

**The Epistle to the Romans  
(Special English Edition)**

Prepared by William S.H. Piper, D.D.

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**All Believers are “in Christ”**

**Reading assignment: Romans 15**

**Introduction**

The conclusion of our studies in Romans is approaching. We should not think for one moment that the last two chapters of this epistle are unimportant or unnecessary. Remember that all scripture is God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16).

In this lesson, we shall see again the Christian’s responsibility to others. We will study that Jews and Gentiles are one in the Gospel. We will study the ministry of Paul to Gentiles. We will see Paul’s advice to the church at Rome and to us today about the Christian life.

**Importance of this Lesson**

- ❑ The importance of this chapter is in the great texts such as verses 13,19,30.
- ❑ Additional advice to the strong believers about their treatment of weak believers is also important in this chapter.
- ❑ Also we find the great reminder that the Gospel was first offered to the Jews.
- ❑ It is important to remember that saved Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ.
- ❑ It is also important to remember that God called Paul in a special way. God gave him power to preach to the Gentiles.

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**THE LESSON**

- Outline:**
- A. The Christian’s Responsibility to the Weak – Romans 15:1-3
  - B. Born-again Jews and Gentiles are One in Christ – Romans 15:4-13
  - C. God Chose Paul and Called Him in a Special Way to Preach to the Gentiles – Romans 15:14-21
  - D. Paul’s Final Reminders and Advice – Romans 15:22-33

**I. THE CHRISTIAN’S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE WEAK – Romans 15:1-3**

- A. Verse 1 – *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.*
  - ◆ *Paul includes himself among the “strong.”*
  - 1. The word “then” has the same meaning as “therefore” and, of course, refers back to Romans 14. The “we” included those who were so strong in “the faith” that they had learned to live as the Bible shows us in Romans 14. We studied this in the previous lesson.
  - 2. The reference here about the “strong” and the “weak” refers back to Romans 14:1. The “strong” are those, who knew the scriptures and obeyed them. They had deepened their faith through this obedience. They had become full-grown in the Christian life and they had grown strong in “the faith.”
  - 3. The “weak” are those who did not understand the Word of God and the grace of God. They were taught the wrong way. Their teaching was incomplete. For this reason they were “weak in the faith.” Remember that “the faith” refers to all of the Christian doctrines as one complete whole.

4. Strong Christians who know the scriptures and the grace of God should not find it difficult to control themselves in their actions to weaker believers. They should be able to be patient with those who are weak in the Christian life. We must always remember our own weaknesses and God’s patience with us.
- B. Verse 2 – We can join the last part of verse 1 with verse 2. Read it as follows *...and not to please ourselves. Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.*
1. *...And not to please ourselves.* – Remember, no man lives or dies to himself (Romans 14:7). We are the Lord’s (Romans 14:8) and everything we do and say should be as “unto Him.” The Christian should never boast about his liberty in Christ. He will step on the feelings and beliefs of weaker brothers and destroy them (Roman 14:15).
  2. *Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good...* This does not mean that we must put away our deep beliefs in order to please some weak believer who obeys the world. We do not need to put away our beliefs to please an unsaved neighbor. This falls under the heading of directions for Christian behavior. We must always live to please others and not to please only ourselves. Paul was a great example in this. In 1 Corinthians 10:32-33, he wrote, “Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”
  3. *to edification* – Note here again Romans 14:19, *...follow after the things...wherewith one may edify another.* To *edify* is to *build up in the faith*. We must not destroy the Christian lives of our neighbor or weak brother but we must make them strong and build them up in the faith.
- C. Verse 3 – *For even Christ pleased not himself...* – Christ is our supreme example in living lives that please others and deny ourselves. He came “not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). “For your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Read also 1 Peter 2:23-24,3:18 and Psalm 69:9 from which the rest of this verse is taken.

## II. THE ONENESS IN CHRIST OF BORN AGAIN JEWS AND GENTILES – Romans 15:4-13

- A. Verse 4 – *For whatsoever things were written aforetime time were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope* – This is readily confirmed by verses such as 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 4:23,24.
1. Verse 5 – *...that we, through patience...* – In Romans 5:3-4, Paul placed experience after patience, saying, *tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.* In Hebrews 12:1, we are exhorted to “run with patience the race that is set before us.” In 1 Thessalonians 5:14 we are encouraged to “be patient toward all men.” When we develop patience, we please God. God is a *God of patience* (Romans 15:5). He is certainly patient with us and we must be patient with each other. This is especially true for the strong in their action to the weak.
  2. *...and comfort of the scriptures...* – Nothing is as wonderful as the *comfort of the scriptures...* Jeremiah cried, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them: and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart...” (Jeremiah 15:16). The scriptures are a comfort to people who are lonely, or discouraged. The scriptures are also a comfort to people who are sick, dying, sorrowing, or forsaken. The psalmist said that the happy man finds enjoyment in the law of the Lord. He thinks about it day and night. He is like a tree planted by the water (Psalm 1:2,3).
  3. *...might have hope* – According to the Bible, patience, together with faith, makes hope. This is the hope of Christ’s return. It makes our lives exciting because we know this hope is real.
- B. Verse 5 – *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus.*
1. Here Paul declares his great desire that the God of patience and comfort will make these graces come true in the lives of the Roman Christians (and to us). Such graces will make them of one mind toward each other through Christ Jesus.

2. When all we do and say is in the name of Christ, as unto Christ and for the glory of Christ, there will be a spiritual unity in the church. That kind of unity rises above unimportant doctrinal differences that are just in the mind.
- C. Verse 6 – *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* There is a basic and wonderful spiritual unity among all true believers whose main desire is to glorify God. There are wide differences in the way we live. Believers are from different races. We differ in our knowledge and understanding of the scriptures, and in our educational accomplishments, but we are all one in Christ.
- D. Verse 7 – *Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*
  1. Note again Romans 14:1,3, where the *strong* is advised to *receive* the weak because God has received him.
  2. Remember that to *receive* means to welcome him (or her) warmly and completely into one’s fellowship.
  3. We must *receive* others as Christ has received us. Aren’t you glad that Christ takes us as we are, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, educated or ignorant, strong or weak. We are all one in Christ! (Note Colossians 3:11.)
- E. Verses 8-12 – Read carefully all five verses.
  1. That Christ *...was a minister of the circumcision...* means that first of all He came to Israel in order to preach to them. “He came unto His own” (John 1:11). “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). God offered the gospel “to the Jew first” (Romans 1:16).
  2. He came first *...to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.* In other words, Christ came to verify what God had spoken and promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. God fulfilled all the promises about the Messiah in Christ. Christ is the Messiah (John 4:25-26). Christ proved that all of God’s promises came to pass. Christ proved the honesty, truth, and faithfulness of God. Beginning at verse 9 and through the rest of the chapter, the word *Gentiles* is used ten times. Remember that to Israel pertained *...the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises* (Romans 9:4). Israel rejected their Messiah (John 1:11; Matthew 11:20; Matthew 27:21-25). God then offered His mercy to the Gentiles (Romans 15:9). Review here Romans 11:1-32. Note particularly verses 30-32 since they connect so well to the verse we are now studying. Read also Ephesians 3:1-12.
  3. Verses 9-12 are remarkable. Verses 10-12 begin with *And again, and again, and again,* This means that Paul really wanted to emphasize the message of God’s mercy toward the Gentiles. We, the Gentiles, should glorify Him (verse 9). To emphasize the message, Paul uses four prophecies from the Old Testament:
    - a. verse 9 – *...For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles (nations), and sing unto thy name* (Psalm 18:49).
    - b. verse 10 – *...Rejoice, ye Gentiles (nations), with His people* (Deuteronomy 32:43).
    - c. verse 11 – *...Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles (nations); and laud him, all ye people* (Psalm 117:1).
    - d. verse 12 – *...There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles (nations); in him shall the Gentiles (nations) trust (or hope)*” (Isaiah 11:10).
- F. Verse 13 – While there is much more to the chapter, Paul here seemed to offer a benediction.
  1. *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing....* Both joy and peace are the result of believing the great truths of the gospel, especially those presented in the Roman epistle.
  2. *...that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.* Think about all the ministries of the Holy Spirit to and for the believer. Through His presence and power He makes the glorious hope we have in Christ such a reality that we can *abound* in it.

### III. PAUL UNIQUELY CHOSEN AND CALLED TO MINISTER TO THE GENTILES –

#### Romans 15:14-21

- ◆ *The doctrinal section of Romans ends with verse 13, but we must never think that the rest of the verses are unimportant. Romans 15:14-16:27 contain a series of afterthoughts or postscripts. These verses contain valuable and important truths. We must accept them as part of the inspired Word of God.*
- A. Verse 14
  1. It is clear that someone told Paul about the spiritual condition of all the Gentile churches.
  2. Neither Paul nor any other apostle had visited Rome, but he had learned that their *faith is spoken of throughout the whole world* (Romans 1:8).
  3. He further knew that they were *...full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*
  4. The believers had grown in grace and in the knowledge of the Word. Now they were able to advise and strengthen each other in *the faith*. I wish that all Christian churches today would have such a testimony!
- B. Verses 15-16
  1. *Nevertheless* – Paul reminded them that God chose him in a special way to take the message of grace to the Gentiles. He did this because some of them thought they did not need Paul’s preaching. Read Acts 9:15; Ephesians 3:1-11.
  2. The word *minister* carries a much deeper meaning than only that of *an apostle*. The word actually means that God had employed Paul as an official administrator for God. God asked him to serve like a priest in behalf of the Gentiles.
  3. Paul remembered at all times that he was not only another apostle but that God chose him in a special way to carry the message of God’s saving grace to the Gentiles.
  4. The *offering up* of verse 16 refers to the Gentiles. Paul served like a priest of the Lord Jesus Christ. He offered believing Gentiles up to God as *acceptable* because the Holy Spirit *sanctified* them. In other words, there is now no difference between Jew and Gentile. The *gospel* is good news to all men. Note also Ephesians 1:14-18; Colossians 3:11.
- C. Verses 17-19
  1. *...therefore* – This refers back, to verses 15 and 16. Paul, indeed, had much in which to *...glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God*. God chose him in a special way to be the *ministering priest* to the Gentiles. And God gave him the full revelation of the grace of God.
  2. Paul took no honor for the wonderful things God did at Pentecost and after that time. He took no honor for the great work of the other apostles whose ministry was mainly to Israel. He spoke, however, of his own ministry among the Gentiles.
  3. Paul mentioned five things that caused the Gentiles to become *obedient* to the Gospel: The WORD and DEED, mighty SIGNS and WONDERS, and the POWER of the Holy Spirit. You can read of these things in the book of Acts.
  4. Paul preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum. In other words, all over Asia Minor right up to the borders of Rome! Remember that he had never been to Rome. He wanted them to know what God had done in other places. He probably felt that he had covered Asia Minor well and he was now ready to come to Rome.
- D. Verses 20-21

Paul went to areas where no other had gone before. Like a true missionary evangelist, he preached to those people who had never heard the Gospel before. He would not build on another man’s foundation. He ministered to people who had never heard about God, to people who worshiped false gods. He went to Gentile cities and areas where people did not know about Christ and His Gospel. Verse 21 is a quote of Isaiah 52:15.

#### IV. PAUL’S FINAL REMINDERS AND EXHORTATIONS – Romans 15:22-33

##### A. Verses 22-24

1. Verse 22 – Paul felt that he must explain the reason for his inability to go to Rome one more time. (note Romans 1:13). He had spent all of his time with the cities of Asia Minor that he had not reached before. This *hindered* him from visiting Rome.
2. Verse 23 – The phrase *...having no more place in these parts...* shows us again that Paul felt his ministry in these areas was fulfilled and that now he was ready to come to Rome.
3. Verse 24 – Paul fully looked forward to a journey all the way to Spain, which no one had reached before. He felt that the church at Rome would assist him on the way to Spain with both gifts and prayer. First, however, he expected to spend a joyful time with them. The phrase, *if first I be somewhat filled with your company* could read, “but, first, I must, in some measure at least, have my fill of your company.” Other translations read “after I have enjoyed your company for a while.”

##### B. Verses 25-29

1. Verses 25-26 – An unusual feature of this section is that it contains probably the first illustration of giving to foreign missions. Paul desired to go to Rome but first he must make one more trip to Jerusalem. The churches of Macedonia and Achaia, which included the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, and others, had collected a voluntary love offering for the poor believers at Jerusalem. Paul wished to return to Jerusalem to present that offering to them. Read Acts 11:29 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15. This was a beautiful expression of love and thankfulness for the people and the place from which the Gospel had come. Love offerings have been common in the true church ever since.
2. Verses 27-28 – Even today the Gentile church owes an eternal debt of thankfulness to Jewish Christians to whom the Gospel was first given and from which it came to us! Read Romans 11:13-25 and 1:16. The Gentile churches were blessed in *spiritual things* that came from the saved people in Israel. Gentile believers now have the duty to pay the Jews back for such a blessing. Gentiles can pay back in *carnal things*, that is, in material things such as money. Read again 1 Corinthians 9:7-14. Note in verse 28 that Paul believed in giving material things for the work of the Lord. The material things were the touchable *fruit* of his ministry. Note Philippians 4:17 and 2 Corinthians 9:11-14.
3. Verse 29 – Paul was sure that he would get to Rome. At this time he had no idea it would be as a prisoner (Acts 27-28)! The phrase *fulness of the blessing* could read “the full measure of the blessing of Christ.” Paul was sure that when he did finally arrive in Rome it he would have full apostolic power and blessing.
4. Verses 30-32
  - a. In verse 30, we discover one of the most important verses we can find anywhere in the Bible about the reason, power and nature of prayer.
    - 1) Paul begged (*I beseech*) the believers at Rome *...for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake...* that they *...strive together with me in your prayers to God for me*. He asked them to do this in answer to the love of God which the Holy Spirit had given to them (Romans 15:30).
    - 2) The word *strive* means *to agonize* or *to wrestle*. It shows us the kind of praying that gets results. In Colossians 4:12, Paul referred to Epaphras as “always labouring fervently for you in prayers.” James 5:16 says that it is “the effectual fervent prayer” that produces results. The Bible says about Christ, our example in all things, “and being in agony he prayed more earnestly” (Luke 22:44).
    - 3) Teachers have written many books about the characteristics and power of prayer. It is amazing to discover that God prefers to make His work in this world dependent on the prayers of His people. Read 2 Timothy 1:1-3; Revelation 5:8,8:3; Philippians 4:6,7; James 5:16; Ephesians 6:18,19; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

- b. In verse 31, Paul tells us that he knows that he had enemies in Jerusalem who hated him because he left the Jews' religion (Galatians 1:13-14). He also knew that some people in Jerusalem would not accept a love gift from Gentile churches because they were proud. He asked for prayer that he would have safety and success.
- c. In verse 32, to have safety and success at Jerusalem meant that Paul would come to Rome "by the will of God" with the joy of the Lord in his heart. How good it is to always work for the Lord with joy and the assurance that you are in His will.
- ◆ *In verse 33, there is a precious benediction. God is not only the source of our joy, He is also the "God of Peace." Note Philippians 4:9 and Hebrews 13:20. Peace is surely what this troubled world needs. But the world will not enjoy peace until Christ reigns in Jerusalem (Isaiah 9:6-7). You and I can experience perfect peace in our hearts today (Philippians 4:6-7; John 14:27). What a blessed note on which to conclude this interesting chapter.*

**THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS**  
**EXAM - LESSON 23**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

- 
1. The final chapters of Romans are as important as the previous chapters because: (Value 5 points)
    - a. Paul wrote them.
    - b. all Scripture is God-breathed.
    - c. these chapters are filled with more doctrine than the others.
  
  2. The "strong" in Romans 15:1 are those who are: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
    - a. physically strong.
    - b. strong in "the faith."
    - c. strong mentally.
  
  3. The greatest example in self-denying, sacrificial living for others is: (Value 5 points)
    - a. the apostle Paul.
    - b. the Lord Jesus.
    - c. the apostle John.
  
  4. It is God-like to develop patience because: (Value 5 points)
    - a. it is a part of the Christian life.
    - b. God is patient.
    - c. then we will get along with everyone else.
  
  5. The word "receive" in Romans 15:7 means: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
    - a. to welcome a person into one's fellowship.
    - b. to work together with such a person.
    - c. to take care of all of the person's needs.
  
  6. That Christ came as a "minister of the circumcision" means: (Value 5 points)
    - a. that as a Jew Christ Himself was also circumcised.
    - b. that every male believer today should be circumcised.
    - c. that Christ came primarily to preach to Israel.
  
  7. Paul's point in using the phrase "and again" in Romans 15:10,11,12 was that he: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
    - a. wanted to drive home the message of God's mercy to the Gentiles.
    - b. wanted to make sure the Jews understood the message of God's mercy.
    - c. wanted the Jews to understand that God had permanently rejected them.
  
  8. According to Romans 15:13 the result of believing the Gospel is: (Value 5 points)
    - a. assurance of heaven.
    - b. joy and peace.
    - c. happiness in the Christian life.

9. According to Romans 15:13, The Holy Spirit helps the believer to: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
  - a. abound in hope.
  - b. rejoice in his salvation.
  - c. glorify God.
  
10. God called Paul to the special ministry of being an apostle: (Value 5 points)
  - a. especially to the Jews.
  - b. especially to the Gentiles.
  - c. to the whole world.
  
11. Paul had to return to Jerusalem before going to Rome and Spain, in order to: (Value 5 points)
  - a. ask the church in Jerusalem for permission to go to Rome.
  - b. bring the offering from the church in Macedonia and Achaia to the believers in Jerusalem.
  - c. worship in the temple and ask the Lord's permission to go to Rome.
  
12. The meaning of "having no more place in these parts" in Romans 15:23, seems to indicate that: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
  - a. Paul's ministry in Asia Minor had been fulfilled.
  - b. Paul was suffering too much persecution in Asia Minor.
  - c. Paul had preached in every town of Asia Minor.
  
13. The meaning of the word "strive" in Romans 15:30 is: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
  - a. "to wrestle" in prayer.
  - b. "to wrestle" in making the Gospel of Christ known to the nations.
  - c. "to fight" against the enemies of Christ.
  
14. One of the characteristics of God mentioned in Romans 15:33 is that God is: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
  - a. a God of joy.
  - b. a God who shows His will to believers.
  - c. a God of peace.
  
15. Regarding his coming to Rome Paul was confident that he would: (Value 5 points)
  - a. enjoy fellowship with the believers in Rome.
  - b. have the full apostolic power and blessing from God in Rome also.
  - c. help the church in Rome solve some of the problems.
  
16. Name the five things Paul mentioned in Romans 15:18-19 by which the Gentiles became obedient. (Open Bible) (Value 25 points)
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_