

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 27TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

## SELFISH TO SELFLESS (ROMANS 15:1-4)

"WE WHO ARE STRONG..."

Paul encourages those who are strong to follow the example of their Lord in **putting the good of others before their own.**

- Paul labels himself and the others who share his view as the "strong," that is, those who are "able" to see that their faith allows them to eat meat, drink wine, and so forth.

"BEAR WITH THE WEAK..."

The "weak" would be believers who are "unable" to come to grips with this truth. Paul urges the strong to bear with the weak.

- The strong are not to just tolerate, but **actively and lovingly carry the burden with the weak** (Gal. 6:2).
- They will thus not seek to "please" themselves, but will "build up others."

## FROM SELFISH TO SELFLESS

This life is not about us. Paul reminds us not to please ourselves. Some Christians are selfish and want to do what is comfortable.

- If we consider others as more important than us, it will be difficult to be selfish. This is how the "strong" build up the "weak."
- There has to be a balance. **We need to read, pray, and spend alone time with God.**

## CHRIST'S EXAMPLE TO SERVE

He came to serve, not to be served (Mark 10:45). **For our sake**, he became poor so that we might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9). Christ assumed the form of a servant (Phil. 2:5-8).

- Paul imitated Christ (1 Cor. 11:1) as he sought not his own good, "but **the good of many, so that they may be saved**" (1 Cor. 10:33).

## MESSIANIC PSALM

Paul uses a quotation from Psalm 69. This reminds us of Christ because **He was more concerned to do the will of God as a servant than he was to seek his own comfort** (Luke 22:42). Jesus was willing to be mocked, tortured, and killed.

- Christ did this to serve those around him, and **we are to have the same attitude.**

## IMPORTANCE OF SCRIPTURE

"The past was written to teach us." It is important to **study, meditate, and ask God to speak to us.** The Scriptures are about Christ.

- The Scriptures can increase "hope" in us through **endurance** (hard work and discipline) and through **encouragement** (the Bible makes incredible promises).
- **We need to know AND live out Scripture.**

## ONE MIND AND ONE VOICE (ROMANS 15:5-6)

### PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

Paul prays for the unity that will be established and preserved as the strong and weak live out Paul's teaching of chapter 14 and 15:1-3.

- This unity is a supernatural gift. It is a spirit that **God must "give you."**
- **If God is the gift giver, why do we seek it from the world or ourselves?**

## AUTHENTIC CHRIST FOLLOWERS

God gives us unity as we follow Christ. **Unity does not come when we seek it; rather, it is a by-product of seeking to follow Christ.**

- **Passive Christians will not experience much unity.**
- **Our eyes have to be fixed on Jesus, His Word, and His Kingdom.** Unity will follow if we are about Him rather than ourselves.

## GLORIFYING GOD

Unity is associated with, and expressed by, our worshiping together, "so that you may glorify God with one mind and one voice."

- There is no way to glorify God with "one voice" unless we are **singing and praying together.**
- When we seek to **live lives of worship together as one body, it will enhance unity.**

## MAJORS VS MINORS

When we get distracted by minors (worship style, Bible translation, freewill vs. predestination, etc.), we stop serving God and others.

- A "major" is a doctrine which we understand to be essential for salvation.
- **The world is looking for hope. When the world looks at us, what do they see?**

## ACCEPTANCE (ROMANS 15:7-13)

### ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER

It is **only when we understand that we are accepted by Christ and live in response to that**, rather than living in order to be accepted by him, **that we will accept others.**

- **If we are accepted by Christ in spite of our deficiencies and flaws, shouldn't this enable us to accept others despite their deficiencies and flaws?** Do we love people?

## CHRIST FOR JEWS AND GENTILES

Christ came so that God would accept both Jew and Gentile, and so the **gospel is able to break down the "dividing wall of hostility"** (Eph. 2:14).

- Jew and Gentile, strong and weak, rich and poor must reflect this in their relationships in the church. **Christ became a servant so that we are able to unite.**

## GOD'S PURPOSE SEEN THROUGH THE OT

God's purpose was always to have a people made up of all nations, Jews and Gentiles. Paul shows this in his four OT quotations.

- Paul cites every part of the OT – the writings (v 9b and 11), the law (v 10), and the prophets (v 12) – to show that inclusion of Gentiles with Jews in the praise of God has always been part of God's purposes.

## GOSPEL UNITY

Gospel unity across every divide and disagreement is what God has always been working toward.

- As the Roman Christians meet together to praise the Root of Jesse, Christ Jesus, they are expressing their "spirit of unity among themselves as they follow Christ" (v 5).
- **Unity isn't easy. We need God's help!**

## ONLY WITH GOD

Joy and peace are supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and any hope we have of learning to love those different than us can only come through Him.

- The **hope that overflows in the believer is only possible if the believer overflows with the Spirit.** The Spirit is only available to people who have a relationship with Him.

## DO WE BEAR WITH THE WEAK?

- Remember, Christ came to serve, not to be served. Will we follow His example?
- How can we serve and build up others? Where could we be most useful to God and others? What's our motivation?
- Do we look for opportunities to serve others or do we look for others to serve us?

## ARE WE TOO DISTRACTED?

- How often do we get sidetracked into debating minors with one another **at the expense of a world that is waiting on us to deliver the good news of the gospel?**
- There are a lot of confused people in our community. There is chaos and darkness around us. They're searching for hope!
- If the world is searching for hope, shouldn't the church be the place to find it? When people look at us, what do they see?
- Some Christians are too distracted in the pursuit of self, pointing fingers, arguing, hiding, and blending in.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Bearing with the weak, loving God and others, sharing the Gospel, and unity are all important. Good news: **We can't accomplish any of these on our own.**
- Christians have the power of the Holy Spirit in them. Why not rely on Him?
- What's holding some back from having a relationship with Him?

## VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL

- Vertical reconciliation with God must lead to horizontal reconciliation with one another.
- Will we surrender and conform to His image? **Will the life we live cause people to ask us about the hope we have?**