

ROMANS 15:22-33

PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP AND THE WILL OF GOD

LAST WEEK WE STARTED OUT WITH A COMPLIMENT FROM PAUL TO THE ROMAN CHURCH.

ROMANS 15:14

14 NOW I MYSELF AM CONFIDENT CONCERNING YOU, MY BRETHREN, THAT YOU ALSO ARE FULL OF GOODNESS, FILLED WITH ALL KNOWLEDGE, ABLE ALSO TO ADMONISH ¹ ONE ANOTHER. ¹

WE DISCUSSED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR A CHURCH TO FUNCTION IN THIS MANNER.

HOW BEING ABLE TO TEACH, ENCOURAGE, BUILD INTO AND EVEN CORRECT ONE ANOTHER IS VITAL TO A HEALTHY CHURCH.

WE TALKED IN DEPTH ABOUT BEING BOLD FOR THE GOSPEL.

AND THE WAY THAT WE CAN BE BOLD IS BY HAVING FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD AND HIS ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL THROUGH US.

WE LEARNED THE APOSTLE PAUL'S DESIRE WAS TO MINISTER TO THE GENTILES.

TO SHARE THE GOSPEL IN PLACES THAT IT HAD NEVER BEEN TAUGHT TO PEOPLE THAT HAD NEVER HEARD IT.

ALL OF THIS TO GLORIFY GOD.

PAUL MADE PERSONAL SACRIFICES AS WELL ENDURED TREMENDOUS HARDSHIPS.

FROM EXTREME PERSECUTION TO EXTREME LIVING CONDITIONS.

AND IN ALL OF THIS HE HAD ONE THING ON HIS MIND.

TO REACH THE LOST IN ORDER TO MAGNIFY THE GREAT NAME OF JESUS.

ALL TO BRING GLORY TO GOD.

WE READ HOW EAGER PAUL WAS TO SHARE ABOUT ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS THAT GOD HAD ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH HIM.

HOW HE BOASTED IN GOD AND HOW WE SHOULD HAVE THAT SAME EXCITEMENT TO SHARE ABOUT ALL THE GOOD THINGS GOD HAS DONE.

LAST WEEK WE LEARNED ABOUT WHAT PAUL HAD DONE AND WHERE HE HAD BEEN FROM JERUSALEM TO ILLYRICUM.

THIS WEEK WE WILL LEARN ABOUT WHERE HE PLANS TO GO AND HIS DESIRE IN HIS NEXT JOURNEY TO FIND A WAY TO VISIT THE ROMAN CHURCH.

ROMANS 15:22-24

22 FOR THIS REASON I ALSO HAVE BEEN MUCH HINDERED FROM COMING TO YOU. 23 BUT NOW NO LONGER HAVING A PLACE IN THESE PARTS, AND HAVING A GREAT DESIRE THESE MANY YEARS TO COME TO YOU, 24 WHENEVER I JOURNEY TO SPAIN, [H] I SHALL COME TO YOU. FOR I HOPE TO SEE YOU ON MY JOURNEY, AND TO BE HELPED ON MY WAY THERE BY YOU, IF FIRST I MAY ENJOY YOUR COMPANY FOR A WHILE.

THIS IS ONE LONG THOUGHT SO LET'S BREAK IT UP SO THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT PAUL IS SAYING.

ROMANS 15:22

22 FOR THIS REASON I ALSO HAVE BEEN MUCH HINDERED FROM COMING TO YOU.

WE COVERED THIS VERSE LAST WEEK AS WE ENDED.

PAUL HAD EXPRESSED IN ROMANS CHAPTER 1 HIS DEEP DESIRE TO VISIT THE ROMAN CHURCH BUT THAT IT HAD NOT YET BEEN GODS WILL THAT HE DO SO.

THE REASON THAT HE IS SPEAKING OF IN VERSE 22 IS THE FACT THAT PRIOR TO NOW HE HAD NOT FULLY SATURATED THE AREA WITH TEACHINGS ABOUT JESUS.

THAT BEFORE HE VISITS THE FAITHFUL ROMAN CHURCH MANY OTHER PEOPLE MUST FIRST HEAR THE GOOD NEWS.

THAT HE FIRST HAD TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH TO “EARS THAT HAVE NOT YET HEARD.”

I THINK THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS THIS LETTER WAS WRITTEN.

OUTSIDE THE MOST OBVIOUS AND IMPORTANT REASON BEING THAT IT WAS PART OF THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD MEANT TO BE USED FOR MILLINEA TO VALIDATE HIS MESSAGE AND PROCLAIM HIS TRUTH.

PAUL WROTE THIS LETTER TO EXPRESS HIS LOVE FOR THIS CHURCH AS WELL AS HIS DESIRE TO VISIT THIS CHURCH.

TO EXPRESS THAT HE WANTED TO COME BUT FIRST MUST FULFILL GODS WILL IN OTHER AREAS.

HE WANTED THE CHURCH TO BE ENCOURAGED.

HE WANTED THEM TO BE WARNED AND AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF SIN.

HE WANTED EVERYONE TO KNOW OF THE COMING JUDGEMENT.

HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THEIR THEOLOGY WAS SOUND.

ALL OF THESE REASONS POINTING TO HIS DEEP LOVE FOR HIS FELLOW BELIEVERS.

WE TITLED THIS SERMON SERIES “ROMANS... THE GREATEST BOOK EVER WRITTEN”

THIS WONDERFUL BOOK CAN BE BROKEN UP INTO 5 SECTIONS.

CHAPTERS 1-3 COVERS THE SINFULNESS OF MAN AND COMING JUDGEMENT.

CHAPTERS 3-5 COVERS JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND FAITH ALONE.

THE FACT THAT WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS A GIFT FROM GOD.

CHAPTERS 6-8 SPEAKS ABOUT SANCTIFICATION WHICH IS THE PROCESS OF BECOMING MORE LIKE CHRIST.

A PROCESS THAT BEGINS AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION AND WILL BE COMPLETED IN GLORY WITH OUR SAVIOR AS WE ARE ETERNALLY UNITED WITH HIM.

CHAPTERS 9-11 SPEAK ABOUT ELECTION AND GODS SOVEREIGNTY IN ALL THINGS.

IN THESE CHAPTERS WE HEAR ABOUT HIS PLAN FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE GENTILES.

CHAPTERS 12-15 PAUL SPEAKS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND CHRISTIAN LIVING.

AND IN CHAPTER 16 ARE HIS FINAL INSTRUCTIONS AND GREETINGS.

SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE BOOK OF ROMANS ARE THE TOPICS OF IMPUTATION AND RECONCILIATION.

TELLING US THAT CHRISTS RIGHTEOUSNESS IS CREDITED TO BELIEVERS BECAUSE OF FAITH, AND THROUGH THAT WE ARE RECONCILED TO THE FATHER.

ROMANS MAY BE ONE OF THE MOST IF NOT THE HARDEST BOOK TO UNDERSTAND AS WELL AS TEACH, BUT IT IS MY FAVORITE BOOK OF THE BIBLE.

BO ALWAYS JOKES THAT HE KNOWS ROMANS IS MY FAVORITE BOOK BECAUSE I QUOTE IT MORE THAN ANY OTHER BOOK.

I TAUGHT THE FIRST 8 CHAPTERS TO THE YOUTH A FEW YEARS AGO AND FELL IN LOVE WITH IT, NOW AFTER THIS PAST YEAR I HAVE COME TO APPRECIATE IT EVEN MORE.

I THINK THE BOOKS THAT ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND SHOULD BE A FOCUS OF ANY CHURCH.

IF WE CAN DEAL WITH THE DIFFICULT THINGS, THEN WHEN SMALL THINGS COME UP IT SEEMS LIKE THEY ARE NO ISSUE AT ALL.

DIFFICULT TRUTHS BRING GROWTH, THEY STRENGTHEN FAITH AND THEY FORCE US TO THINK.

THEY FORCE US TO COME TO TERMS WITH THINGS THAT WE DON'T NECESSARILY WANT TO DEAL WITH.

WHICH IS PARAMOUNT TO BECOMING A MORE MATURE BELIEVER.

IF THE BIBLE WEREN'T THOUGHT PROVOKING, THEN WE WOULD NEVER GROW.

IF IT DIDN'T FORCE US TO DEAL WITH THE THINGS IN OUR LIFE THAT MUST CHANGE THEN WE NEVER WOULD.

AND I THINK WE'VE DONE A PRETTY GOOD JOB OF DISSECTING AND EXPLAINING THOSE TOPICS.

BUT TODAY ISN'T ONE OF THOSE DAYS.

AS PAUL CLOSES OUT HIS LETTER HE TELLS US OF HIS PLANS, HE PRAISES SOME OF THE CHURCHES FOR THEIR ROLE IN THE SPREADING OF THE GOSPEL.

AND HE ASKS THE ROMAN CHURCH TO JOIN HIM IN PRAYER THAT HE MAY BE ABLE TO COME VISIT THEM SOON.

ROMANS 15:22,23

22 FOR THIS REASON I ALSO HAVE BEEN MUCH HINDERED FROM COMING TO YOU. 23 BUT NOW NO LONGER HAVING A PLACE IN THESE PARTS, AND HAVING A GREAT DESIRE THESE MANY YEARS TO COME TO YOU,

I THINK WE HAVE MORE THAN COVERED VERSE 22.

IN VERSE 23 PAUL TELLS US HE NO LONGER HAS A PLACE IN THESE PARTS.

AT FIRST IT MAY SOUND AS IF HE FEELS UNWELCOME IN THOSE AREAS.

BUT I'M PRETTY SURE WE HAVE DISCOVERED THAT PAUL WASN'T CONCERNED ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HE RECEIVED A WARM WELCOME.

IN FACT, I'M SURE HE HAD GROWN QUITE ACCUSTOMED TO FEELING UNWELCOME IN MOST OF THE AREAS HE TRAVELLED.

NOT BY EVERYONE OF COURSE, BUT CERTAINLY BY THE JEWISH LEADERS AND LEADERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

HE WAS DESPISED AND FEARED JUST LIKE JESUS.

AND JESUS WARNED THAT THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN.

MARK 9:9, 10

9 "BUT WATCH OUT FOR YOURSELVES, FOR THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO COUNCILS, AND YOU WILL BE BEATEN IN THE SYNAGOGUES. YOU WILL ^{lc]}BE BROUGHT BEFORE RULERS AND KINGS FOR MY SAKE, FOR A TESTIMONY TO THEM. 10 AND THE GOSPEL MUST FIRST BE PREACHED TO ALL THE NATIONS.

EVERYWHERE PAUL AND THE OTHER DISCIPLES WENT THEY WERE MET WITH SOME SORT OF RESISTANCE.

SO WHEN HE SAYS IN ROMANS 15:23 "THERE IS NO PLACE FOR ME IN THESE PARTS" I DON'T THINK HE'S REFERRING TO FEELING UNWELCOME, HE EXPECTS THAT.

I THINK WHAT HE'S SAYING IS THAT THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE IN THESE PARTS FOR ME TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL.

I MUST MOVE ON FROM HERE TO THE NEXT PLACE THE SPIRIT IS LEADING ME.

WHICH SEEMS LIKE, OK NO BIG DEAL, HE'S CONTINUING HIS MINISTRY SOMEWHERE ELSE, ISN'T THAT WHAT HE'S SUPPOSED TO DO?

EXACTLY!

BUT HE'S NOT DOING ANY OF THIS FOR HIS OWN AGENDA.

HE IS VERY INTENTIONAL; HE IS LETTING GOD DIRECT HIM IN THIS AREA.

WHICH IS A LESSON TO ALL OF US, SOMETIMES WE HAVE COMPLETED THE WORK WE ARE SUPPOSED TO DO IN A CERTAIN AREA.

IN OUR WALK WITH CHRIST, WE WILL GO THROUGH DIFFERENT SEASONS.

WHICH MEANS HE WILL ALLOW US TO BE AT A CERTAIN JOB OR LIVE IN A CERTAIN PLACE FOR A PERIOD OF TIME UNTIL HE HAS ACCOMPLISHED WHAT HE WANTS ACCOMPLISHED.

WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO DISCERN THESE TIMES THOUGH.

SOMETIMES WE GET COMFORTABLE PLACES AND DON'T WANT TO LEAVE...

SO GOD MAKES US UNCOMFORTABLE IN ORDER TO GET US TO MOVE.

SOMETIMES WE ARE MISERABLE SOMEWHERE AND GOD WON'T PROVIDE A WAY OUT.

THAT MEANS YOU ARE THERE FOR A REASON, SO INSTEAD OF WALLOWING IN IT, ASK GOD TO HELP YOU SEE WHAT IT IS HE WANTS YOU TO ACCOMPLISH.

PAUL IS EXPRESSING THAT HE FEELS THE SPIRIT OF GOD TELLING HIM THAT HIS TIME THERE IS DONE AND IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON.

MAYBE GOD IS TELLING YOU IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO MOVE ON IN AN AREA OR YOUR LIFE.

MAYBE THE FUTURE SEEMS UNSURE AND SCARY.

MAYBE IT SEEMS UNCERTAIN OR RISKY.

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH OFTEN DOES.

BUT HOW CAN OUR FAITH GROW IF WE DON'T EXERCISE IT, BY TRUSTING IN GOD AND TAKING THAT STEP.

I CAN SAY THIS, IF GOD IS CALLING TO YOU TO MOVE, HE WILL PROVIDE THE WAY.

HE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH THE RESOURCES YOU NEED.

MAYBE NOT THE ONES YOU WANT BUT HE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH WHAT YOU NEED.

YOU HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF IF YOU ARE GOING TO TRUST HIM.

WE SEE NO HESITATION IN THE APOSTLE PAUL, BECAUSE HE WAS FULLY RELIANT ON THE LORD.

HE TRUSTED HIM IN ALL THINGS AND COMMITTED HIMSELF TO THE MISSION GOD HAD GIVEN HIM.

DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES AND THE PAIN, HE KNEW ULTIMATELY IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.

I URGE YOU TO BE OF THE SAME MINDSET.

TRUST IN THE LORD AND HIS PERFECT PLAN.

PSALM 40:1-3

**I WAITED PATIENTLY FOR THE LORD;
AND HE INCLINED TO ME,
AND HEARD MY CRY.**

**² HE ALSO BROUGHT ME UP OUT OF A HORRIBLE PIT,
OUT OF THE MIRY CLAY,
AND SET MY FEET UPON A ROCK,
AND ESTABLISHED MY STEPS.**

**³ HE HAS PUT A NEW SONG IN MY MOUTH—
PRAISE TO OUR GOD;
MANY WILL SEE IT AND FEAR,
AND WILL TRUST IN THE LORD.**

DAVID DOESN'T SAY THAT HE ASKED AND GOD GAVE.

HE SAID I WAITED PATIENTLY FOR THE LORD.

GOD WILL MOVE BUT IT IS ON HIS TIMELINE AND NOT OURS.

HIS PERFECT TIMING.

BUT WHAT YOU CAN'T DO IS NOT MOVE WHEN GOD SAYS IT'S TIME
AND THEN SAY "WELL I WAS JUST BEING PATIENT"

TRUST ME GOD KNOWS HOW TO GET YOU TO MOVE, BETTER TO DO IT
HIS WAY THAN TRY TO FIGHT IT.

ROMANS 15:24

**²⁴ WHENEVER I JOURNEY TO SPAIN, ^[H] I SHALL COME TO YOU. FOR I
HOPE TO SEE YOU ON MY JOURNEY, AND TO BE HELPED ON MY
WAY THERE BY YOU, IF FIRST I MAY ENJOY YOUR COMPANY FOR A
WHILE.**

WHAT A SHIFT!

JUST THINK ABOUT ALL THE THINGS PAUL HAS COVERED IN THIS
LETTER BUT NOW WE HEAR HIS DESIRE TO JUST SPEND TIME WITH
FELLOW BELIEVERS.

HE KNEW HOW IMPORTANT FELLOWSHIP WITHIN THE CHURCH IS.

AND HE DESIRED TO JUST SPEND TIME WITH THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE.

I CAN TOTALLY RELATE.

I GREATLY ENJOY OUR WEDNESDAY EVENINGS TOGETHER.

I GREATLY ENJOY MEN'S NIGHT.

ONE OF MY FAVORITE NIGHTS OF THE YEAR IS OUR SALT CHURCH FAMILY CHRISTMAS.

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT WE ARE, WE ARE FAMILY AND THE TIME WE SPEND TOGETHER IS IMPORTANT IN ITS NECESSARY.

JOHN 13:34,35

³⁴ A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE TO YOU, THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, THAT YOU ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. ³⁵ BY THIS ALL WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER."

IT'S HARD TO LOVE EACH OTHER IF WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER, AND IT'S HARD TO KNOW EACH OTHER IF WE DON'T SPEND QUALITY TIME TOGETHER.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT?

WE DON'T ONLY HAVE TO HANG OUT AT CHURCH!

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO SPEND TIME WITH EACH OTHER.

INVITE SOMEONE TO LUNCH, HAVE A FAMILY OVER FOR DINNER.

GO BOWLING!

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ENJOY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO HAVE FUN.

IT'S OK TO ENJOY LIFE.

TO BE HAPPY WHEN GOD PROVIDES.

YOU WANT TO KNOW THE SECRET TO A FULFILLING LIFE?

FIND JOY IN GOD!

FOR SOME REASON MANY CHRISTIANS FEEL LIKE HAVING FUN IS WRONG.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, A BIG GROUP OF US WENT BOWLING, WE HAD AN ABSOLUTE BLAST!

WITHOUT A SINGLE DROP OF ALCOHOL.

IT'S AMAZING THE WONDERFUL TIMES YOU CAN HAVE WHEN YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY LIKEMINDED PEOPLE THAT YOU CARE ABOUT AND THAT CARE ABOUT YOU.

THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT PAUL IS TALKING ABOUT.

JUST ENJOYING SPENDING TIME WITH PEOPLE THAT HE CARES ABOUT.

ROMANS 15:24

24 WHENEVER I JOURNEY TO SPAIN, [H] I SHALL COME TO YOU. FOR I HOPE TO SEE YOU ON MY JOURNEY, AND TO BE HELPED ON MY WAY THERE BY YOU, IF FIRST I MAY ENJOY YOUR COMPANY FOR A WHILE.

ROMANS 15:25,26

25 BUT NOW I AM GOING TO JERUSALEM TO [U] MINISTER TO THE SAINTS. 26 FOR IT PLEASED THOSE FROM MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA TO MAKE A CERTAIN CONTRIBUTION FOR THE POOR AMONG THE SAINTS WHO ARE IN JERUSALEM.

WHEN PAUL SAYS HE IS GOING TO MINISTER TO THE SAINTS HE'S NOT SPEAKING OF PREACHING.

HE'S TALKING ABOUT MINISTERING TO THEIR NEEDS.

THE CHURCHES IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA SENT MONEY VIA PAUL TO THE SAINTS IN JERUSALEM.

KIND OF LIKE WE SEND MONEY TO HONDURAS TO SUPPORT DAVID AND CINDY AND I.E.R.

IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE HELP OTHER MINISTRIES FINANCIALLY.

IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE AS CHURCH MEMBERS SUPPORT THIS MINISTRY FINANCIALLY.

WHICH I WILL SAY YOU GUYS ARE VERY GENEROUS.

IT IS BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY THAT WE DIDN'T HAVE TO GET A LOAN FROM THE BANK TO PURCHASE THE NEW BUILDING.

PAUL SAYS THAT THEY WERE PLEASED TO GIVE...

GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER

2ND CORINTHIANS 9:6-9

6 BUT THIS I SAY: HE WHO SOWS SPARINGLY WILL ALSO REAP SPARINGLY, AND HE WHO SOWS [b] BOUNTIFULLY WILL ALSO REAP [b] BOUNTIFULLY. 7 SO LET EACH ONE GIVE AS HE PURPOSES IN HIS HEART, NOT GRUDGINGLY OR OF [n] NECESSITY; FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER. 8 AND GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE ALL GRACE ABOUND TOWARD YOU, THAT YOU, ALWAYS HAVING ALL SUFFICIENCY IN ALL THINGS, MAY HAVE AN ABUNDANCE FOR EVERY GOOD WORK. 9 AS IT IS WRITTEN:

***"HE HAS DISPERSED ABROAD,
HE HAS GIVEN TO THE POOR;
HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER."***

THERE ARE SEVERAL IMPORTANT LESSONS IN THIS SECTION OF SCRIPTURE.

BUT I WANT TO FOCUS ON THE STATE OF THE GIVERS HEART.

BECAUSE PAUL MADE IT A POINT TO SAY THAT IT PLEASED THE PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH TO GIVE TO THE SAINTS THAT WERE IN JERUSALEM.

THEY WERE HAPPY TO HELP.

GIVING IS A WONDERFUL WAY TO HELP MINISTER TO PEOPLE.

BUT THE STATE OF YOUR HEART WHEN YOU GIVE AND THE MOTIVATION BEHIND WHY YOU GIVE MATTERS.

REMEMBER THAT'S WHAT GOD IS LOOKING AT.

IF YOU GAVE A MILLION DOLLARS TO HELP FEED THE POOR BUT DID IT FOR YOUR OWN SATISFACTION THEN THAT BRINGS NO GLORY OR SATISFACTION TO THE LORD.

SO OFTEN PEOPLE HELP OR GIVE TO BE SEEN.

THEY DO IT AS A WAY TO COUNTERACT THEIR SIN (AS IF THAT'S EVEN POSSIBLE)

THEY DO IT BECAUSE THEY HOPE TO GET SOMETHING IN RETURN.

THERE ARE SO MANY REASONS THAT PEOPLE GIVE THAT ARE WRONG AND SELFISH.

YES, THE BIBLE SAYS THAT THOSE WHO GIVE CHEERFULLY WILL BE BLESSED, BUT THOSE BLESSINGS CAN'T BE THE MOTIVATION.

THE MOTIVATION MUST BE FOR GOD'S GLORY AND FOR HIS PURPOSE.

OTHERWISE, IT'S COMPLETELY POINTLESS.

IT MAY BRING YOU A TEMPORARY FEELING OF SATISFACTION BUT THERE ARE NO HEAVENLY REWARDS IF YOUR MOTIVES ARE IMPURE.

MATTHEW 6:2

THEREFORE, WHEN YOU DO A CHARITABLE DEED, DO NOT SOUND A TRUMPET BEFORE YOU AS THE HYPOCRITES DO IN THE SYNAGOGUES AND IN THE STREETS, THAT THEY MAY HAVE GLORY FROM MEN. ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD.

AND THAT REWARD IS WHAT EXACTLY?

BEING GLORIFIED BY MEN. WHICH HAS NO ETERNAL IMPLICATIONS.

ROMANS 15:27

²⁷ IT PLEASSED THEM INDEED, AND THEY ARE THEIR DEBTORS. FOR IF THE GENTILES HAVE BEEN PARTAKERS OF THEIR SPIRITUAL THINGS, THEIR DUTY IS ALSO TO MINISTER TO THEM IN MATERIAL THINGS.

THE GENTILES RECEIVED THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION FROM THE JEWS; THEREFORE WERE BOUND TO MINISTER TO THEM IN WHAT WAS NEEDED FOR THE BODY.

ROMANS 1:16

¹⁶ FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL ^[G]OF CHRIST, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES, FOR THE JEW FIRST AND ALSO FOR THE GREEK.

I THINK WE FORGET THAT THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE PRESENTED WITH THE GOSPEL FIRST.

MANY OF THEM AS WE KNOW REJECTED IT BUT IT WAS THE ONES WHO RECEIVED IT AND BELIEVED THAT IT WAS TRUTH THAT WERE USED BY GOD TO BRING THE MESSAGE TO THE GENTILES.

THIS LEFT THE GENTILES INDEBTED TO THE JEWISH CONVERTS.

AND THEY WERE OVERJOYED TO REPAY THAT DEBT.

THEY WERE EXCITED AND HAPPY TO HELP THE PEOPLE THAT BROUGHT THEM THE MESSAGE OF THE SAVING GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS.

PAUL WROTE THIS LETTER MOST LIKELY IN AD 58.

DURING THAT TIME THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM WAS EXPERIENCING NOT ONLY GREAT PERSECUTION BUT GREAT POVERTY.

THERE WAS A FAMINE THROUGHOUT PALESTINE DURING THAT TIME, MANY CHRISTIAN MEN LOST THEIR JOBS OR WERE THROWN IN PRISON.

THIS MADE A BAD SITUATION EVEN WORSE.

THERE WAS A GREAT NEED.

WHICH WOULD'VE BEEN WHY PAUL MADE AN APPEAL TO THE CHURCHES IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA.

AND THEY WERE MORE THAN HAPPY TO HELP.

THIS TYPE OF MINISTRY HELPED TO ENSURE THAT WALLS THAT PREVIOUSLY EXISTED BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE WERE NOT REBUILT.

DURING THIS TIME THERE WAS STILL A GREAT DEAL OF UNREST AND DISTRUST BETWEEN THE JEWISH AND GENTILE BELIEVERS.

THIS GESTURE FROM THESE PRIMARILY GENTILE CHURCHES THAT WERE FOR THE MOST PART POOR THEMSELVES, WAS A POWERFUL GESTURE OF LOVE.

AND I'M SURE IT WENT A LONG WAY IN WHAT WAS A DIFFICULT ROAD AHEAD AS THE NEW BELIEVERS LEARNED TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH ONE ANOTHER.

ROMANS 15:28

28 THEREFORE, WHEN I HAVE PERFORMED THIS AND HAVE SEALED TO THEM THIS FRUIT, I SHALL GO BY WAY OF YOU TO SPAIN

PAUL WAS OVERJOYED WITH THE GENEROUS GIFT THAT HE HAD THE HONOR AND PLEASURE OF BRINGING TO THE SAINTS IN JERUSALEM.

BY HIM “PUTTING HIS SEAL” ON THIS GIFT HE WAS SAYING THAT IT WAS A TRUE GIFT FROM THE HEART.

THERE WERE NO ULTERIOR MOTIVES BEHIND IT.

THE GIFT WAS SOLELY TO HELP THOSE IN NEED AND REPAY THEM FOR THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS THEY HAD BESTOWED UPON THE GENTILES.

PAUL MENTIONS AGAIN THAT HE PLANS TO VISIT THE ROMAN CHURCH ON HIS WAY TO SPAIN.

BUT HIS PRESENT PRIORITY WAS TO DEMONSTRATE GENTILE LOVE FOR JEWISH BELIEVERS BY DELIVERING THIS OFFERING TO THEM.

PAUL’S PRIORITY WAS ALWAYS TO STAY WITHIN THE WILL OF GOD.

HE PUT GODS DESIRES FOR HIM FIRST IN EVERYTHING HE DID.

I HAVE TO WONDER IF WE DO THIS, AND IF WE DO IT WELL...

AND WHAT I MEAN BY THAT IS DO WE PRIORITIZE WHAT GOD WANTS OVER WHAT WE WANT?

DO WE HAVE A KINGDOM MINDSET?

FOCUSED ON WHAT GOD WANTS FOR US.

FOCUSED ON HIS WILL AND NOT OUR OWN.

LIFE GETS BUSY AND IT HAPPENS SO FAST.

BEFORE WE KNOW IT WE ARE RUNNING IN A THOUSAND DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS GOING 100 MILES AN HOUR.

NEVER SLOWING DOWN LONG ENOUGH TO SEE IF WE ARE DOING WHAT GOD WANTS US TO DO.

WE NEED TO SLOW DOWN AND MAKE SURE WE ARE WALKING ACCORDING TO WHAT GOD WANTS.

PAUL SAID HE DESPERATELY WANTED TO VISIT THE ROMAN CHURCH BUT HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS NOT YET IN THE WILL OF GOD.

MEANING THAT HE PUT GODS WILL AND PLAN AHEAD OF HIS OWN.

ROMANS 15:29

29 BUT I KNOW THAT WHEN I COME TO YOU, I SHALL COME IN THE FULLNESS OF THE BLESSING ^UOF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

WHEN THE TIME DOES COME THAT HE IS ABLE TO COME VISIT IT WILL BE WHEN GOD PROVIDES A WAY.

BECAUSE PAUL LIVED IN CONTINUAL OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD, HIS LIFE WAS ALWAYS BLESSED.

OBVIOUSLY, THIS BLESSING DID NOT EXCLUDE PHYSICAL HARDSHIPS OR PERSECUTION.

WHICH WE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER, BEING BLESSED BY GOD DOESN'T MEAN THERE WON'T BE DIFFICULT OR TRYING TIMES.

BUT PAUL WOULD NOT ALLOW ANY OF THOSE THINGS TO ROB HIM OF THE FULNESS OF THAT BLESSING.

WE SHOULD PROCESS LIFE THE SAME WAY.

YOU SEE WE HAVE A CHOICE WHETHER OR NOT WE LET THINGS ROB US OF FEELING THE FULLNESS GOD'S BLESSING.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE HAPPY ALL THE TIME TO ENJOY THE FULNESS OF GOD'S BLESSING.

BUT YOU DO HAVE TO BE OBEDIENT IF YOU WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE FULNESS OF HIS BLESSINGS.

JUST IMAGINE HOW MANY TIMES OUR SIN HAS COST US FROM EXPERIENCING EVERYTHING GOD WANTED US TO.

HOW MANY BLESSINGS WE KEPT OURSELVES FROM RECEIVING.

YOU MAY BE ENGAGED IN SOMETHING RIGHT NOW THAT IS STOPPING YOU FROM EXPERIENCING THE BLESSINGS OF THE LORD.

AND WHEN I SAID THAT IF THINGS POPPED INTO YOUR HEAD, THEN THAT'S THE HOLY SPIRIT LETTING YOU KNOW MAYBE IT'S TIME TO STEP AWAY FROM THOSE THINGS.

WE ALL HAVE AREAS THAT WE ARE WEAK AND WE STRUGGLE IN, MYSELF INCLUDED.

WE HAVE ALL DONE THINGS THAT HAVE CAUSED US TO MISS OUT ON THE FULNESS OF GOD'S BLESSING.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE GIVE UP.

PROVERBS 24:16

FOR A RIGHTEOUS MAN MAY FALL SEVEN TIMES AND RISE AGAIN, BUT THE WICKED SHALL FALL BY CALAMITY.

IT'S OK IF YOU FALL, ITS OK IF YOU FALL OVER AND OVER.

YOU'RE ONLY DOOMED IF REFUSE TO GET BACK UP.

ONLY YOU CAN MAKE THE DECISION TO GET BACK UP.

IF YOU SEEK THE WILL OF GOD HE WILL GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH YOU NEED TO GET BACK UP.

YOU CAN'T DO IT ON YOUR OWN.

YOU CAN TRY AND MAY SUCCEED FOR A LITTLE WHILE BUT EVENTUALLY YOU WON'T HAVE ANY STRENGTH LEFT AND WITHOUT GODS HELP YOU AS PROVERBS SAYS "FALL INTO CALAMITY"

ROMANS 15:30-32

30 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, 31 THAT I MAY BE DELIVERED FROM THOSE IN JUDEA WHO ^[K]DO NOT BELIEVE, AND THAT MY SERVICE FOR JERUSALEM MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SAINTS, 32 THAT I MAY COME TO YOU WITH JOY BY THE WILL OF GOD, AND MAY BE REFRESHED TOGETHER WITH YOU.

AGAIN, WE HAVE ONE OF PAUL'S FAMOUS RUN-ON SENTENCES.

LET'S LOOK AT THE FIRST PART

ROMANS 15:30

30 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,

PAUL IS MAKING A PETITION TO THE ROMAN CHURCH TO JOIN HIM IN PRAYER FOR HIS UPCOMING MISSION TRIP.

THE PHRASE "THROUGH THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT" IS ONLY SEEN IN THIS ONE INSTANCE IN SCRIPTURE.

AND IT'S NOT TALKING ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LOVE FOR PAUL BUT RATHER HIS LOVE FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BUT WE HEAR PAUL ASKING FOR PRAYERS!

SOME OF YOUR TRANSLATIONS MAY SAY INSTEAD OF "STRIVE WITH ME", "STRUGGLE TOGETHER WITH ME."

PAUL IS INVITING THEM INTO THIS STRUGGLE WITH HIM, TO JOIN HIM IN PRAYER.

WHEN WE ASK FOR PRAYERS, WE ARE ASKING THOSE PRAYING WITH US AND FOR US TO JOIN US IN WHATEVER STRUGGLE WE ARE DEALING WITH.

WE SHOULD TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY, AND UNDERSTAND THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT THAT REALLY MEANS.

TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE THAT IS GOING THROUGH OR MAY GO THROUGH SOMETHING DIFFICULT IS TO JOIN THEM IN THAT STRUGGLE.

AND HERE WE HAVE PAUL, THE APOSTLE OF ALL THE APOSTLES.

ASKING FOR PRAYER, ASKING THIS FAITHFUL CHURCH TO JOIN HIM IN HIS STRUGGLE.

THIS SHOWS US THAT NO MATTER HOW MATURE WE ARE, HOW FAITHFUL WE ARE, HOW WILLING WE ARE TO SUFFER, HOW MUCH WE DESIRE TO WALK IN THE WILL OF GOD WE STILL NEED PRAYER!

THE PRAYERS OF A FAITHFUL CHURCH ARE A POWERFUL THING AS WE HAVE SEEN RIGHT HERE IN OUR OWN LITTLE CHURCH.

WE HAVE SEEN MIRACULOUS HEALINGS OF LORI AND TOM.

WE HAVE SEEN GOD MOVE THROUGH HIS PEOPLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THOSE WITHIN THE CHURCH AS WELL AS THOSE THAT ARE NOT PART OF OUR CHURCH.

I HAVE SEEN MY OWN FATHER BE HEALED AND BROUGHT BACK FROM DEATH'S DOORSTEP.

IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH SOMETHING AND NEED PRAYER, MAYBE IT'S VERY PERSONAL, MAYBE IT'S EMBARRASSING OR PAINFUL...

CAN I URGE YOU TO GO TO ONE OF OUR PRAYER TEAM MEMBERS OR CHURCH ELDERS AND ASK THEM TO PRAY FOR YOU.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

⁶ BE ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING, BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, WITH THANKSGIVING, LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD; ⁷ AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS.

BUT IN EVERYTHING GO TO HIM IN PRAYER.

SOMETIMES THAT MEANS CONFESSING YOUR SINS TO A TRUSTED FELLOW BELIEVER AND HAVING THEM PRAY FOR YOU.

JAMES 5:13-16

13 IS ANYONE AMONG YOU SUFFERING? LET HIM PRAY. IS ANYONE CHEERFUL? LET HIM SING PSALMS. 14 IS ANYONE AMONG YOU SICK? LET HIM CALL FOR THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH, AND LET THEM PRAY OVER HIM, ANOINTING HIM WITH OIL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. 15 AND THE PRAYER OF FAITH WILL SAVE THE SICK, AND THE LORD WILL RAISE HIM UP. AND IF HE HAS COMMITTED SINS, HE WILL BE FORGIVEN. 16 [U] CONFESS YOUR TRESPASSES TO ONE ANOTHER, AND PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER, THAT YOU MAY BE HEALED. THE EFFECTIVE, [K] FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILS MUCH.

I USED TO STRUGGLE WITH THE PART THAT SAYS THE PRAYERS OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAIL MUCH.

BECAUSE I KNEW MYSELF AND I KNEW I WAS FAR FROM RIGHTEOUS.

AND THEN ONE DAY IT HIT ME, I HAVE BEEN CREDITED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS BECAUSE OF WHAT JESUS ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS.

SO WITH THAT NEW MINDSET IT OPENED THE DOOR FOR ME TO TRULY UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT VERSE MEANT.

IN ROMANS 15 PAUL IS ASKING FOR THE CHURCH TO PRAY WITH HIM AND FOR HIM.

KNOWING THAT THERE ARE SINFUL PEOPLE WITHIN THE CHURCH, HE STILL ASKED... WHY?

BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN CREDITED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH IN JESUS.

AND THE SAME GOES FOR US.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS WE SERVE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST BUT ONE OF THE ABSOLUTE MOST IMPORTANT IS BY PRAYING FOR THEM.

ROMANS 15:30,31

³⁰ 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, ³¹ THAT I MAY BE DELIVERED FROM THOSE IN JUDEA WHO ^[K]DO NOT BELIEVE, AND THAT MY SERVICE FOR JERUSALEM MAY BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SAINTS,

PAUL KNEW HE WAS ABOUT TO BE FACED WITH MORE PERSECUTION, HE KNEW THAT THERE WERE DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD FOR HIM AS HE TRAVELLED TO JERUSALEM.

SO, HE ASKED FOR PRAYER TO BE DELIVERED FROM THE NON-BELIEVERS.

HIS DESIRE WAS TO BE ABLE TO MINISTER TO THE SAINTS IN JERUSALEM AND THEN CONTINUE ON HIS MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

BUT HE KNEW THAT HE COULD FACE MAJOR DELAYS WITH POTENTIAL IMPRISONMENT.

HIS DESIRE WAS TO CONTINUE ON AND HE DIDN'T WANT TO BE HELD UP BY THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OR THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.

SO HE ASKED FOR PRAYER.

HE ALSO WANTED "HIS SERVICE TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SAINTS"

HE WANTED TO BE ABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

BOTH DAILY PHYSICAL NEEDS AS WELL AS SPIRITUAL NEEDS.

THESE PRAYERS WERE ANSWERED IN THAT HE WAS DELIVERED FROM DEATH BUT NOT IMPRISONMENT.

ACTS CHAPTER 21 COVER PAUL'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

I ENCOURAGE YOU GUYS TO READ IT.

THE BOOK OF ACTS IS AN AMAZING BOOK, THAT'S WHY CLIFF IS TEACHING IT IN A SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS!

ROMANS 15:32

,³² THAT I MAY COME TO YOU WITH JOY BY THE WILL OF GOD, AND MAY BE REFRESHED TOGETHER WITH YOU.

THIS IS STILL PART OF PAUL'S PRAYER REQUEST, AND IT'S THE MOST PERSONAL OF THEM ALL.

AS WE SAW EARLIER HIS DESIRE TO VISIT THE ROMAN CHURCH AND ENJOY THEIR COMPANY, HE REITERATES THAT DESIRE IN THIS REQUEST.

TO NOT BE HINDERED IN JERUSALEM SO THAT HE CAN COME TO THEM WITH JOY, KNOWING THAT HE COMPLETELY FULFILLED THE WILL OF GOD.

AND THEN THAT HE MAY ENJOY A TIME OF REST AND FELLOWSHIP SO THAT HE CAN BE REFRESHED AND CONTINUE ON HIS MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

ARE YOU SEEKING JOY IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THE WILL OF GOD?

DO YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT LIFE THAT WAY?

THAT BEING IN THE WILL OF GOD SHOULD BRING YOU JOY?

ARE YOU TAKING THE TIME YOU NEED TO BE REFRESHED BY OTHER BELIEVERS.

MY HOPE IS THAT WE WILL ALL PROCESS LIFE THIS WAY, LOOKING TO BE SATISFIED IN THE WILL OF GOD.

FINDING JOY WHEN YOU ARE ALIGNED WITH HIS WILL.

AND BEING INTENTIONAL WHEN IT COMES TO SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST.

ROMANS 15:33

33 NOW THE GOD OF PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN.

PAUL ENDS HIS PRAYER REQUEST WITH A BLESSING.

WHICH IS HOW I WOULD LIKE TO END TODAY.

AS WE DRAW NEAR TO THE END OF THIS WONDERFULLY POWERFUL BOOK, I TRULY HOPE EACH ONE OF YOU HAS BEEN BLESSED BY THE TEACHING OF IT.

I HOPE WE ALL LEARNED ALL SOMETHING THAT CHANGED HOW WE LOOK AT GODS WORD AND HOW WE LOOK AT HIM.

I HOPE WE ALL HAVE A BETTER APPRECIATION FOR THE DOCTRINES THAT WE STUDIED.

AS PAUL WROTE TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH HE INCLUDED A BEAUTIFUL PRAYER THAT I WOULD LIKE TO PRAY FOR YOU ALL TODAY AS WE END.

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU ALL TO PLEASE STAND

EPHESIANS 3:14-19

14 FOR THIS REASON I BOW MY KNEES TO THE FATHER ¹⁴OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, ¹⁵FROM WHOM THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH IS NAMED, ¹⁶THAT HE WOULD GRANT YOU, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT THROUGH HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN, ¹⁷THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS THROUGH FAITH; THAT YOU, BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE, ¹⁸MAY BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND WITH ALL THE SAINTS WHAT IS THE WIDTH AND LENGTH AND DEPTH AND HEIGHT— ¹⁹TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSES KNOWLEDGE; THAT YOU MAY BE FILLED WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.