 20-24

Romans 15:20-24
 It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation. Rather, as it is written:

“Those who were not told about him will see,
 and those who have not heard will understand.”

This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.

But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

4) Reflection question. Paul seems too long to meet his fellow Christian brothers from a faraway place, (Distance To Rome From Corinth is: 617 miles / 992.97 km / 536.16 nautical miles), planes and cars did not exist then. Do you want to visit your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ from any other country?

Part 4 of 5: Obligation to the Poor (Romans 15:25-33)

Verse 25-33

Romans 15:25-33
 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord’s people there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord’s people in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this contribution, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

5) Reflection question. Rate how happy or reluctant you are to give at this point in your life.

| "Very reluctant" | | | | "Sometimes ok, sometimes painful" | | | "Super happy to give" | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Part 5 of 5: To be the Body of Christ as God intended (Romans 16:1-27)

Verse 1-16

Romans 16:1-16

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

Greet also the church that meets at their house.

Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.

Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew.

Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.

Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

All the churches of Christ send greetings.

Subpoint 1 of 2: Paul was Not a Lone Ranger

6) a) Discussion question. At least how many individuals has Paul listed from verses 1-16?

At least 29. 26 individuals, 2 families, 3 house churches

Subpoint 2 of 2: A Church Led By the People

b) Fill in the blanks. What are the different types of people who make up the church?

| Types of people groups | Names |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jews and Gentiles | Epenetus & Herodion |
| Slaves and freedmen | Ampliatius, Urbanus, Stachys, Apelles are common slave names. They may have been either slaves or "freedmen," former slaves who had gained |

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | their freedom. |
| Rich and Poor | Priscilla and Aquila |
| Different roles (fellow prisoners) | Androni |
| Male and Female | Phoebe, Mary, Ampliatus |
| Multigenerational church | Rufus' mother |

c) Fill in the blanks. Who are the women commended for their labor in the Lord?

| Description | Names |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Women in leadership | Phoebe the deaconess |
| Co-workers in Christ | Priscilla and Aquila |
| Fellow prisoners in Christ | Andronicus and Julia |
| “ those women who work hard in the Lord, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.” | Tryphena and Tryphosa and Persis |
| who has been a mother to me, too. | Rufus' mother |

Takeaway for Romans 15-16

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| Part 1 of 5: Building up Each Other in Hope (Romans 15:1-4) Part 2 of 5: Unity Despite Diversity (Romans 15:5-13) Part 3 of 5: Passion in Evangelism (Romans 15:14-24) Part 4 of 5: Obligation to the Poor (Romans 15:25-33) Part 5 of 5: To be the Body of Christ as God intended (Romans 16:1-27) Subpoint 1 of 2: Paul was Not a Lone Ranger Subpoint 2 of 2: A Church Led By the People |
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Meditation

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind

toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6 ESV)

What wrong attitudes do I need to repent of?

What is it in these verses that bring comfort?

What is it in these verses that build me up?

Meditate on these for the next week and come back to share with each other how God has spoken to you through the Holy Spirit.