

SRMBC Family Bible Study

Romans: A New Lifestyle

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Reverend Thomas A. Keys, Pastor

Lesson 18: Unity Hope and Prayer

Romans 15:1 – 13

A creative Sunday-school teacher decided to try an experiment with his kindergarten class. He began by teaching them the importance of sharing. Then when snack time came, he deliberately put one too few juice cups on the table and videotaped what took place next. All of the kids rushed to the table and grabbed a juice cup—all except one boy, who stood empty-handed and crying.

None of the other children offered to share their juice with the boy. Then the teacher showed the videotape to the children, and they talked about sharing one more time.

In this chapter Paul urges us to stop being so self-centered. For the first time in Romans he holds up the example of Christ, the one who embodies all the qualities God desires in us.

Group Discussion: “You deserve the best.” “Look out for number one.” “Pamper yourself.” “I’m worth it.” Why do you think these slogans have become the mindset of our culture?

When is self-concern appropriate, and when does it turn into selfishness?

Thinking only about ourselves is totally natural for us – it is truly the “American Way”

Read Romans 15:1 – 13.

1. What words and phrases throughout this passage indicate how we are to treat one another?

Verses	Phrases	Verses	Words
Vs. 1	who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves	Vs. 2	Edification
Vs. 2	each of us please his neighbor for his good	Vs. 4	Patience and Comfort
Vs. 5	grant you to be like-minded toward one another	Vs. 8	Servant
Vs. 6	one mind and one mouth	Vs. 9	Glorify; Sing
Vs. 7	receive one another, just as Christ also received us	Vv. 4, 12, 13	Hope
Vs 10	Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people	Vv. 10 - 13	Rejoice; Praise Laud, Joy
		Vs. 13	Believing; Peace

2. In light of Romans 14, who are the strong and weak that Paul mentions in 15:1?

What Paul means by “weak” faith. In this context, he does not mean a weak trust in God but rather all incomplete or inaccurate understanding of the Christian life.

The “strong” are those who are firmly established and mature in the faith. They know that they (nor anyone) cannot “earn” status by their good works.

3. What personal attitudes might hinder or help us to bear with the failings of the weak (vv. 1-2)? Explain why.

Hindering Attitudes	Why It Hinders	Helping Attitudes	Why It Helps
Pleasing Ourselves	When we think that everything revolves around us we can become condescending to others. We make no time for others.	Pleasing Others	Not simply being a “people pleaser” but someone who genuinely has the Joy and the love of Christ for others – People will want to be around us
Seeking To Do Evil To Others	Seeking to show off or knowledge to embarrass others (especially publicly) – a bad attitude towards others.	Doing Good for	A person who says – How can I help? – Not primarily what can I get? – People will come to you for help
Seeking To Tear Down Others	Sometimes we make corrections in order to put people down – Not to correct them and help them do better. Not patient with the shortcomings of others.	Leading to Edification	People will be able to trust you and will feel comfortable coming to you for help

4. If we follow Christ’s example in this and other areas of our lives, why will we need endurance, encouragement and hope. Why are Bible study and prayer (vv. 4-5) essential if we are to maintain these attitudes?

The Word

Endurance and encouragement come from the Scriptures (v. 4),

(Ex. **Matt 4:4** “But Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”)

Prayer

And they come from God (v. 5), the author of Scripture - Ex. **Ps. 138:3** – “On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold and strengthened my soul.”

5. In contrast to the discord and possible verbal abuse hinted at in Romans 14, what does God desire of us (vv. 5-6)?

- Like Mindedness – Unity
- As Brother and Sisters in Christ – We Are Family
- Unity in Mind and Voice In Praise Unto God And Jesus Christ

Paul underscores the fact that **we are one in Christ despite our differences**. It is important that we exhibit that unity in our **fellowship** and **worship**.

6. How can the fact that Christ has accepted us promote both unity and praise (v. 7)?

Therefore Receive One Another:

Instead of letting issues divide us, as Christians, we should receive one another just as Christ received us – in the terms of pure grace, **knowing yet bearing with our faults**.

Just As Christ Also Received Us:

Christ did not receive us because we were perfect, But, in loving condescension covering our faults, seeking our good, he welcomed us.

In the same way, and with the same purpose, let us receive one another.

7. In verses 9-12 Paul quotes from four different Old Testament passages. What words and phrases express the dominant mood of these verses?

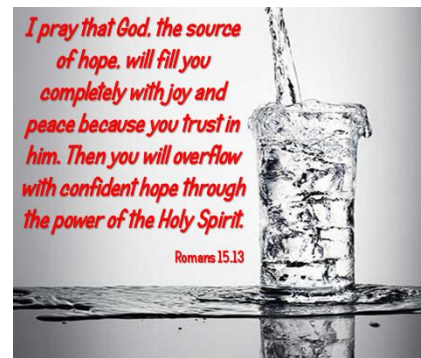
Phrases	OT Scripture Reference
I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and <u>sing to Your name.</u> "	Psalms 18:49; 2 Samuel 22:50
<u>Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people</u>	Deuteronomy 32:4
<u>Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles</u> - Laud Him, <u>all you peoples</u>	Psalms 117:1
<u>There shall be a root of Jesse</u> - In Him the Gentiles <u>shall hope</u>	Isaiah 11:10

- The theme is the unified worship of Jesus by Jews and Gentiles (all people from every nation) together.
- When this occurs, we fulfill those Old Testament Scriptures that foretold the day when Gentiles would praise God and put their hope in him (Cf. Romans 15:7-13)

8. Paul concludes this passage with a vivid prayer (v. 13). How would you describe what is taking place in Paul's description? How can we become those whose lives overflow with joy, peace and hope (v. 13)?

How We Can Overflow:

- **Empty Ourselves** – by prayer and submission, give up our Will for Will of the Lord (Matt, 16:24 -26).
- **Fill Ourselves** – With Prayer, the Word, Worship and Service (Rom 12:1).
- **Ask The Lord To Fill Us** with His Spirit - and commit to walking in the Spirit (Luke 11:13; Gal 5:16).



Paul pictures us as a vessel (like a drinking glass) into which God pours joy and peace. These qualities are poured into us so abundantly that we begin to overflow with hope. This is very visual imagery, so it is best to picture what is taking place to help us to fully understand Paul's meaning.

Spend time praising God for the joy, peace and hope we have in Christ.

Keys for Living



Just as God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit are One, we the church are called operate and function as one Body in Christ.



As we are all members of the Family of God, we have the privilege of sharing the joy of worship and praise of Jesus with one another.



The more we study the Word, pray and worship together, the better we will know Jesus and know one another.