

Romans 15

Paul's Call to Unity

- 1** *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.*
2 *Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.*

The spiritual should “bear up” not “bear with” the weak. The purpose of spiritual maturity is not to please ourselves rather to build up our brother.

- Q. What are some ways we can build each other up?
Q. What hinders us most?

We are not called to give in to the grumblings of the weak, if so, the church would be run by the weak and immature. We are called to “please our neighbor for their good.”

Eph 4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

3 *For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.”* **4** *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.*

We learn from Christ’s supreme example, Christ did not live for himself but as unto the Father, so much so he even bore the reproach of men. Christ life made other lives better, we learn from Scripture what our attitude ought to be.

5 *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had,* **6** *so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Paul is urging the Jews and the Gentiles to get along in unity. Today the call would be the same as well as include gentiles and gentles getting along in unity.

Unfortunately, the church has failed at this command yet as individuals we can succeed.

7 *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*

Q. How did Christ accept you? In that same manner accept others.

Spurgeon on **just as Christ also received us**: “Christ did not receive us because we were perfect, because he could see no fault in us, or because he hoped to gain somewhat at our hands. Ah, no! But, in loving condescension covering our faults, and seeking our good, he welcomed us to his heart; so, in the same way, and with the same purpose, let us receive one another.” (Enduring Word Commentary).

Paul uses Scripture to show the inclusivity of all people in Christ's plan of salvation. Psalm 18:49, DT 32:43, Ps 117:1 Rev 5:5

8 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 **9** 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." **10** Again, it says, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people." **11** And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him." **12** 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."

Paul is summarizing his statement on unity; Christ's ministry was to unite into one body both Jew and Gentile.

13 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.

Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we can achieve the unity. We can also have joy and peace and hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

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

Paul acknowledges the competence of the Church in Rome and considers his letter a reminder. He also reiterates their acceptance of Gentile believers is foundational in the church.

17 Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. **18** 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— **19** 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.

Paul acknowledges his work among the Gentiles and carefully attributes all of it to God. God used powerful signs and wonders to establish the church.

Jerusalem was the headquarters for Paul and he worked west up to Illyricum. He states that he has fully proclaimed the gospel.

20 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. **21** Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." **22** This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.

Paul demonstrates an Apostles heart. His desire is to establish churches. He did not found the church in Rome so seemingly it was put on the backside of his to do list.

Paul's Plan to Visit Rome

23 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, 24 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.

Paul's desire is to visit Rome on his way to Spain. Many are the plans of a man's heart but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. Prov. 19:21.

25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. 27 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.

Paul had collected an offering from Gentile churches to bring to the oppressed in Jerusalem. He was hoping the offering would help bridge the gap between Jew and Gentile as well as provide relief.

It was hard to make a living as a Christian in the first century church. Christians were heavily discriminated against by Jews and Romans.

28 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. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. 30 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. 31 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, 32 so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. 33 The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Paul gets to Rome by way of persecution and is imprisoned for two years. Whether he made it to Spain or not, Historians are undecided.

Romans 16

Personal Greetings

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. 2 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. 3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. 4 They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. 5 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. 6 Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you. 7 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. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test. Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus. 11 Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord. 12 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. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.

Vs 1-16 is a list of people Paul is recognizing.

17 I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. 18 For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.

Believers should use discernment when engaging in friendship and acquaintance.

19 Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. 21 Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my fellow Jews. 22 I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord. 23 Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.

25 Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past,

the mystery is the church. The joining of both Jew and gentile into one body.

26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.