

Study 10 Romans 15 The Example of Christ. Unity Not Disunity

Read Romans 15

As we near the end of the letter to the church in Rome it become clearer why Paul wrote the letter: To promote unity among the believers in the church as they follow Christ (15:5), to remind the believers about the teachings of the Christian faith (15:15), to inform them of Paul's plan to visit the church on his missionary journey to Spain (15:22-29) and to tell the Roman Christians to be on guard against those who cause division (16:17).

Read Romans 15

Look again at verse 1-13.

- 1.a. What do these verses tell us about how we are to treat one another?
- 1.b. From this passage who is our example of how we are to treat one another?
2. In light of Romans 14:1, what does "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak" (15:1) mean?
3. If Christ is our example of how we treat our brothers and sisters in Christ, why do you think we still need endurance and further encouragement (15:4-6)?
4. How does the truth that Christ has accepted you encourage you to strive to have a spirit of unity here at ECBC (vs. 5)?
5. In verses 9-12 Paul quotes four different OT passages. How do these passages encourage hope, joy and peace in you (vs. 13)?

In 15:25 and following we read about Paul's plan to take an offering he has collected from the churches in what is modern day Greece to the poor living in Jerusalem. This collection and the trip Paul made to Jerusalem are also mentioned in Acts chapter 20-21 and 1 Corinthians 16. We know from Acts that Paul does make it to Jerusalem. But he was quickly arrested and was imprisoned first in Jerusalem, then in Caesarea and finally he lived under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30). Most scholars believe Paul eventually had his trial before Caesar, was released and eventually went to Spain.

6. In light of the long journey Paul is forced to make to reach Rome, what was the significance of Paul's request for prayer in 15:30-32? What are some things you have learned about prayer from what happened to the apostle Paul as he tried to make his way to Rome? How might this impact the way you pray?

As we finish our Study of Romans what were one or two points that especially stand out to you from the Letter?

End by praying for one another.

Note:

Question 2

“bear with the failings of the weak” (15:1) does not refer to sin. Throughout Scripture sin is clearly taught as being wrong, not something to bear with. “We who are strong ought to bear ...” together with the command do not “please ourselves” (15:1) and 14:1 which says, “Accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters.” mean that disputable matters is the issue here not sin. Disputable matters are those things, such as the foods we eat, which holidays we celebrate and other matters Christians do not always agree on. We must insist on the essentials of the faith, but show grace to our brothers and sisters in the non-essentials. Christians are not instructed to bear with or ignore the sins of their brothers and sisters in Christ. Instead we are instructed to show our love for our brother and sister by lovingly helping them see their sin and repent from it (Matthew 18:15-18; James 5:19-20).