

Romans 15 — Living for Others, Living in Hope, Living on Mission

Bearing With One Another in Love

Paul continues the theme he introduced in the previous chapter—walking in love when believers differ in conscience and practice:

“We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”

Spiritual maturity is not measured by how much freedom we claim, but by how willingly we limit ourselves for the good of others. Strength is shown not in insisting on our rights, but in carrying the burdens of those whose faith is more fragile.

“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.”

The Christian life is not centered on self-satisfaction. It is shaped by a commitment to build others up. Love asks, *Will this help my brother or sister grow closer to the Lord?*

Christ Our Supreme Example

Paul anchors this call to selflessness in the example of Jesus:

“For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’”

Jesus did not live to protect His own comfort. He willingly bore rejection, misunderstanding, and suffering to accomplish the will of the Father and the salvation of sinners. He saved us when He shed His blood on the cross. His resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord. If Christ laid aside His rights for our redemption, we cannot cling tightly to ours in matters that affect others.

Scripture, Patience, and Hope

Paul now broadens the focus:

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

God gave us His Word not only to inform us, but to sustain us. Scripture teaches us who God is, how He works, and why we can trust Him. When circumstances tempt us toward discouragement, God’s Word anchors us in hope.

Hope is never disconnected from God. When we forget that He reigns, despair grows. When we remember that He is sovereign, faithful, and wise, hope is renewed. God often calls His people to wait—after obedience has been rendered—for Him to complete His work. That waiting requires patience, but it is never wasted.

Unity That Glorifies God

Paul offers a prayer that reflects God’s desire for His people:

“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.”

Unity in the church does not mean uniformity of opinion, preference, or background. It means shared devotion to Christ and shared commitment to love one another.

“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.”

Christ did not wait for us to become polished or perfected before receiving us. He welcomed us in our weakness, our immaturity, and our brokenness. That same grace must shape how we receive one another.

One Savior for Jews and Gentiles

Paul reminds his readers that Jesus came to fulfill God’s promises to Israel and to extend mercy to the nations:

“Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers.”

Jesus is the promised Messiah, faithful to God’s covenant with Israel. Yet His saving work was never limited to one people group.

“And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.”

Paul supports this truth by weaving together passages from the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets, showing that God’s plan always included the nations.

“There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall hope.”

This hope rests entirely on Christ—crucified and risen.

Joy, Peace, and Abounding Hope

Paul offers another prayer, rich with encouragement:

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Joy and peace are not the foundation of faith; they are the fruit of believing God’s Word. Feelings fluctuate, circumstances change, but God’s promises remain secure. True assurance rests not in emotional experience, but in trusting what God has said.

Hope abounds as the Holy Spirit applies God’s truth to our hearts, reminding us that our salvation is secure because Christ has died and risen again.

Paul’s Calling and Christ’s Work Through Him

Paul expresses confidence in the Roman believers:

“I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

Yet he explains why he has written so boldly—because God entrusted him with a unique calling:

“That I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God.”

Paul’s ministry was not merely verbal. The gospel he preached was confirmed by a transformed life and the power of the Holy Spirit:

“In mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.”

Word and deed worked together. The message of Christ must be spoken clearly, but it must also be embodied faithfully.

A Missionary Heart

Paul explains his strategy:

“I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation.”

Paul longed to take the gospel where Christ was not yet known. His desire was not competition, but completion—seeing the good news reach new people and new places.

He shares his plans to travel, his service to the needy believers in Jerusalem, and his hope to eventually visit Rome in the fullness of Christ’s blessing.

The Power of Prayer and God’s Will

Paul closes with a heartfelt request:

“Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me.”

Even an apostle depended on prayer. Paul knew that ministry effectiveness flows from God’s work, sustained by the prayers of God’s people.

“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

Practical Application

- Spiritual strength expresses itself through patience and self-restraint.
- Unity grows when believers receive one another with grace.
- Hope is sustained by Scripture, not circumstances.
- Joy and peace flow from believing God’s Word.
- The gospel must be lived as well as proclaimed.

A Challenge for Believers

Ask yourself honestly: Are you living to please yourself, or to build others up? Are you receiving fellow believers as Christ received you? Commit yourself anew to patience, unity, and love. Allow Scripture to shape your outlook, and let hope govern your response to trials. Pray for God's work beyond your own circle, and be willing to participate in it.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

The hope Paul describes is not theoretical—it is personal. Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross to forgive your sins. God raised Him from the dead, declaring Him to be God, Savior, and Lord.

You can be received by Christ just as you are—not after you fix yourself, but by trusting Him.

If you will turn to Jesus, believe in Him, and call upon His name, He will forgive you, give you peace with God, and fill your life with living hope.

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”