

Romans 15

1. How would describe someone who is "strong" in the faith?

What is the difference between someone who is strong in the faith and someone who is weak?

How does one become strong?

What can the church do to help you become a stronger Christian?

2. What does the word "indulge" mean?

What does Paul instruct us to do in verse 2?

How do we please our neighbors without indulging them?

Paul does put a limitation on our actions by saying we are to please our neighbor "for his good." What does that mean to you?

In what ways does Jesus please us for our own good?

Today, we are surrounded by people seeking to please themselves (see 2 Timothy 3:2). How difficult might it be to fulfill Paul's admonition?

Read Matt. 20:27-28. Why, if Jesus came to serve, did He receive insults?

Why did Jesus do this?

Since we are to follow in His steps, can we expect to receive the same treatment? Please explain.

3. How important is studying history to you? Please explain.

What does Paul tell us in verse 4?

Since everything in the past was written to teach us, how should we approach the Old Testament?

What would you say to someone who felt that because we are under the new covenant, we only need to study the New Testament?

What are some truths that you have learned from the Old Testament?

4. In verse 5, Paul tells us that God gives us endurance and encouragement. Why does He do this?

Can you remember a time when someone encouraged you? How did that affect you?

Why do Christians need endurance?

When exercising, we can train and raise our endurance level. Yet, here, Paul tells us that God gives us endurance. Why can we not gain it on our own?

Can you remember a time when you needed endurance to continue your walk with Jesus? If so, would you share it?

5. Remembering that Paul is speaking to both Jews and Gentiles, verse 5 takes on special meaning. According to Paul, why does God give us encouragement and endurance?

Does the church today speak with one heart and mouth? Please explain.

Paul tells us that we cannot achieve unity on our own. Unity stems from the Holy Spirit. However, this does not mean we have no responsibilities. According to Paul, what can we do to help the church have one heart and mouth?

How did Jesus accept you? Under what conditions?

Again, Jesus is our standard. Therefore, how are we to accept one another?

6. In verse 8, Paul explains how Jews and Gentiles are intertwined, but he begins with the Jews. Why?

Paul says that Christ became a minister or a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth. How would you react to being called a servant?

The word for "Jews" in verse 8 is the same word that means "circumcision." So, this verse could read that the Christ became a minister to circumcision or to the circumcised. Why would Paul use this word?

Paul tells the Jews that Jesus is the Christ, the longed-for Messiah. To the Jews, who or what did they expect from the Messiah?

How do you think the Jews would react to Paul's statement that their Messiah is to be a servant to them?

Paul makes this statement not only for the Jews but also for the *Gentiles*. What would this statement mean to the *Gentile* believers?

7. Paul continues with this argument by stating that Jesus came as a minister of the Jews for what reason? (See v. 9.)

Do you believe there are some in the church today who do not believe in the promises made to the Patriarchs?

Jesus' was to become a servant of the Jews to confirm the promises to the patriarchs. Who were the patriarchs? What promises were given to them?

For us to comprehend fully Paul's statement about the Messiah, we need to know the Patriarchs and God's promises to them. Why was it important for the *Gentiles* to understand that Jesus' was a confirmation of all the promises made to the patriarchs?

Paul next quotes several passages to show that God was always the God of the *Gentiles* as well as the Jews. From which books does Paul quote?

Thus, the Messiah came as minister of the Jews to show that He is the Christ for both Jews and *Gentiles*. What implication does this have for us today?

Are there some groups or people that you have difficulty believing that Jesus dies for them as well as for you? Please explain.

8. Paul has been very intense in his letter so far. Verse 13 signifies a shift in focus. How would you classify verse 13?

Do you believe Paul is sincere in this prayer? Please explain.

To whom is Paul speaking?

For what does Paul pray?

From where does true joy, peace, and love originate?

Paul sets an excellent example for us. When we are in a serious discussion with others, we should take time to pray for all involved and to seek God. How "easy" is this for you to do?

9. We seem to have a much easier time criticizing someone or something than pointing out the good. Do you agree? Please explain your answer?

What is the difference between encouraging and flattering someone?

Along with the correction, Paul wants to encourage the church in Rome as well. Of what is Paul convinced?

What traits are necessary for us to instruct each other? Why are these necessary?

As members of the Body of Christ, we should be able to correct and instruct each other. Why do you think we do not see more of this?

How might you react to being corrected and then instructed?

Do you believe anyone would ever reach the point where he or she is no longer in need of correction or instruction? Please explain.

10. In verse 15, Paul admits that he has written to the church quite boldly. Why do you think he was so bold?

Would you describe yourself as someone who proclaims the Word of God boldly? Why or why not?

Read Proverbs 28:1, Eph. 6:19, Acts 4:28-29, and Acts 4:31. What do these verses teach us about being bold?

Some can mistake boldness for arrogance. What is the difference?

According to Paul, what was the source of his boldness?

11. We all have a call on our lives. We all have been given spiritual gifts. Do you know what gift the Holy Spirit has given you? What is the call on your life?

What was the call on Paul's life?

Jews considered *Gentiles* unclean. Jews were not to enter the home of a *Gentile* or eat with a *Gentile*. To do so would make the Jew unclean. Yet, God called Paul to take the Truth to this unclean people. What would be your reaction if this were your call?

What can we tell about Paul in that he carried out this call with boldness and passion?

Why does Paul want to take the Gospel to the *Gentiles*?

What should be our motivation to spreading the Good News to all those around us?

12. Is there a difference between pride and being proud? Please explain.

What does the Bible say about pride? (See Proverbs 16:18, 18:12, and Romans 12:16.)

Paul states he glories or is proud of his service to God. How do you react to that statement?

Are you proud of your service to God? Please explain.

In verse 18, Paul clarifies this statement. Usually prideful people speak only of themselves. Paul says that he will only of one thing. What is that?

How often do you speak of what Jesus has accomplished through you?

What has He accomplished through you?

Do you feel like you are bragging about yourself when you answer the previous question? Please explain. Are you?

13. In verses 18-19, Paul tells us how he is able to lead Gentiles to obey God. How is he able to do this?

Paul tells us that he is a Pharisee of Pharisees. He has been taught by the best religious teachers of that time. He knows the law better than most. He was so zealous for the Lord that he persecuted Christians. Yet, these things do not give Paul the power or ability to bring people to Jesus. What enables him to do so?

Are we given the same ability through the power of the Holy Spirit? Please explain.

How comfortable are you with leading another person to Christ? Please explain.

Paul mentions that he has spread the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum. Locate these places on a map to see just how much area Paul covered.

Paul says that he fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. What does he mean by "fully"?

Is it possible to partially proclaim the gospel of Christ? If so, why would someone only proclaim part of the gospel?

Do you feel qualified to proclaim fully the gospel of Jesus Christ?

14. What is your ambition in life?

Paul states that he is an apostle to the Gentiles. What is an apostle?

As an apostle to the Gentiles, what was Paul's ambition?

Why did he prefer to go to places where Christ was not known?

Paul states that he was fulfilling a scripture from Isaiah, which he states in verse 21. How is he fulfilling that scripture?

Are all called to go into places where Christ has not been heard? Please explain.

Who might be called to "build on someone else's foundation?"

15. According to verse 22, why had Paul been hindered from coming to Rome?

Now that Paul has visited the other areas, he wants to visit Rome. He states that he had longed to go there. Why do you think Paul was so passionate about going to Rome?

Paul planned on visiting Rome on his way where?

How long was the journey from Jerusalem to Spain via Rome?

What are Paul's plans when he arrives in Rome?

Paul states that he wants to enjoy their company. Another way to state that would be that Paul wants to be filled and satisfied with their company. What does this tell us about Paul?

How important is fellowshiping with other believers to you? Please explain.

16. Do you see a difference between tithing and giving love offerings? Please explain.

Why do you think it is difficult for people to tithe?

In verse 25, where is Paul going?

Why is going there?

According to verse 26, how did the churches in Macedonia and Achaia give to the church in Jerusalem?

Some might ask, "Why give to the poor in Jerusalem when these churches probably have poor of their own?" How would respond to that question?

The churches in Macedonia and Achaia were *Gentile* churches. Why did Paul say these churches "owed" it to the church in Jerusalem?

Do you believe today's church has shared in the spiritual blessings of the Jews? Please explain.

Why do you think Paul told the church in Rome about the love offering for the poor from the Macedonian and Achaian churches?

How do you feel about giving to the poor?

Read Matthew 26:6-13. What does Jesus say about the poor?

17. Verse 28 gives a short look at Paul's itinerary. What were his plans?

Paul says that when he arrives in Rome, he will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. Other translations read "the fullness of the blessings of Christ," "Christ's full blessings," and "fullest blessings of Christ." What does Paul mean?

What does it mean to you to bless someone? (Refer back to Romans 12:14.)

Meanwhile, until Paul arrives in Rome, what does he ask the church in Rome to do?

Do you pray regularly for those in leadership, both in and out of the church? Please explain.

Specifically, what does Paul ask them to pray?

Where was Judea?

Who were the unbelievers in Judea?

Why would they want to hinder Paul's ministry to the Jerusalem church?

Do we still face unbelievers who wish to hinder the church's ministry? If so, can you give examples?

What are we to do in the face of such opposition?

18. In verse 32, Paul says that he wants them to pray so that by God's will he would come to Rome. If it was God's will for him to come, then why pray?

What is the relationship between prayer and God's will?

From this we see that Paul, despite his personal desires, did nothing without first seeking God. How easy or difficult is that for you to do?

What does it mean to you to be refreshed?

What do you do or where do you go to be refreshed? (Notice, Paul went to other believers.)

How does Paul conclude this part of his letter?

How would you describe the peace of God?

How important is the peace of God to you? Please explain.

How do we walk in this peace?