

Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Newsletter Theme: Application of Romans 15 & 16

Grace Magnified In Our Mortal Body

In these last two chapters of *Romans* we see how grace living is to be magnified, particularly in those strong in faith. Chapter 15 lists characteristics of maturing saints:

- 1. Accept/help/prefer:** *"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Verse 1*
- 2. Oneness:** *"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Verse 6*
- 3. Receive others:** *"Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God." Verse 7*
- 4. Joy & peace, abounding in hope/power:** *"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Vs. 13*
- 5. Goodness reigning, Truth dwelling, and able to give sound advice:** *"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." Verse 14*

The qualities presented instruct us to live what we have been taught in *Romans*. The saint is to prefer others in love, yielding unto God to access His power and wisdom, now working in the inner man. If grounded in the basics of the gospel (*Romans*), a saint has started to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). His mind would be renewed in sound doctrine (Rom. 12:2), enabling him to magnify love and grace as he lives.

Practically, what would our life look like if these qualities were magnified in day-to-day-living? We'd live our life as we have always lived it, but with a godly perspective, focusing on other's needs, as a dedicated servant, looking for ways to minister as did Paul: *"But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints." (Rom. 15:25)*

While we need to take care of necessary things, the goal of our lives would change. We no longer would live to please ourselves in everything, day & night. Rather, on the behalf of Christ (*Phil. 1:29*) and in His stead (*II Cor. 5:20*), we would learn to joy being a living sacrifice, using our earthen vessel to please God. We'd be whatever we need to be as a helper of others within the Body.

Bearing One Another's Burdens



Two key illustrations teach us how grace is magnified to bear another's burdens:

Example 1: Christ is our great example. He manifested the highest level of grace & selfless love. We're to have His mind: *"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:6-8)*

Christ knew mankind was in a dire situation, being unrighteous and ungodly, deserving wrath: *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20)* In mercy and grace, Christ bore our sin burden on the cross and arose victorious. He became sin for us, so we could be made *"...the righteousness of God." (II Cor. 5:21)*

Example 2: Graciously, Paul took on the burdens of others to live as a sacrifice. As the Gentile Apostle, a Christ-given office, Paul suffered greatly (*II Cor. 11:21-28*). He did this in order to bring the blessed gospel of Christ to us, doing and becoming whatever was needed: *"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." (I Cor. 9:19)* His goal: *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (I Tim. 2:4)*

Application: We have choices every day and can serve self or be led by the Spirit (*Rom. 8:14*). Here are a few examples of bearing the burdens of others in love.

- A drunk friend breaks down on the road at 1 a.m. and needs a ride, but also wise counsel.
- A sick saint needs encouragement, groceries, & housecleaning, but you planned to relax.
- You have deep back pain, but are the annual speaker at this week's Bible conference.
- You share the gospel with a couple friends, and miss your longed for Super Bowl party.

As we read, believe, & are conformed to the image of Christ, grace reigns within us.



Search it out!

Choose Something to Study in This Section

Romans 15-16: Notice the Detail of Specific Terms Used Related to TimeExamine verses! 

In this tool, we will focus on detail: (the context of time; when something has, is, or will happen). One way is to notice terms which imply time. Another is the tense of a verb, which expresses when something occurs (past/present/future). Similar tools are found in "Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools," available on Amazon.

1. Notice verbs that show tense: Scan *chapter 15* for words such as are/were/will be, please/pleased/will please, fall/fell/will fall, receive/received/will receive, etc. Do you see others in chapter 16?

2. Determine the tense: past, present or future.

**Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.*

Choose three words picked from # 1 and assess the time in which the term refers. How is this significant in your reading? Does it help your understanding?

3. Look in *Romans 15-16* for specific words that convey time: Examples: afore, past, now, then, later, future, etc. What would happen to your understanding if the passage did not indicate 'the when' of something?

4. Reflect on specific time issues: a) *Romans 15:1*: "We then that **are** strong..." Is this referring to saints who exhibit strength now, in the past, or will in the future? b) *Romans 15:24*: "...I **trust** to see you..." Is this a current trust/prior/future? c) *Romans 16:17*: "...doctrine which ye **have learned**..." What tense is 'learned'?

Romans 15: A God of Patience, Consolation, Hope, & Peace

Romans 15 documents a few of God's characteristics. It is not merely a list of the qualities, but relays that He is "the God of..." specific virtues: patience and consolation, hope, and peace. This means God is the ultimate owner or source of these qualities, being the Creator and Lord of all. As a result, we can not only trust that God will exhibit these attributes, but is fully able to teach us also: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Corinthians 2:10) Also consider: "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom. 8:27)

This chapter focuses on saints who are spiritually strong. Even the strong need to mature and keep learning to live as who God made them in Christ, to magnify grace in order to live the Word. In the first instructions given, Paul relays their need to 'bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please themselves' (Vs. 1). In addition, they are told to have one mind and mouth to glorify God, receiving one another (Vs. 6-7). This gracious like-mindedness requires that they be living sacrifices. Worldly issues are set aside as they yield to prefer others. The God of patience and comfort is their provision:

Verse 5: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus."

Next, we see that God has always loved the Gentiles, making a way for them, even today, offering great hope in believing in Him. Paul also has confidence in the Gentile believers, that they are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and able to go on to admonish one another as members one of another (Vs. 13-14). God is able to fill them with joy and peace, through hope, to continue in the faith:

Verse 13: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, though the power of the Holy Ghost."

Finally, we see that there is a need for the saints to strive together in prayer like Paul and to hold forth the gospel of Christ, so others may mature in the faith. The Body of Christ is to be one in glorifying God, by preaching and ministering to one another. Clearly, there is a need to be in God's will, which is known by sound doctrine. As we do this, walking by faith, we can experience God's peace:

Verse 32-33: "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Simply put, God will supply all our needs and is able to do "...exceeding abundantly..." above all we could ask/think, through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our full spiritual provision (Phil. 4:19, Eph. 3:20).



Romans 16: A Glimpse of Faithful Servants

Chapter 16 is a clear example for us to realize what it looks like to function in maturity and magnify grace in our lives. “According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.” (Phil. 1:20) The saints listed were established in Romans truth, enabling them to work together to serve with Paul.

A few things stand out in the chapter: Paul cherished and acknowledged unique contributions and relationships. Individuals were both Jewish and Gentile saints, living by faith. Saints had Church meetings in homes, often ministering with those whom they knew well. Much like you and I today, they worked closely with those they cared deeply about, having intimate fellowship.

Some were servants who traveled as teachers or messengers. Phebe was Paul’s assistant, a succorer who brought his epistle to Rome (Vs 1-2). Priscilla & Aquila were a married couple who worked with Paul, risking their lives for Church business (vs.3-4). Some were laborers or fellow-prisoners, while others functioned as helpers. Paul had intimate ties with these saints as fellow-workers, well-beloved, approved, and chosen. All striving together, magnifying grace in their lives, laboring with Paul.

Reflect: Our choices matter. As we live as who we are in Christ and allow Him and His grace to be magnified in our body, there is a glorious impact now and in the future. (*I Timothy 4:8*)

To God: We can please our Father (*I Thess. 4:1*) as we live the Truth placed within us. (Yet we can grieve the Holy Spirit (*Eph. 4:30*), when we receive God’s grace in vain.)

To ourselves: Spiritual growth enables doctrine to be applied in the details of our lives. It also affects how we function in eternity, determining our position in the heavenlies and rewards for acceptable labor (*I Cor. 3*).

To others: As Christ shines within us, we can have an eternal impact on others to grow, providing support and encouragement (*Rom. 12*). The angels also are watching and learning (*Eph. 3:10*).

So yes, it absolutely matters how we live our life!



Romans: Ending Strong

As the student looks back to Romans 1, the goal of the book was set forth: “For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, **to the end ye may be established.**” (*Rom. 1:11*) To be established means to set up the permanent foundation of a house or edifice of doctrine. Paul lays forth four packed sections to edify (build up) saints:

1. **Justification** (made righteous): *Romans 1-5*
2. **Sanctification** (a holy walk): *Romans 6-8*
3. **God has a plan for Israel & us:** *Romans 9-11*
4. **New Worship & Service:** *Romans 12-16*

In *chapter 16*, God summarizes how *Romans* is able to stabilize us: “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began; But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” (*Rom. 16:25-26*) Roman’s progressive teaching provides a foundation, stabilizing and fortifying believers to be strong.

Why is it important for you and every man to know about Paul’s gospel, the preaching of Christ, and the basics of the mystery? It enables you 1) to be justified, 2) to live out your new identity in Christ, 3) to access the power of God, and 4) to serve/worship God acceptably.

Every believer needs a strong foundation to build their spiritual life upon in order to live godly and mature through Paul’s epistles. Romans provides the fundamentals on which everything else is built for the Christian life. Thus, it’s essential to learn and become so familiar with it that you’re able to know how to functionally apply it for living to glorify our Father.

What you can do to end strong: Read and reread Romans, not only for understanding, but also to learn how to apply it. Learning how to live it can take some time. You may make mistakes, but learn from them. Be patient with yourself and others. It is all grace!

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Stamp

To:

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)

Considering The Word, 'Then' By Deborah Garner

*“We **THEN** that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Romans 15:1*

The second word in *Romans 15:1* reminds us to look back at *Romans 14* to know where Paul is going. *Chapter 14* teaches us how to love the weaker brother by not judging him, but preferring and respecting his spiritual journey. If a man is not fully persuaded in what he is doing in his conscience (*Rom 14:5, 23*), he is sinning. Our liberties are not to cause others to stumble (*Rom 14:13*); we don't push or flaunt them. *Romans 14:22* says to the strong in faith, to *“...have it to **THY-SELF** before God.”* We practice our liberties quietly and peaceably before God.

Romans 15:1 asks us to BEAR the infirmities (weaknesses) of the weak. We are being asked to prefer others. Our job is not to point out where the weak are making life inconvenient for us; we are to “grin and BEAR it.” Recently, with the CoVid-19 virus guidelines, I felt constrained. My daughter added me to the “elderly” category that is encouraged to stay home. For her sake, I allowed her to shop for me. I did not take the liberties to please myself, I considered her conscience.

“We're as strong as our weakest member.” Through discipleship, the body of Christ will strengthen our weakest members. Have we renewed our minds with corresponding actions concerning the “weaker” brother in *Romans 14*? Maybe I'm seen as the weaker brother by someone. Praise God! The result is the same: We are to *“...follow after the things which make for peace...” (Rom 14:19)*. We are becoming of the *same mind (Rom. 12:16)*. Our “THEN” word now has something to build upon.

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