

Walking Through Romans to Christ

Romans chapter 15 “Having and Sharing the Hope of Christ” (v.1-21)

Righteousness by Faith Series

Opening/REVIEW: In our last lesson we looked at the issues faced when “having a clear conscience before God.” You start asking whether it’s right or wrong. Everyone must live according to the convictions of their conscience and be courteous and respectful to those who haven’t seen eye to eye on questionable issues. In this chapter, the letter to the Romans will give some final words on “Having and Sharing the Hope of Christ.”

1. Pleasing not ourselves (v.1-6)

- a. (v.1-3) We are counseled to have an attitude of deference in these matters of living to serve others. We must aim to help, build up, and draw others closer to Christ. We cannot just please ourselves. We should ever seek to lead others closer to Christ, and to set a loving, godly, and winsome example before them in our lives. **Christ did not seek to “please himself” but rather to please, glorify, and honor God the Father** (Matthew 26:39 “...not my will, but yours...” was Christ’s prayer). The quote of verse 3 is taken from Psalm 69:9. The “reproach” of the sinful world toward God the Father, fell upon Christ! Satan’s hatred for God fell upon Christ. The punishment for sin fell upon Christ. God’s wrath against sin fell upon Christ! Jesus took it all. He laid himself down as nothing (Philippians 2:5-8). Although they spit in His face (Matthew 26:63-68) and mocked Him, yet He prayed, “Father forgive them...” (Luke 23:34). **If Christ gave up so much for us, what might we be willing to give up for the sake of all those others who Christ has died for?**
- b. (v.4) This is the great principle of God’s word! The word of God is “for our learning.” Why were these things written for us? See **John 20:30, 31 (not to sit on the shelf!)**
- c. (v.5,6) The Lord desires that we should be “like minded” even as Christ’s mind was with the Father. **God desires that our minds be like Christ’s also (Phil. 2:5)**. We are to be as “one” for the glory of Jesus Christ, working and laboring together in faith; Not divided! (See the prayer of Christ in **John 17:20-23**; also 1 Corinthians 1:10-15). **Christ desires oneness in His church, among His people!** For there is “...one Lord, one faith, and one baptism...” (Ephesians 4:1-6)!

2. Receiving as Christ received (v.7)

- a. How did Christ receive us? With an open heart and arms outstretched in Love! “He who comes to me, I will in no wise cast out” (**John 6:37**). Christ was always seeking to save those who were lost and wandering from the fold of God. **Jesus did not draw men and women with censure for their sin and folly of life, but with the beckoning of everlasting love!** “Yeah, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee...” (**Jeremiah 31:3**). “...neither do I condemn you, Go, and sin no more...” (John 8:10,11). Although, none of us was in any way “worthy!” We’ve all been filthy sinners, condemned to die for our sins (ref. Romans 3:23; 6:23). **By His grace alone can we possibly be saved! And the very fact that we are “unworthy” is what qualifies us to receive that grace of Christ.** For “Christ died to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (**1 Timothy 1:15**). “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...” (**Romans 5:8**). We were still unworthy, and yet Jesus gave all for us!! **Can we receive others in such a way, by God’s grace?!**

3. Christ confirmed God’s promises for All People (v.8-13)

- a. Christ was a minister to the Jews or “circumcision” to “confirm the promises” (v.8)

- i. He confirmed that “better covenant” which was built upon God’s promises, not men’s faulty promises (**Hebrews 8:6**). *Christ came to especially “confirm” this covenant with the Jewish people of His time (Daniel 9:24,27). He was sent especially to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24-28). But, after completing this special work of confirming the promises, the message of Christ was to continue outward to all the world! The Savior of all mankind had come!! Rejoice all people everywhere, for Christ our light has shown upon us! In the story of Matthew 15:24, there was a Gentile woman who perhaps might have seemed at first glance, that she was treated poorly by Christ. But not to fear. Jesus called her as but a puppy, and yet she had hope! Christ knows our hearts faith and though He may test us, yet He does not test us beyond what our faith is able to bear! Sometimes, we may have to “wrestle with God,” even as did this woman, and as did Jacob. But we must never give up! We must cry out as Jacob did, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me!” (Genesis 32:26). The woman held onto Christ in faith, and she received the blessing of God!*
 - b. (v.9-13) *Messiah was a gift to the whole world (**Luke 2:10-14**), not just to the Jewish people alone. All the Bible promises testify to this very fact! “Peace on earth, good tidings...to all people...a savior...” is given unto you. O such great joy was expressed in that moment by the angels of God. They were giving heaven’s most precious gift to all mankind. Have you experienced this joy in Christ? Don’t miss out! “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8).*
- 4. Working to offer something acceptable to God (v.14-16)**
- a. (v.14) *Paul was confident that the Gentiles receiving this message from him were “filled with all knowledge” and of the grace and goodness of Christ. He was confident that they should be able to build each other up in Christ. Not that there was any good thing in us, for there was not, except for God’s goodness and truth! For “...in me dwells no good thing” (Romans 7:18). And even Christ said, “Why do you call me good? For there is none who are good, except one—God” (Mark 10:18). By God’s grace, we can have His goodness within us, and then be able to build each other up from the fullness of Christ being within us.*
 - b. (v.15,16) *Paul wrote boldly to these Gentiles. And he assured them of the promises of God toward them, and to all people. The Lord was seeking to save all men who would be saved! Surely, this is the call of Christ (2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 22:17). These believers in Christ were to be given as a sweet smelling offering to God through transformed hearts and new purity of life given by Christ. The gospel of Christ was ministered to them so that the “offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable...” (v.16) to God. These were to be presented as “living sacrifices” (Romans 12:1,2), pure and holy to God, even as a “chaste virgin” (2 Corinthians 11:2) were these and all men to be presented to God through Christ!*
- 5. Proclaiming the Gospel of Christ fully to those who’ve not heard (v.17-21)**
- a. *Paul proclaimed this gospel of Christ to soul after soul, in place after place, with great signs and miracles attending the work—even unusual signs (Acts 19:1-12). This was even the promise of Christ to His apostles (Mark 16:17,18). This was the blessing of God for the great furthering of His work. We are to carry on this gospel work, as the Lord has called each of us to labor for the lost! A note on signs and miracles: The devil uses false signs and miracles as well. These do not always tell us for certain that God is at work. But, you should know, the false can be found out because these do not speak or live according to God’s word (ref. Revelation 13:13, 14; 16:13,14; Matthew 24:24; 7:21-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Isaiah 8:20).*

Today’s Appeal: Will you seek by God’s grace to experience Christ’s humble spirit of love more? _____ (And then, in experiencing, to go and share more of Christ with others?)