

Doctrine & Duty. Belief and Behavior.

Romans 12-16 Heaps of application! The overwhelming theme in the end of Romans is **the Unity of the church & love**.

The context in these chapters is that we are called into a family, Unity. Called to love God, one another, & to love others. Through this UNITY, we will be walking in God's will, growing in relationship with Him, one another, aaaaand.... Through the unity of the church ...evangelism will happen!

Francis Chan recently said it is unity in the church—not logical arguments and apologetics—which will ultimately bring people to salvation in Christ. Personally think both are true, but good doctrine has to be followed up by authentic gospel culture. Can't just talk it, have to walk it, in order for ppl to believe it!

Romans 15 picks up where 14 left off.... There was a **difference** in background and tradition between the Jew & Gentile believers in Rome. They all believed in the gospel of salvation, but in the non essentials, they were struggling & arguing, bringing God's least favorite outcome...**division!**

Last chapter Paul sets the Roman church, only the **epicenter of the world** at that time, back to true north again, keep Jesus and Him crucified the main thing stressing that Unity, Truth, & Unity are of utmost importance. Allow for differences of opinions, don't waiver on the gospel, & don't abuse your freedom to do something someone else can not do, and cause them to stumble. But keep your eyes on the grand picture...love God, love others, and bring the gospel to the world!

Ch15 ...Paul continues **ringing his Unity bell**. The bell tone deepens as he tells us to **carry one another's burdens** when they are weak, following **Christ our example**, for He is **ultimate burden bearer** when it comes to sin and salvation. Paul tells us hope is found in the scriptures, they give us an example pointing to **Jesus**, the absolute **Hope** of all nations!

We are to welcome people into the family even if they may be from a different ppl group, regardless of their historical, cultural & racial differences.

At 2 points in this passage **Paul prays** for this diverse family of God. Paul will point out to the Jew that the scriptures themselves welcome all people groups, all backgrounds ...the gospel is good news for the entire world, we are to hold no prejudices, regardless of ethnicity, whether an immigrant, US citizen, or outcast from society, a morally correct or incorrect person, worship Saturday, Sunday, drums no drums, pre tribulation rapture post trib rapture, we are to welcome all lovers and all searchers of Jesus Christ.

For God desires ALL should come to repentance. God saved you and me while we were still sinners! So who are we to refuse anyone who is seeking solace in the Lord, or to neglect a younger believer?

"Oh, I'm a very mature believer I need to leave the problems of the weak to them" a, really?

1 We then who are strong ought to **bear with the scruples** of the weak, and **not to please ourselves**. 2 Let each of us **please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification**.

ESV obligation to bear with the failings of the weak. What obligation is Paul talking about?

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price. **Therefore glorify God with your body**. You're not your own, and the love of God understands the gospel gives us a heart of gratitude....grace should overwhelm us to action! YOU can't be saved by the Savior without being moved with compassion, but our selfishness it's so stubborn, resistant, robs us of compassion in action...

Paul says here to **Lift up the weak, be others minded, and the body (your body) will be strong!**

Lift Up The Weak- Bear the failings of the week... In a family setting the parents are usually a picture of strength, A father might pick up their 5 year old off the ground learning to ride a bike, for he is stronger, then the kid will run to mama... moms are strong in compassion! An older brother will defend his little sister when the bully comes around.

Context of church, we too are a family unit, not **like one, we are one**. It expands these walls, goes beyond the Calvary name ...for we are one Family in Jesus, cross cultural, cross continental... and with that comes differences in strength.

Be Others Minded - Bear with, not putting up with, the idea of bearing UP, carrying the weight of a brother or sister, supporting them with greater strength, helping them come from a **bent over** tired stance to an upright one!

A mature believer will have a strength of faith by years of leaning upon Jesus. If you **consider yourself strong** in the faith, remember your strength was a gift given to you to use for others.... Gal 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Results of this...The Body will be Built up - we are encouraged here to Go lift other people up if they are down. Use your power to love on, lift up, and **build up the body of Christ**.

Instead of looking down and mocking, laughing, or criticizing people with less freedom, less faith, strength.... get off your high horse and lift a brother up!

But this **means being selflessness**, it means taking your eyes off **your thing**, which is really doing **God's thing** for someone else. And it *will* cost you something to do so, but God has a plan and purpose, he even lets us know what it is! For When we use our strength to lift others in the family of God up, the entire body is strengthened & somehow fit more tightly together, like a tightly fit stone wall vs loosely fit.

The Christian way is **not to please yourself**, but to live to please others (not ppl pleasers, that is all self focused! Not ppl pleasers but burden breakers,) **Why would I do that you ask...who did you give your heart to, who saved you from death?** How did He live?....

3 For even **Christ did not please Himself**; but as it is **written**, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” **4** For whatever things were written before were **written for our learning**, that we through the **patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope**.

We call ourselves Christians, or Believers in Jesus, we ought to live like Him. Jesus didn't come to earth to take a nice vacation from heaven and all its glory! He was **on a mission** to do His Father's **will and save mankind!** It was no pleasure pursuit. Jesus didn't live to please himself!

How many times did He say “to do my Father's will” **John 6:38** For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

The ultimate *pleasing* Jesus could do for any one person, and all of mankind was done on the cross, when He cast aside all His rights, human and Godly, and died for you and for me. This is the ultimate example of living to please others.

If you're a believer you are living proof of the greatest pleasure even know, to have the **weight and stain of sin wiped out**, wiped off and washed clean!

If Jesus didn't come to please Himself, what are we His disciples supposed to do? Live for others **ultimate pleasure**, that is seeing Jesus face to face, and be saved by Him.

Scripture Written for our Learning, patience, comfort, and HOPE! Who wrote scripture, what is it good for?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of **God**, and is **profitable for doctrine**, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every **good work**. There is building up of the body personally and corporately that happens when we read the word of God. This brings UNITY & LOVE into a family of believers! As we read the Bible, build ourselves up then we can, lift one another up ...in the word!

2 Tim 3:14-15 But you must **continue in the things which you have learned** and been assured of, knowing **from whom** you have learned them, **15** and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are **able to make you wise for salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Scripture makes us wise, builds us up in hope to salvation. That is HOPE complete, we hold onto. Salvation in Jesus, we. Along to Him!

When the world seems to have you down, the waves have swallowed you whole ...there is a Hope who has a hand that will reach down right where you are at if only you call upon Him. For the first time for salvation, the 1000th time!

The Scriptures lead us to Christ in every chapter, and HE is our HOPE! **Instead of sinking** under the waves we are **sustained** by the hope that the Lord will see us through.

5 Now, may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, **6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God** and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Paul is a mission man, a word of God man, and also a praying man. Paul prays right here in his letter... **Now may the God of patience and comfort....** The power source of prayer is God.

Paul doesn't pray, take all your worries away, trouble free life, that the sickness be gone... Paul prays the one string he's been playing the last 3 chapters ... for **ONENESS! One mind, one mouth...**

Be like minded toward one another, as you want for yourself, want and supply for your neighbor. Not just financially. We all want a little grace when we mess up, so give grace to others. We **want good Biblical** input when in a crisis, so **reach out share** the word you know. We want to talk to someone about our problems, be **willing to listen** when you're ear is needed. Jesus lent an ear to the woman no one would talk to, Jesus opened His arms to the children no one wanted...Jesus took you in when no one wanted to forgive you!

Philip 2:1-11 1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being **like-minded**, having the same love, being of **one accord, of one mind**. 3 Let nothing be done through **selfish ambition** or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each **esteem others better than himself**. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but **also for the interests of others**. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but **made Himself of no reputation**, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** and became obedient to the point of death, even the **death of the cross**. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the **name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to **the glory of God** the Father.

Paul could not be more clear, the HS has penned through Paul the absolute importance of *this* family casting aside differences, coming alongside each other, lifting others up more highly, building one another up, and he even tells us WHY!!!

What is God's heart? What is the entire narrative of the Bible about? **Redemption!** It's a redemption story of how Jesus came to save all mankind from ourselves. He wants to save others... & Somehow He uses **US** as **His voice pieces**, crying out to the lost and lonely, the forsaken and forlorn, "THERE IS HOPE, HE HAS A NAME, Hope has a plan, Hope has a name...JESUS "

Why does God call us to live undivided totally united?

Because Harmony Brings Glory to God! When the church is together people see Jesus! So that oneness, that **one voice**, that selfless lifestyle the church is called to live, **will be a greater witness to the glory**, weight, value of Jesus Christ **more than any outreach** or evangelism could ever do *without* oneness! Oneness is the greatest evangelism! “How will they know you are Mine, by your love for one another. Oneness happens through love alone!

Philippians 1. 27 Only let your conduct be **worthy of the gospel** of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in **one spirit**, with **one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel**.

THIS IS WHY WE ARE HERE! To love God and love others, working totally untied...by bringing the gospel, good news of HOPE, Redemption, and eternal security heaping full of joy unimaginable... Imagine a world where the church locks arms undivided, the HS over pouring...revival would happen!

Paul brings it in ...group hug time guys... Kumbaya moment here as he goes through great pains to show the Jewish believer that unity for all ppl is in fact God's plan, not Paul's persuasion. Quotes the OT to further reveal Jesus through the OT, and show that the plan all along has been for Jesus to save any person type that will receive His call... Jew & Gentile

8 Now I say that Jesus **Christ has become a servant** to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, **9** and that the **Gentiles might glorify God** for His mercy, as it is written:

“For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles,

And sing to Your name.” (Psalm 18.49, maybe of defeating the Gentiles?)

10 And again he says: “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!” (Duet 32.43... He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries;)

11 And again: “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!” (Psalm 117)

12 And again, Isaiah says:

“There shall be a **root of Jesse**; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, **In Him the Gentiles shall hope**.” (No denying Isaiah here...Jesus is for all!

Paul presents the promise of the Messiah, to come to Israel, which was fulfilled in the coming of JC. Paul reassures his timid friends, levels the playing field, we're all equally sinful in the eyes of Jesus in need of saving... And Jesus came for all of them! Yes the Jew was given special privilege of bringing the Lord's word to the nations, gentiles, all people regardless of race color creed or criminal record or political party affiliation!

A Canaanite woman a Gentile, came to Jesus begging him, Oh Son of David, Messiah, please heal my daughter demon possessed. “I was sent only to help God's lost sheep—the people of Israel.”

Begs with him.... “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.” Even the little dogs eat the scraps at their Masters table...

Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, **great is your faith!** Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Jesus Himself shocked the ancient world when he acknowledged children, woman, gentiles, the Samaritan woman, outcasts, and drunkards...

Paul’s pen from the HS is **pounding down the doors of racism**, separatism, and elitism long before social justice hit the streets of America. There is **no greater liberator**, soul saver, or freedom maker than Jesus to hit the planet and there never will be! The difference between Jesus and any other social justice leader ever since is this ...Jesus was always in the **business of bringing oneness** to the family of God in order to bring outside chaos back into order, and people into the family of God. Any division making happening from Jesus is to break down the walls of inequality, abuse, abandonment, imprisonment, and save the souls of the lost.

But His chosen pathway to bring that GOSPEL HOPE is through oneness and unity in the family of God. Think how effective the Church would be if we put aside our differences, shut our mouths, and started to lift one another up, build each other up, support our commonality THE GOSPEL of Christ, and preach that to the world.

Outside the church so often it can be an “us against them” mentality with the world. The Jewish people thought that about Gentiles. And often within the churches we can cast a critical eye on the things that do not matter. As if Jesus was on our side and not on *their* side. Josh had this same self righteous view point until He had an encounter with Jesus. Christophany.

Joshua 5.13-14 13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You **for us or for our adversaries?**”

14 So He said, “**No**, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and **worshiped**...

Praying Paul back at it again.... Now that you’ve heard Unity and Truth combined with the love of Christ will bring the gospel message to the world... he prays for them to be completely filled with joy and peace, because trust, believing in Jesus, trust overflows with confident HOPE ...but only because of the dunamis power of the HS

13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who **will believe in Me** through their **word**; 21 that they all may **be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, **that the world may believe that You sent Me**.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

We are to carry the WORD of God like a torch, carry one another as Christ carried our sin to the grave, rising again. He is our example of love, and selfless service. Scripture points to Hope & Hope has a name... it's Jesus the Risen Lord, the Comforter, the ALL IN ALL, the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Lords.... Jesus, is the name we proclaim for...

Unity brings harmony, & harmony points people to Jesus even better than outreach every will. Before the world will bite & taste & see the Lord is good themselves ... the food has to smell good gang! We have to be unified in order for Jesus to be glorified, because that's His plan!

What key are you tuning your heart to? What song is your voice singing? What do people hear when you open your mouth, do they hear the precious gospel being sung by the unity with Christ & His family? Are you a sour note in a symphony of sweetness? Your voice is needed, don't be derailed, let it go, and come to grips with **unity together with** truth must prevail in order for the gospel to be heard!(If anyone has something against someone, bring it to Jesus now, reflect, repent, and pray before communion)

If the church family would **stand together in one accord**, despite our differences, and let go of our grievances, singing with one voice, unity at the core of our chorus, it would sing to the world a symphony so sweet.... Echoing the name above all names...Jesus. Crying out to the world through the unity of the church of Jesus Christ How great, how great how great the Lord truly is!