



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Romans 15:1-21
- II Timothy 2:1-4; 3:13-17
- Galatians 5:13-14

WASH, RINSE, REPEAT

- Wash
- Rinse
- Repeat

SEED:

“For **whatever things were written before were written for our learning**, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4 NKJV

“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,” Romans 15:8 NKJV

“Now **I myself am confident concerning you**, my brethren, that you also are **full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.**” Romans 15:14 NKJV

FRUIT:

“You therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard** from me among many

witnesses, **commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.** You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. **No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.**" II Timothy 2:1-4 NKJV

"But **evil men and impostors** will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But **you must continue in the things which you have learned** and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 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. **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,** and is **profitable** for **doctrine,** for **reproof,** for **correction,** for **instruction in righteousness,** that the **man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped** for every good work." II Timothy 3:13-17 NKJV

"For you, brethren, **have been called to liberty;** only **do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh,** but **through love serve one another.** For **all the law is fulfilled in one word,** even in this: **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**" Galatians 5:13-14 NKJV

NARRATIVE FOR TODAY'S SCRIPTURES: ROMANS

It has already been clearly established, and prayerfully by now without argument, who are the strong and who are the weak. And here you see the great Torah scholar and author of this very letter includes himself as one of the strong. He knows all about which meats are clean and which cultural holidays are acceptable. And he has written the book, literally, on how mature believers with more information should treat less mature believers who lack certain knowledge. Don't think about yourself before you consider the wellbeing of others. Don't do anything to make a weaker person stumble, even if you must surrender some of the liberties you've gained through advanced understanding. What is best for your brother and what will help him build his faith is a much greater priority than any liberty you've earned through learning. In fact, toward the end of his heartfelt teaching on the matter Paul admonishes the strong in the faith; "Happy is he who does not condemn himself by choosing to do what harms a weaker brother—even if what he has chosen is otherwise permitted by God."

This idea of a more mature brother taking on the role of helping to build the faith of a less mature brother is a central theme in Paul's writings. It's his discipleship model. "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be

able to teach others also.” And you do so by edifying others with the word of God. This idea of edifying others is inextricably linked to the grand design of God’s institution, the Church. The ultimate intention is to build up Christians, to edify them, until they perfectly represent Christ in all His fullness. Paul makes the most intimate connection to this high calling by linking the husband’s role in human marriage with Christ’s ministry to the church as His bride. The husband is to sanctify and cleanse his bride by washing her in the word, so she can be presented as holy and without blemish. That is why you must always point to God’s word in order to mature the saints, not to yourself, as Paul elaborates next!

It should be glaringly obvious by now. Not even Christ Jesus prioritized Himself above others, even though it was through Him all of creation came into existence, and in all things He has preeminence. How do we know this to be true? It’s in the Holy Scriptures. And what was written previously in the Old Testament Scriptures that Paul calls upon to solidly His point? It certainly must integrate somehow with his teaching about the proper relationship between the strong and the weak.

This is the tiny excerpt from David’s song, the lyric Paul chose to make his point; “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” It is one-half of one verse of thirty-six verses in this song. You can’t possibly understand the depth of what is going on in

David's heart, nor Paul's for why he chose those words, unless you are willing to search. On the surface, it is clear that Paul has learned in his vast studies that the subject in the verse is Christ. You might not know that if you were just reading David's Psalm. About those words, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me," Paul teaches us, "even Christ did not please Himself." Retribution against those who, in their ignorant boldness, see fit to rebuke the God of the Universe, is not the priority. In fact, David is the one being persecuted, as the Christ-figure in the Psalm. And then he must repent for possibly acting in any way that might have shielded the truth of God and a relationship with Him from the offenders. Interpret the passage as such and the connection to Christ stands out in bold relief. David ultimately repents for his behavior and he humbly takes responsibility for how he treated those whom God clearly wanted to redeem. He concludes that a willingness to take on the responsibility for others and to make them a priority is pleasing to the Lord. Those actions will, in the end, cause the offenders to seek God with authentic hearts and and thus find life. That is how the strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.

But more than his specific point here, there is an overarching principle. Everything in the Old Testament was written to instruct us. This speaks to both the one doing the instruction and the information itself. The information is steadfast and enduring, which

makes it stable and dependable, no matter who you are or when in history you live. And it always brings encouragement and consolation, just as you could read elsewhere in the Psalm Paul referenced. "The Lord hears the poor, and does not despise His prisoners." The outcome for all is hope; we can have joyous expectation, trust, and confidence in all the Lord has promised in His word. This is the same hope of which Paul wrote earlier in this letter. "We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." And that is why we go to His word for instruction.

Paul commissioned Timothy to do that very thing. Use the Holy Scriptures, with which you was raised, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. If you blend complete and thoroughly equipped you arrive at completely equipped or fulfilled, which is what you must become before you are ready to deal with the disobedience in others. To fulfill is what Jesus said about His relationship to the Old Testament; "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill."

Paul just used the same words to describe the Scriptures as he is now using to describe God: patience and comfort. The word of God is steadfast and enduring, stable and dependable; call upon it for aid! It endures forever and offers encouragement and consolation. And now Paul says those very same attributes belong to God Himself, the God of patience and comfort. He wants us all to have the same understanding of this very topic. Sure Paul emphasizes elsewhere that we have one mind, unity of the faith, to think like Christ. But here he is being more pointed on a specific topic. Make God's word the go to for all instruction! And Paul admonishes that we all agree and testify that this how we will conduct our affairs. How glorifying to God it is when we do. It is also true that the Scriptures themselves teach that Christ is the incarnate word of God. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." We find the God of patience and comfort in the patience and comfort of the Scriptures!

Because Yahweh is a God of patience and comfort, and His word is a word of patience and comfort, dependable and true, a constant encouragement, we ought to accept one another as so elaborated in the past few chapters, because this is what His word teaches. Love one another and do no harm. Accept one another as Christ accepted you. Remember what you were like when He chose you! How did He see you when you were undeserving? He

demonstrated His own love toward you, in that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you. It's the same plan for each of us, as we have all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. To Christ, you were the joy on His mind when endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

It's only if we we drag the context forward that we get a more detailed picture of all Paul's been teaching since he began contrasting the weak in the faith from the strong in the faith in the last chapter. And of course, this chapter seamlessly blended that message with what it looks like with Christ as our perfect example. Let's review quickly, so we can truly understand why Paul is now emphasizing the servant leadership of Christ. "We who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves, for even Christ did not please Himself." Christ became a bondservant, first to the Jew, those whom would have an advantage to become strong in the faith because of their advanced knowledge. But for what other cause? For the weak in the faith, to confirm the promises made to the fathers that the Gentiles too would come to know Him.

And then as the master does so well, Paul rattles off four Old Testament references to the Gentiles. Confess the Lord among the Gentiles; rejoice that the Gentiles are joining God's people; praise God because the Gentiles will also praise Him; and the Messiah

Himself will reign over the Gentiles. These are the promises written before for our learning, edification, and instruction. What a perfect reason for those who are strong in the faith to know the Scriptures. The Gentiles will come to the faith and will start off weak for lack of knowledge. And we have Christ as the perfect role model, the quintessential example, the precise standard of how we ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.

Christ is your perfect precedent, how the strong should act so the weak would receive the promises. As such, what is your path forward to emulate Christ? It was obviously not an easy transition for the early Jewish converts, those whom Paul would consider to have an advantage. They continually looked down on their brothers in the faith who were once Gentile, and oftentimes would not even fellowship with them, or might do so only when no other Jewish brothers were watching. Peter was totally guilty of such behavior, until he was sternly rebuffed by Paul.

A few excerpts from Paul's letter to the Philippians charts a good path forward to maturity in this area. Be like-minded, exercise God's love, and be in unity as if you share the same beliefs and practices. Do not be self-centered, but instead see others as more important than you. Do not consider your own interests before what is a priority to others is satisfied. This is precisely what was on the mind of Christ when He departed His heavenly realm and became

a human, and then humbly sacrificed Himself for mankind. Can there be a more powerful picture of what it looks like to put others first? If you consider that perspective, the chance of complaining about anything, or arguing over things that have no eternal value, approaches zero. Live like that and you are emulating what it means to be blameless and harmless. Remember, love does no harm to a neighbor; and love is the fulfillment of the law. If you appear like this, a sinless people who live among a twisted and perverted world, there can be no doubt you have given everything up for God, as if your past life is a vapor that was absorbed into the atmosphere. And here is one more promise to cling to; witness to and serve others and it will become your greatest source of joy.

Certainly, no plan to reach such a level of living is possible without the Holy Spirit, but the right perspective helps. When you arrive at the sincere belief that your truest source of joy and peace is your Christlike treatment of others, not what it produces for you, you will experience what it means to have hope in God right down to the marrow of your bones. Rinse yourself in these words friends, as it places your source of joy under your command. Love others, prefer others, and do no harm to others, all things under your control, and your joy will be fulfilled!

Paul gets personal with his intended audience. I have every confidence that you can achieve what I've laid out here. I know its

a high calling, but you can do it. You are ready! You have the knowledge and maturity to deliver. You are able to minister as such, to handle the weak properly and to advise, reprimand, and even rebuke, as necessary, with love! Paul began this letter and will end this letter with the most extraordinary compliments for his intended readers. Your faith is famous throughout the whole world and your obedience has become known to all!

How does that obedience display itself in real life, for them and for you? Imitate those who imitate Jesus by obeying the traditions of the faith just as they were delivered to you. Act like God by loving others like Christ loves you. Live your life each day by asking, "What would Jesus say or do at this moment?" and then copy Him. These are not a new set of commands to follow; this is what obedience to God has meant all along. What is new is the revelation that the only meaningful obedience to God is grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience. And that is achieved only when the love of God is in you and the light of Christ emanates from you. If you have hate for your brother, by either causing or allowing his sin, you are not emulating the love of Christ. Anyone who claims to be walking in the love of Christ, who does not obey God, is lying to you because only those who obey the Lord can have His love perfected in them!

Paul has taken a risk by compiling so much theology in one letter, but he is confident that his calling as an Apostle to the Gentiles will rub off on them. Be reminded that Rome is a mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles, many of those Gentiles Greeks, and a great place to put into practice all he has delivered, especially this latest doctrine on the relationship between the weak and the strong. Paul feels very confident that his optimism is well-founded. He really believes the recipients can handle the depths of his teaching.

At the time Romans was written, Paul had not yet visited Rome, but he certainly knew about the activities and effectiveness of the Church there as we thus far witnessed by his compliments. Paul is anxious to visit with people who he believes, by the Spirit, can handle Yahweh's deepest revelations. He has used references from the Old Testament, time and time again, to establish the doctrinal basis of his writings. Here in chapter 15 he admits that he has gone deep with them; *"I have written more boldly to you on some points."* He's confident they will understand both the profound doctrinal insights, as well as the complicated relationship between those of differing backgrounds coming into the faith.

Take a moment to appreciate the depth of Romans:

- He's identified three eternal classes of people.
- He's distinguished doing the Law from works (deeds) of Law.

- He's discussed the advantages and disadvantages of past upbringing as a Jew or Gentile.
- He's introduced the simple Gospel of "Salvation" (Justification, Redemption, Reconciliation) and distinguished it from the more complex Gospel of the Kingdom (Perfection, Completion, Christlikeness).
- He helped us clarify what righteousness is and introduced the two types, imputed righteousness (free) and earned righteousness (practiced).
- He's solidified our identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and what that means both spiritually (in heaven) and physically (on earth).
- He introduced the legal basis for redemption from the Old Testament; without death and blood you cannot be born again. And he used marriage to explain it.
- He uncovered the sources of personal struggles and how they are overcome.
- He's distinguished the Law of Moses from the Law of sin and death.
- He's elaborated on killing the flesh and the power of walking in the Spirit.

- He's taught us about the prophetic future, the "revealing of the sons of God," and about the necessity of human initiative in Yahweh's eternal plans.
- He's helped us understand God's sovereignty.
- He reminded us exactly what we confessed when we got born again. And what it means to live with grace-empowered faith-based-obedience.
- He alleviated the confusion about the fate of natural Israel and the three eternal fates of mankind.
- He helped us understand what it truly means to sacrifice everything and live a life in the faith.
- He showed us the outcome of a transformed mind and how to obtain one.
- Then, he helped us understand the true nature of Godly authority.
- He gave us real clarity about the how different it is, because of their upbringings, for a Jew and a Gentile to come to faith. He emphasized how we should we treat each other and why we must prioritize others.
- He coached us on how to honor and support those who are weak in the faith.

- And throughout the entire letter, he formulated “Christian Doctrine” and proved it all from the Old Testament. That alone should encourage us to become experts in God’s Word.

Paul calls himself a “minister to the Gentiles.” Don’t you find it fascinating that Yahweh would choose the great Jewish scholar to disciple the Gentiles? When you think about it, it makes perfect sense. Who better than an expert to elaborate on what the Old Testament means relative to their newfound faith? And who better to explain the “complicated” relationship between “former” Gentiles and those who “already” called themselves the chosen people of God. The Jew and Gentile have come from very different places, but they are traveling to the same destination.

This is why Paul had to “get away alone” for so long to sort through what his encounter with Y’shua meant relative to his previous faith, his new faith, and the faith of these new Gentile converts. In his own life, he had to move from self-determination based obedience to grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience, so he could deliver an authentic message about what that looked like to all people, both Jew and Gentile. Paul knew that what he had previously gained in his life, as a highly educated Jewish Torah scholar, was nothing compared to what Christ had done in him. In

fact, he would boast only in his weakness and infirmity and count everything that he had gained on his own a loss!

That does not mean you don't take action with your faith in mind. Faith is in word and deed. Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves because faith without works is dead. Make this your witness so you can also expect the Gentiles to become obedient to the faith, otherwise your testimony is hypocrisy. The initial message to the Gentiles is "Christ Crucified" and then stand back and watch the Holy Spirit move in signs and wonders. But, then the message changes as God's people are called to move from childhood in the faith (weakness) to adulthood in the faith (maturity), as the Holy Spirit partners with human initiative. Yes, the Gentiles are also called to become obedient, but Paul is careful not to lead them down the same historic journey of mistakes that Israel made—the journey of self-righteousness. He is also warning Jewish believers to recognize this tendency in themselves, and furthermore, to not become an impediment for the Gentiles to embrace a life of grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.

Paul again returns to his favorite Prophet. He wants to drive home a message. Go where you have not gone before. Preach the Gospel in places no one has heard of Jesus. Besides, there is no other foundation that anyone can lay than that which is laid in Jesus Christ. This is the third time he has called upon the same chapter in

Isaiah. In Romans 2 Paul writes, “My name is blasphemed continually every day.” And again in Romans 10 he writes, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”

And it would seem that he is teaching us that the testimony will first come from Jerusalem. That aligns with Isaiah’s prophecy. Yes, Paul says “from Jerusalem” and beyond I preached this message. I was called to lay down new tracks where “no man has gone before.” It’s Isaiah’s revelation; “So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider.” This is a new revelation added to his existing knowledge “from Jerusalem.” They must get it right first, and from there the entire world will say, “Yahweh reigns!”

“Think in Bible.” DJH

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY’S MESSAGE:

No one said the battle would be easy. But any good soldier is willing to endure hardship, especially if he was commissioned by and fights for Jesus Christ as his Commanding Officer. And no excellent soldier who is engaged in warfare for the Lord entangles himself with the affairs of this life. He’d much rather be pleasing to

the God who enlisted him as a soldier. Think about it; how could you be a good example to others if you are entangled with the things of this world? Rather than being distracted with worldly lusts, put aside everything that weighs you down, the sins which so easily ensnare you. Commit instead to only one track, and then run on that track as long as it takes to win the race. And focus on only one prize at the finish line; remember, Jesus is the One who laid out the track before you and He is the goal at the end of the race. Consider the things that you have learned from many faithful witnesses. Take and commit them to other faithful men, who will also be able to teach others those same things. Wash, rinse, repeat.

If your one aim is Christ you can inspire others to imitate you as you imitate Him. If you are authentic, others will follow. Point people towards what the Bible says and how God commands we live. In other words, imitate God because He is the living word. Love others as Christ loves you and gave Himself as an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice. Walk out your life just as Jesus walked. Obey God's commandments, the ones He gave us from the beginning. Doing so will keep you from sinning, as transgression of a command is the very definition of sin. The best way to identify true believers is to observe those who obey God's commandments. He who claims to be a follower of Jesus, but does not keep His

commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. However, whoever obeys His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.

Christ taught lesson after lesson, and gave demonstration after demonstration. He was in the boat with His disciples and He calmed the storm; He asked His disciples to feed thousands and then He showed them how. He sent them out again in a boat, this time without Him, and then walked out on the sea to meet them. Again, He calmed the storm; apparently they were not ready, nor capable, to duplicate what He did. He presented a second occasion to feed the multitudes and yet they were still not ready, "Where would we get enough food in this remote wilderness to feed such a large crowd?" And through it all, He healed the masses of every imaginable disease and promised we'd do greater things!

If you repeatedly flip the same coin and lose on both sides, I suggest you take a look at Y'shua's playbook and begin to live on the edge. That is where, although narrow, the seas become calm, bread comes down from heaven, and the masses are healed by the simple touch of your garment or the handkerchief you once held. Maybe there will come a time when all that is needed is to pass through your shadow, which by then is a perfect replica of His. It may seem far off, but you will get there; just wash, rinse, repeat.

WASH

1. The Ultimate Tool

A. It's Not about You!

(1) Final word on why we deal with the weak the way we do.

(a) Don't Please Yourself

1. "We then who are **strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak**, and **not to please ourselves**.

Let each of us please his neighbor **for his good**, leading to **edification**." Romans 15:1-2 NKJV

2. We sympathize with the weak for their sake, for their good, for their edification, like Christ does.

a) It has already been clearly established, and prayerfully by now without argument, who are the strong and who are the weak.

b) Here you see the great Torah scholar and author of this very letter includes himself as one of the strong.

c) He knows all about which meats are clean and which cultural holidays are acceptable. And he has written the book, literally, on how mature believers with more information should treat less mature believers who lack certain knowledge.

- d) Don't think about yourself before you consider the wellbeing of others. Don't do anything to make a weaker person stumble, even if you must surrender some of the liberties you've gained through advanced understanding.
- e) What is best for your brother and what will help him build his faith is a much greater priority than any liberty you've earned through learning.
- f) In fact, toward the end of his heartfelt teaching on the matter Paul admonishes the strong in the faith; "Happy is he who does not condemn himself by choosing to do what harms a weaker brother—even if what he has chosen is otherwise permitted by God."
- g) For the complete teaching on the subject see:

[Identity Politics: Be Fully Convinced](#)

3. Paul's Discipleship Model

- a) This idea of a more mature brother taking on the role of helping to build the faith of a less mature brother is a central theme in Paul's writings. It's his discipleship model.
 - 1) *"You therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you***

have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.” II Timothy 2:1-4
NKJV

b) And you do so by edifying others with the word of God. This idea of edifying others is inextricably linked to the grand design of God’s institution, the Church. The ultimate intention is to build up Christians, to edify them, until they perfectly represent Christ in all His fullness.

c) The Grand Design

1) *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the **equipping** of the saints for the work of ministry, for the **edifying** of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the **fullness** of Christ; that we should*

*no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of **doctrine**, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the **edifying** of itself in love.”*

Ephesians 4:11-16 NKJV

- 2) **To Edify:** to build up; as in architecture to build a house, structure, building; spiritual advancement.
- 3) **To Equip:** bringing to a condition of fitness; a preparing; perfecting. This is the same word used in the Romans 15:2.
- 4) **Fullness:** to make replete; to cram full, to execute; to full satisfy, fill to the fullest. (Same word used in both II Corinthians 10:6 (obedience fulfilled) and Matthew 5:17

- 5) *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to **fulfill**.”* Matthew 5:17 NKJV
 - 6) *“and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is **fulfilled**.”* II Corinthians 10:6 NKJV
 - 7) **Doctrine:** same as teaching or learning in Romans 15:4.
- d) Paul makes the most intimate connection to this high calling by linking the husband’s role in human marriage with Christ’s ministry to the church as His bride. The husband is to sanctify and cleanse his bride by washing her in the word, so she can be presented as holy and without blemish.
- 1) *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might **sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word**, that He might **present her** to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be **holy and without blemish**.”* Ephesians 5:25-27 NKJV

2) *“This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning **Christ and the church**. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”* Ephesians 5:32-33 NKJV

e) That is why you must always point to God’s word in order to mature the saints, not to yourself, as Paul elaborates next!

B. This is why we have the Bible!

(1) The Reason Things Were Written

(a) Not even the Creator of all things did anything to please Himself.

1. “For **even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written**, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” For **whatever things were written before** were **written for our learning**, that we through the **patience and comfort of the Scriptures** might have **hope.**” Romans 15:3-4 NKJV

2. It should be glaringly obvious by now.

a) Not even Christ Jesus prioritized Himself above others, even though it was through Him all of creation came into existence, and in all things He has preeminence.

- b) How do we know this to be true? It's in the Holy Scriptures.
- 1) *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For **by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible**, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him**. And He is before all things, and **in Him all things consist**. And **He is the head of the body, the church**, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that **in all things He may have the preeminence**.”* Colossians 1:15-18 NKJV
- c) And what was written previously in the Old Testament Scriptures that Paul calls upon to solidly His point?
- d) It certainly must integrate somehow with his teaching about the proper relationship between the strong and the weak.
- e) This is the tiny excerpt from David's song, the lyric Paul chose to make his point; “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

- 1) *“Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, **And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.**”* Psalms 69:9 NKJV
- f) It is one-half of one verse of thirty-six verses in this song. You can't possibly understand the depth of what is going on in David's heart, nor Paul's for why he chose those words, unless you are willing to search.
- g) On the surface, it is clear that Paul has learned in his vast studies that the subject in the verse is Christ. You might not know that if you were just reading David's Psalm.
 - 1) About those words, *“The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me,”* Paul teaches us, *“even Christ did not please Himself.”*
- h) Retribution against those who, in their ignorant boldness, see fit to rebuke the God of the Universe, is not the priority. In fact, David is the one being persecuted, as the Christ-figure in the Psalm.
 - 1) *“Save me, O God! For **the waters have come up to my neck.** I sink in deep mire, Where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters,*

*Where the floods overflow me. I am weary with my crying; My throat is dry; My eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause Are more than the hairs of my head; **They are mighty who would destroy me**, Being my enemies wrongfully; **Though I have stolen nothing, I still must restore it.** O God, You know my foolishness; And **my sins are not hidden from You.** Let not those who wait for You, O Lord God of hosts, **be ashamed because of me**; Let not those who seek You **be confounded because of me**, O God of Israel. Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children;" Psalms 69:1-8 NKJV*

- i) And then he must repent for possibly acting in any way that might have shielded the truth of God and a relationship with Him from the offenders.

Interpret the passage as such and the connection to Christ stands out in bold relief.

- 1) ***"When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. I also made***

sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I am the song of the drunkards. But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Lord, in the acceptable time; **O God**, in the multitude of Your mercy, Hear me in the truth of Your salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, And let me not sink; Let me be delivered from those who hate me, And out of the deep waters. Let not the floodwater overflow me, Nor let the deep swallow me up; And let not the pit shut its mouth on me. Hear me, O Lord, for Your lovingkindness is good; Turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. And do not hide Your face from Your servant, **For I am in trouble**; Hear me speedily. Draw near to my soul, and redeem it; Deliver me because of my enemies. You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You. **Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness**; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none." Psalms 69:10-20 NKJV

- j) Interpret the passage as such and the connection to Christ stands out in bold relief.
- 1) *“They also **gave me gall for my food**, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”* Psalms 69:21 NKJV
 - 2) *“they **gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink**. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.”* Matthew 27:34 NKJV
- k) David ultimately repents for his behavior and he humbly takes responsibility for how he treated those whom God clearly wanted to redeem.
- l) He concludes that a willingness to take on the responsibility for others and to make them a priority is pleasing to the Lord.
- m) Those actions will, in the end, cause the offenders to seek God with authentic hearts and and thus find life. That is how the strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.
- 1) *“But **I am poor and sorrowful**; Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving. **This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bull,***

*Which has horns and hooves. **The humble shall see this and be glad; And you who seek God, your hearts shall live. *For the Lord hears the poor, And does not despise His prisoners.** Let heaven and earth praise Him, The seas and everything that moves in them. For God will save Zion And build the cities of Judah, That they may dwell there and possess it. Also, the descendants of His servants shall inherit it, And those who love His name shall dwell in it."*

Psalms 69:29-36 NKJV

3. But more than his specific point here, there is an overarching principle.
 - a) Everything in the Old Testament was written to instruct us. This speaks to both the one doing the instruction and the information itself.
 - b) **"Patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope..."** The information is steadfast and enduring (remains behind), which makes it stable and dependable, no matter who you are or when in history you live.
 - c) And it always brings encouragement and consolation, just as you could read elsewhere in

the Psalm Paul referenced. ****“The Lord hears the poor, and does not despise His prisoners.”***

d) The outcome for all is hope; we can have joyous expectation, trust, and confidence in all the Lord has promised in His word. This is the same hope of which Paul wrote earlier in this letter.

a) *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and **rejoice in hope** of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, **hope**. Now **hope** does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”*

Romans 5:1-5 NKJV

e) Paul commissioned Timothy to do that very thing. Use the Holy Scriptures, with which you was raised, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- 1) *“But **evil men and impostors** will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But **you must continue in the things which you have learned** and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 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. **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is **profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped** for every good work.”* II Timothy 3:13-17 NKJV
- 2) **Instruction:** learning, teaching (the function or the information)
 - f) If you blend complete and thoroughly equipped you arrive at completely equipped or fulfilled, which is what you must become before you are ready to deal with the disobedience in others. To fulfill is what Jesus said about His relationship to the Old Testament; “Do not think that I came to

destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

- 1) *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience **when your obedience is fulfilled.**”* II Corinthians 10:4-6 NKJV
- 2) *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to **fulfill.**”* Matthew 5:17 NKJV

C. One Mind One Mouth

(1) God is the Word (the Scriptures)

(a) God of Patience and Comfort

1. “Now may **the God of patience and comfort** grant you to be **like-minded** toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with **one mind** and **one mouth** glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 15:5-6 NKJV

2. Paul just used the same words to describe the Scriptures as he is now using to describe God: patience and comfort.
- a) The word of God is steadfast and enduring, stable and dependable; call upon it for aid! It endures forever and offers encouragement and consolation.
 - b) And now Paul says those very same attributes belong to God Himself, the God of patience and comfort.
 - c) He wants us all to have the same understanding of this very topic.
 - d) Paul emphasizes elsewhere that we have one mind, unity of the faith, to think like Christ.
 - e) But here he is being more pointed on a specific topic. Make God's word the go to for all instruction!
 - f) And Paul admonishes that we all agree and testify that this how we will conduct our affairs.
 - g) How glorifying to God it is when we do. It is also true that the Scriptures themselves teach that Christ is the incarnate word of God. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." We find the

God of patience and comfort in the patience and comfort of the Scriptures!

- 1) ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”*** John 1:1-5 NKJV
- 2) ***“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*** John 1:14 NKJV

D. Through the Eyes of Christ and Paul

- (1) How should you view others?
 - (a) See others as Christ sees them!
 1. **“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.”** Romans 15:7 NKJV
 2. Accept one another as so elaborated in the past few chapters, because this is what His word teaches.

- a) Yahweh is a God of patience and comfort, and His word is a word of patience and comfort, dependable and true, a constant encouragement.
 - b) Love one another and do no harm.
 - c) Accept one another as Christ accepted you.
 - d) Remember what you were like when He chose you! How did He see you when you were undeserving? He demonstrated His own love toward you, in that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you.
- 1) *“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. [8] **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God*

through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.” Romans 5:6-11 NKJV

e) As written before for our learning... it's the same plan for each of us, as we have all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

1) *“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; [23] **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,** being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”*

Romans 3:21-26 NKJV

- f) To Christ, you were the joy on His mind when endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- 1) *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, [2] **looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.** For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.” If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is*

there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.” Hebrews 12:1-8 NKJV

RINSE

2. Get all the impurities out!

A. It’s Why Christ Came!

(1) Precedent: He is our perfect example!

(a) Our Blueprint, Template, Standard, Role Model!

1. “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**, 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.”** And again he says: **“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”** And again: **“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”** 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.** 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.**” Romans 15:8-13 NKJV

2. Looking back to go forward!
 - a) It's only if we drag the context forward that we get a more detailed picture of all Paul's been teaching since he began contrasting the weak in the faith from the strong in the faith in the last chapter.
 - b) And of course, this chapter seamlessly blended that message with what it looks like with Christ as our perfect example.
 - c) Let's review quickly, so we can truly understand why Paul is now emphasizing the servant leadership of Christ. "We who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves, for even Christ did not please Himself."
 - d) Christ became a bondservant, first to the Jew, those whom would have an advantage to become strong in the faith because of their advanced knowledge.
 - 1) *"but made Himself of no reputation, **taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.**"* Philippians 2:7 NKJV

- e) But for what other cause? For the weak in the faith, to confirm the promises made to the fathers that the Gentiles too would come to know Him.
- f) And then as the master does so well, Paul rattles off four Old Testament references to the Gentiles.
- 1) **From Psalm 18:49** Confess the Lord among the Gentiles: “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.”* Romans 15:9 NKJV
 - 2) **From Deuteronomy 32:43** Rejoice that the Gentiles are joining God’s people: “**And again** he says: *“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”*” Romans 15:10 NKJV
 - 3) **From Psalm 117:1** Praise God because the Gentiles will also praise Him: “**And again:** *“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”*” Romans 15:11 NKJV
 - 4) **From Isaiah 11:10** The Messiah Himself will reign over the Gentiles: “**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.”*” Romans 15:12 NKJV

- g) These are the promises written before for our learning, edification, and instruction. What a perfect reason for those who are strong in the faith to know the Scriptures. The Gentiles will come to the faith and will start off weak for lack of knowledge.
 - h) And we have Christ as the perfect role model, the quintessential example, the precise standard of how we ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.
 - i) Christ is your perfect precedent, how the strong should act so the weak would receive the promises. As such, what is your path forward to emulate Christ?
3. It was obviously not an easy transition for the early Jewish converts, those whom Paul would consider to have an advantage.
- a) They continually looked down on their brothers in the faith who were once Gentile, and oftentimes would not even fellowship with them, or might do so only when no other Jewish brothers were watching. Peter was totally guilty of such behavior, until he was sternly rebuffed by Paul.

- 1) *“Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for **before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him,** so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”*
Galatians 2:11-16 NKJV

4. A few excerpts from Paul's letter to the Philippians charts a good path forward to maturity in this area.
 - a) Be like-minded, exercise God's love, and be in unity as if you share the same beliefs and practices. Do not be self-centered, but instead see others as more important than you. Do not consider your own interests before what is a priority to others is satisfied.
 - 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, fulfill my joy by **being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.** Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem others better than himself.** Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for **the interests of others.**”* Philippians 2:1-4 NKJV
 - b) This is precisely what was on the mind of Christ when He departed His heavenly realm and became a human, and then humbly sacrificed Himself for mankind. Can there be a more

powerful picture of what it looks like to put others first?

- 1) ***“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 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. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 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, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”***

Philippians 2:5-11 NKJV

- c) If you consider that perspective, the chance of complaining about anything, or arguing over things that have no eternal value, approaches zero.
 - 1) *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now*

*much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. **Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,** among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. Yes, and if I am being **poured out as a drink offering** on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. **For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.**"* Philippians 2:12-18 NKJV

- d) Live like that and you are emulating what it means to be blameless and harmless. Remember, love does no harm to a neighbor; and love is the fulfillment of the law. If you appear like this, **a sinless people who live among a twisted and perverted world,** there can be no doubt you have

given everything up for God, as if your past life is a vapor that was absorbed into the atmosphere.

e) Get all the impurities out! A sinless people:

- 1) ***“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”*** 1 John 3:4-9
NKJV

5. And here is one more promise to cling to; witness to and serve others and it will become your greatest source of joy.

- a) Certainly, no plan to reach such a level of living is possible without the Holy Spirit, but the right perspective helps. When you arrive at the sincere belief that your truest source of joy and peace is your Christlike treatment of others, not what it produces for you, you will experience what it means to have hope in God right down to the marrow of your bones.
- b) Rinse yourself in these words friends, as it places your source of joy under your command. Love others, prefer others, and do no harm to others, all things under your control, and your joy will be fulfilled!
- 1) ***“Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”*** Romans 13:10 NKJV
 - 2) ***“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.””*** Galatians 5:13-14 NKJV

REPEAT

3. Paul has confidence in his audience!

A. The High Calling

(1) You've been trained well!

(a) Filled with goodness and knowledge

1. "Now **I myself am confident concerning you**, my brethren, that **you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.**" Romans 15:14 NKJV

2. Paul gets personal with his intended audience.

a) I have every confidence that you can achieve what I've laid out here.

b) I know its a high calling, but you can do it. You are ready!

1) *"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, **I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind;** and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree*

that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.”

Philippians 3:13-16 NKJV

- 2) *“**I can do all things** through Christ who strengthens me.”* Philippians 4:13 NKJV
- c) You have the knowledge and maturity to deliver. You are able to minister as such, to handle the weak properly and to advise, reprimand, and even rebuke, as necessary, with love!
3. Paul began this letter and will end this letter with the most extraordinary compliments for his intended readers.
 - a) Your faith is famous throughout the whole world and your obedience has become known to all!
 - 1) *“Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for **obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,”* Romans 1:5 NKJV
 - 2) *“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that **your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**”* Romans 1:8 NKJV
 - 3) *“For **your obedience has become known to all.** Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want*

you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.” Romans 16:19 NKJV

4. How does that obedience display itself in real life, for them and for you?

a) Imitate those who imitate Jesus.

1) “**Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**” I Corinthians 11:1 NKJV

b) By obeying the traditions of the faith just as they were delivered to you.

1) “*Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and **keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.***” I Corinthians 11:2 NKJV

c) Act like God

1) “*Therefore **be imitators of God** as dear children.*” Ephesians 5:1 NKJV

d) By loving others like Christ loves you.

1) “*And **walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.***” Ephesians 5:2 NKJV

- e) Live your life each day by asking, “What would Jesus say or do at this moment?” and then copy Him.
 - 1) *“He who says he abides in Him **ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**”* I John 2:6 NKJV
- f) These are not a new set of commands to follow; this is what obedience to God has meant all along.
 - 1) *“Brethren, **I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.**”* I John 2:7 NKJV
- g) What is new is the revelation that the only meaningful obedience to God is grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.
 - 1) *“Again, **a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.**”* I John 2:8 NKJV
- h) And that is achieved only when the love of God is in you and the light of Christ emanates from you.
 - 1) *“He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. **He who loves***

*his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. **But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.**"* 1

John 2:9-11 NKJV

i) If you have hate for your brother, by either causing or allowing his sin, you are not emulating the love of Christ.

1) *"**You shall not hate your brother** in your heart. **You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin** because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.**"* Leviticus 19:17-18 NKJV

j) Anyone who claims to be walking in the love of Christ, who does not obey God, is lying to you because only those who obey the Lord can have His love perfected in them!

1) *"My little children, **these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ***

*the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. Now by this **we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.**"* 1 John 2:1-5 NKJV

B. Why does Paul includes so much content in Romans?

(1) He has a good reason!

(a) This audience can handle it!

1. "Nevertheless, brethren, **I have written more boldly** to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, **that the offering of the Gentiles** might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. **Therefore I have reason** to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God." Romans 15:15-17 NKJV

2. Paul has taken a risk by compiling so much theology in one letter, but he is confident that his calling as an Apostle to the Gentiles will rub off on them.
 - a) Be reminded that Rome is a mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles, many of those Gentiles Greeks, and a great place to put into practice all he has delivered, especially this latest doctrine on the relationship between the weak and the strong.
 - b) Paul feels very confident that his optimism is well-founded. He really believes the recipients can handle the depths of his teaching.
 - c) At the time Romans was written, Paul had not yet visited Rome, but he certainly knew about the activities and effectiveness of the Church there as we thus far witnessed by his compliments.
 - 1) *“For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing **I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you.**”* Romans 1:9-10 NKJV

- d) Paul is anxious to visit with people who he believes, by the Spirit, can handle Yahweh's deepest revelations.
- e) He has used references from the Old Testament, time and time again, to establish the doctrinal basis of his writings.
- f) Here in chapter 15 he admits that he has gone deep with them; *"I have written more boldly to you on some points."*
- g) He's confident they will understand both the profound doctrinal insights, as well as the complicated relationship between those of differing backgrounds coming into the faith.

(2) Take a moment to appreciate the depth of Romans:

(a) Summary

1. He identified three eternal classes of people.
2. He's distinguished doing the Law from works/deeds of Law.
3. He discussed the advantages and disadvantages of past upbringing as a Jew or Gentile.
4. He introduced the simple Gospel of Salvation (Justification, Redemption, Reconciliation) and

distinguished it from the more complex Gospel of the Kingdom (Perfection, Completion, Christlikeness).

5. He helped us clarify what righteousness is and introduced the two types, imputed righteousness (free) and earned righteousness (practiced).
6. He solidified our identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and what that means both spiritually (in heaven) and physically (on earth).
7. He introduced the legal basis for redemption from the Old Testament; without death and blood you cannot be born again.
8. He used marriage to explain how there must be a death to release us from our old life.
9. He uncovered the sources of personal struggles and how they are overcome.
10. He distinguished the Law of Moses from the law of sin and death.
11. He elaborated on killing the flesh and the power of walking in the Spirit.
12. He taught us about the prophetic future, the "revealing of the sons of God," and about the necessity of human initiative in Yahweh's eternal plans.

13. He helped us understand God's sovereignty.
14. He reminded us exactly what we confessed when we got born again. And what it means to live with grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.
15. He alleviated the confusion about the fate of natural Israel and the three eternal fates of mankind.
16. He helped us understand what it truly means to sacrifice everything and live a life in the faith.
17. He showed us the outcome of a transformed mind and how to obtain one.
18. He helped us understand the true nature of Godly authority.
19. He gave us real clarity about the how different it is, because of their upbringings, for a Jew and a Gentile to come to faith.
20. He emphasized how we should we treat each other and why we must prioritize others.
21. He coached us on how to honor and support those who are weak in the faith.
22. And throughout the entire letter, he formulated "Christian Doctrine" and proved it all from the Old Testament. That alone should encourage us to become experts in God's Word.

(b) Paul calls himself a “minister to the Gentiles.”

1. Don’t you find it fascinating that Yahweh would choose the great Jewish scholar to disciple the Gentiles?
2. When you think about it, it makes perfect sense. Who better than an expert to elaborate on what the Old Testament means relative to their newfound faith?
3. And who better to explain the “complicated” relationship between “former” Gentiles and those who “already” called themselves the chosen people of God.
4. The Jew and Gentile have come from very different places, but they are traveling to the same destination.

C. Don’t take credit

(1) It’s Not just lip service!

(a) It’s Word AND Deed

1. **“For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient— in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”**
Romans 15:18-19 NKJV

2. This is why Paul had to “get away alone” for so long!
 - a) He had to sort through what his encounter with Y’shua meant relative to his previous faith, his new faith, and the faith of these new Gentile converts.
 - b) In his own life, he had to move from self-determination based obedience to grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience, so he could deliver an authentic message about what that looked like to all people, both Jew and Gentile.
 - c) Paul knew that what he had previously gained in his life, as a highly educated Jewish Torah scholar, was nothing compared to what Christ had done in him.
 - 1) *“But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted loss** for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the*

righteousness which is from God by faith;”

Philippians 3:7-9 NKJV

- d) In fact, he would boast only in his weakness and infirmity and count everything that he had gained on his own a loss!
- 1) *“Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool —I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my*

deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? **If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.**" II Corinthians 11:22-30 NKJV

2) "It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago —whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; **yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities.** For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me." II Corinthians 12:1-6 NKJV

- e) That does not mean you don't take action with your faith in mind. Faith is in word and deed. Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves because faith without works is dead.
- 1) *“(for **not the hearers** of the law are just in the sight of God, **but the doers** of the law will be justified;”* Romans 2:13 NKJV
 - 2) *“But **be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”* James 1:22-25 NKJV
 - 3) *“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are*

*needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.***" James 2:14-18 NKJV

- f) Make this your witness so you can also expect the Gentiles to become obedient to the faith, otherwise your testimony is hypocrisy.
 - 1) *"Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for **obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,"* Romans 1:5 NKJV
- g) The initial message to the Gentiles is "Christ Crucified" and then stand back and watch the Holy Spirit move in signs and wonders.
 - 1) *"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and **Him crucified.**"* I Corinthians 2:2 NKJV (See I Corinthians 2:1-5)
- h) But, then the message changes as God's people are called to move from childhood in the faith (weakness) to adulthood in the faith (maturity), as the Holy Spirit partners with human initiative.

1) *“However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,”* I Corinthians 2:6-7 NKJV (See I Corinthians 2:6-16)

i) Yes, the Gentiles are also called to become obedient, but Paul is careful not to lead them down the same historic journey of mistakes that Israel made—the journey of self-righteousness. He is also warning Jewish believers to recognize this tendency in themselves, and furthermore, to not become an impediment for the Gentiles to embrace a life of grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.

1) *“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”* Romans 10:3 NKJV

D. Now, Go!

(1) One Final Time: Why the Bible was Written

(a) Paul again returns to his favorite Prophet.

1. **“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written: **“To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand.”**”**

Romans 15:20-21 NKJV

2. Paul wants to drive home a message.
 - a) Go where you have not gone before. Preach the Gospel in places no one has heard of Jesus.
 - b) Besides, there is no other foundation that anyone can lay than that which is laid in Jesus Christ.
 - 1) *“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building. According to the grace of God which*

*was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. **For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**"* 1

Corinthians 3:5-11 NKJV

- c) This is the third time he has called upon the same chapter in Isaiah. In Romans 2 Paul quotes Isaiah 52:5. And again in Romans 10 he quotes Isaiah 52:7.
- 1) *"Now therefore, what have I here," says the Lord, "That My people are taken away for nothing? Those who rule over them Make them wail," says the Lord, "And **My name is blasphemed continually** every day." Isaiah 52:5 NKJV*
 - 2) *"**How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news,** Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"'" Isaiah 52:7 NKJV*

- d) And it would seem that he is teaching us that the testimony will first come from Jerusalem. That aligns with Isaiah's prophecy.
- e) Yes, Paul says "from Jerusalem" and beyond I preached this message. I was called to lay down new tracks where "no man has gone before."
- f) It's Isaiah's revelation in Isaiah 52:15
 - 1) *"So shall **He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him** [will have no way to argue against Him]; **For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.**"* Isaiah 52:15 NKJV
- g) This is a new revelation added to his existing knowledge "from Jerusalem." They must get it right first, and from there the entire world will say, "Yahweh reigns!"

Summary: WASH

1. The Ultimate Tool

A. It's Not about You!

- (1) Final word on why we deal with the weak the way we do.
 - (a) Don't Please Yourself

1. We sympathize with the weak for their sake, for their good, for their edification, like Christ does.
 - a) It has already been clearly established, and prayerfully by now without argument, who are the strong and who are the weak.
 - b) Here you see the great Torah scholar and author of this very letter includes himself as one of the strong.
 - c) He knows all about which meats are clean and which cultural holidays are acceptable. And he has written the book, literally, on how mature believers with more information should treat less mature believers who lack certain knowledge.
 - d) Don't think about yourself before you consider the wellbeing of others. Don't do anything to make a weaker person stumble, even if you must surrender some of the liberties you've gained through advanced understanding.
 - e) What is best for your brother and what will help him build his faith is a much greater priority than any liberty you've earned through learning.
 - f) In fact, toward the end of his heartfelt teaching on the matter Paul admonishes the strong in the faith;

“Happy is he who does not condemn himself by choosing to do what harms a weaker brother—even if what he has chosen is otherwise permitted by God.”

g) For the complete teaching on the subject see:

[Identity Politics: Be Fully Convinced](#)

2. Paul’s Discipleship Model

a) This idea of a more mature brother taking on the role of helping to build the faith of a less mature brother is a central theme in Paul’s writings. It’s his discipleship model.

b) And you do so by edifying others with the word of God. This idea of edifying others is inextricably linked to the grand design of God’s institution, the Church. The ultimate intention is to build up Christians, to edify them, until they perfectly represent Christ in all His fullness.

c) The Grand Design

1) **To Edify:** to build up; as in architecture to build a house, structure, building; spiritual advancement.

- 2) **To Equip:** bringing to a condition of fitness; a preparing; perfecting. This is the same word used in the Romans 15:2.
 - 3) **Fullness:** to make replete; to cram full, to execute; to full satisfy, fill to the fullest. (Same word used in both II Corinthians 10:6 (obedience fulfilled) and Matthew 5:17)
 - 4) **Doctrine:** same as teaching or learning in Romans 15:4.
- d) Paul makes the most intimate connection to this high calling by linking the husband's role in human marriage with Christ's ministry to the church as His bride. The husband is to sanctify and cleanse his bride by washing her in the word, so she can be presented as holy and without blemish.
- e) That is why you must always point to God's word in order to mature the saints, not to yourself, as Paul elaborates next!

B. This is why we have the Bible!

(1) The Reason Things Were Written

- (a) Not even the Creator of all things did anything to please Himself.

1. It should be glaringly obvious by now.

- a) Not even Christ Jesus prioritized Himself above others, even though it was through Him all of creation came into existence, and in all things He has preeminence.
- b) How do we know this to be true? It's in the Holy Scriptures.
- c) And what was written previously in the Old Testament Scriptures that Paul calls upon to solidly His point?
- d) It certainly must integrate somehow with his teaching about the proper relationship between the strong and the weak.
- e) This is the tiny excerpt from David's song, the lyric Paul chose to make his point; "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."
- f) It is one-half of one verse of thirty-six verses in this song. You can't possible understand the depth of what is going on in David's heart, nor Paul's for why he chose those words, unless you are willing to search.
- g) On the surface, it is clear that Paul has learned in his vast studies that the subject in the verse is

Christ. You might not know that if you were just reading David's Psalm.

- 1) About those words, *"The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me,"* Paul teaches us, *"even Christ did not please Himself."*
- h) Retribution against those who, in their ignorant boldness, see fit to rebuke the God of the Universe, is not the priority. In fact, David is the one being persecuted, as the Christ-figure in the Psalm.
- i) And then he must repent for possibly acting in any way that might have shielded the truth of God and a relationship with Him from the offenders. Interpret the passage as such and the connection to Christ stands out in bold relief.
- j) Interpret the passage as such and the connection to Christ stands out in bold relief.
- k) David ultimately repents for his behavior and he humbly takes responsibility for how he treated those whom God clearly wanted to redeem.
- l) He concludes that a willingness to take on the responsibility for others and to make them a priority is pleasing to the Lord.

- m) Those actions will, in the end, cause the offenders to seek God with authentic hearts and and thus find life. That is how the strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.
2. But more than his specific point here, there is an overarching principle.
- a) Everything in the Old Testament was written to instruct us. This speaks to both the one doing the instruction and the information itself.
 - b) **“Patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope...”** The information is steadfast and enduring (remains behind), which makes it stable and dependable, no matter who you are or when in history you live.
 - c) And it always brings encouragement and consolation, just as you could read elsewhere in the Psalm Paul referenced. ****“The Lord hears the poor, and does not despise His prisoners.”***
 - d) The outcome for all is hope; we can have have joyous expectation, trust, and confidence in all the Lord has promised in His word. This is the same hope of which Paul wrote earlier in this letter.

- e) Paul commissioned Timothy to do that very thing. Use the Holy Scriptures, with which you was raised, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
 - 1) **Instruction:** learning, teaching (the function or the information)
- f) If you blend complete and thoroughly equipped you arrive at completely equipped or fulfilled, which is what you must become before you are ready to deal with the disobedience in others. To fulfill is what Jesus said about His relationship to the Old Testament; “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

C. One Mind One Mouth

- (1) God is the Word (the Scriptures)
 - (a) God of Patience and Comfort
 - 1. Paul just used the same words to describe the Scriptures as he is now using to describe God: patience and comfort.

- a) The word of God is steadfast and enduring, stable and dependable; call upon it for aid! It endures forever and offers encouragement and consolation.
- b) And now Paul says those very same attributes belong to God Himself, the God of patience and comfort.
- c) He wants us all to have the same understanding of this very topic.
- d) Paul emphasizes elsewhere that we have one mind, unity of the faith, to think like Christ.
- e) But here he is being more pointed on a specific topic. Make God's word the go to for all instruction!
- f) And Paul admonishes that we all agree and testify that this how we will conduct our affairs.
- g) How glorifying to God it is when we do. It is also true that the Scriptures themselves teach that Christ is the incarnate word of God. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." We find the God of patience and comfort in the patience and comfort of the Scriptures!

D. Through the Eyes of Christ and Paul

- (1) How should you view others?

- (a) See others as Christ sees them!
 - 1. Accept one another as so elaborated in the past few chapters, because this is what His word teaches.
 - a) Yahweh is a God of patience and comfort, and His word is a word of patience and comfort, dependable and true, a constant encouragement.
 - b) Love one another and do no harm.
 - c) Accept one another as Christ accepted you.
 - d) Remember what you were like when He chose you! How did He see you when you were undeserving? He demonstrated His own love toward you, in that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you.
 - e) As written before for our learning... it's the same plan for each of us, as we have all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.
 - f) To Christ, you were the joy on His mind when endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Summary: RINSE

2. Get all the impurities out!

A. It's Why Christ Came!

(1) Precedent: He is our perfect example!

(a) Our Blueprint, Template, Standard, Role Model!

1. “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**, 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.”** And again he says: **“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”** And again: **“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”** 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.** 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.”**” Romans 15:8-13 NKJV

2. Looking back to go forward!

a) It’s only if we we drag the context forward that we get a more detailed picture of all Paul’s been teaching since he began contrasting the weak in the faith from the strong in the faith in the last chapter.

- b) And of course, this chapter seamlessly blended that message with what it looks like with Christ as our perfect example.
- c) Let's review quickly, so we can truly understand why Paul is now emphasizing the servant leadership of Christ. "We who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves, for even Christ did not please Himself."
- d) Christ became a bondservant, first to the Jew, those whom would have an advantage to become strong in the faith because of their advanced knowledge.
- e) But for what other cause? For the weak in the faith, to confirm the promises made to the fathers that the Gentiles too would come to know Him.
- f) And then as the master does so well, Paul rattles off four Old Testament references to the Gentiles.
 - 1) **From Psalm 18:49** Confess the Lord among the Gentiles: "and **that the Gentiles** might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written:
 - 2) **From Deuteronomy 32:43** Rejoice that the Gentiles are joining God's people:

- 3) **From Psalm 117:1** Praise God because the Gentiles will also praise Him:
- 4) **From Isaiah 11:10** The Messiah Himself will reign over the Gentiles:
 - g) These are the promises written before for our learning, edification, and instruction. What a perfect reason for those who are strong in the faith to know the Scriptures. The Gentiles will come to the faith and will start off weak for lack of knowledge.
 - h) And we have Christ as the perfect role model, the quintessential example, the precise standard of how we ought to bear with the scruples of the weak.
 - i) Christ is your perfect precedent, how the strong should act so the weak would receive the promises. As such, what is your path forward to emulate Christ?
3. It was obviously not an easy transition for the early Jewish converts, those whom Paul would consider to have an advantage.
 - a) They continually looked down on their brothers in the faith who were once Gentile, and oftentimes

would not even fellowship with them, or might do so only when no other Jewish brothers were watching. Peter was totally guilty of such behavior, until he was sternly rebuffed by Paul.

4. A few excerpts from Paul's letter to the Philippians charts a good path forward to maturity in this area.
 - a) Be like-minded, exercise God's love, and be in unity as if you share the same beliefs and practices. Do not be self-centered, but instead see others as more important than you. Do not consider your own interests before what is a priority to others is satisfied.
 - b) This is precisely what was on the mind of Christ when He departed His heavenly realm and became a human, and then humbly sacrificed Himself for mankind. Can there be a more powerful picture of what it looks like to put others first?
 - c) If you consider that perspective, the chance of complaining about anything, or arguing over things that have no eternal value, approaches zero.
 - d) Live like that and you are emulating what it means to be blameless and harmless. Remember, love

does no harm to a neighbor; and love is the fulfillment of the law. If you appear like this, **a sinless people who live among a twisted and perverted world**, there can be no doubt you have given everything up for God, as if your past life is a vapor that was absorbed into the atmosphere.

- e) Get all the impurities out! A sinless people:
5. And here is one more promise to cling to; witness to and serve others and it will become your greatest source of joy.
- a) Certainly, no plan to reach such a level of living is possible without the Holy Spirit, but the right perspective helps. When you arrive at the sincere belief that your truest source of joy and peace is your Christlike treatment of others, not what it produces for you, you will experience what it means to have hope in God right down to the marrow of your bones.
 - b) Rinse yourself in these words friends, as it places your source of joy under your command. Love others, prefer others, and do no harm to others, all things under your control, and your joy will be fulfilled!

Summary: REPEAT

3. Paul has confidence in his audience!

A. The High Calling

(1) You've been trained well!

(a) Filled with goodness and knowledge

1. Paul gets personal with his intended audience.

a) I have every confidence that you can achieve what I've laid out here.

b) I know its a high calling, but you can do it. You are ready!

c) You have the knowledge and maturity to deliver. You are able to minister as such, to handle the weak properly and to advise, reprimand, and even rebuke, as necessary, with love!

2. Paul began this letter and will end this letter with the most extraordinary compliments for his intended readers.

a) Your faith is famous throughout the whole world and your obedience has become known to all!

3. How does that obedience display itself in real life, for them and for you?

a) Imitate those who imitate Jesus.

- b) By obeying the traditions of the faith just as they were delivered to you.
- c) Act like God
- d) By loving others like Christ loves you.
- e) Live your life each day by asking, “What would Jesus say or do at this moment?” and then copy Him.
- f) These are not a new set of commands to follow; this is what obedience to God has meant all along.
- g) What is new is the revelation that the only meaningful obedience to God is grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.
- h) And that is achieved only when the love of God is in you and the light of Christ emanates from you.
- i) If you have hate for your brother, by either causing or allowing his sin, you are not emulating the love of Christ.
- j) Anyone who claims to be walking in the love of Christ, who does not obey God, is lying to you because only those who obey the Lord can have His love perfected in them!

B. Why does Paul includes so much content in Romans?

- (1) He has a good reason!

- (a) This audience can handle it!
1. “Nevertheless, brethren, **I have written more boldly** to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, **that the offering of the Gentiles** might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. **Therefore I have reason** to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.” Romans 15:15-17
NKJV
 2. Paul has taken a risk by compiling so much theology in one letter, but he is confident that his calling as an Apostle to the Gentiles will rub off on them.
 - a) Be reminded that Rome is a mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles, many of those Gentiles Greeks, and a great place to put into practice all he has delivered, especially this latest doctrine on the relationship between the weak and the strong.
 - b) Paul feels very confident that his optimism is well-founded. He really believes the recipients can handle the depths of his teaching.
 - c) At the time Romans was written, Paul had not yet visited Rome, but he certainly knew about the

activities and effectiveness of the Church there as we thus far witnessed by his compliments.

- d) Paul is anxious to visit with people who he believes, by the Spirit, can handle Yahweh's deepest revelations.
- e) He has used references from the Old Testament, time and time again, to establish the doctrinal basis of his writings.
- f) Here in chapter 15 he admits that he has gone deep with them; *"I have written more boldly to you on some points."*
- g) He's confident they will understand both the profound doctrinal insights, as well as the complicated relationship between those of differing backgrounds coming into the faith.

(2) Take a moment to appreciate the depth of Romans:

(a) Summary

1. He identified three eternal classes of people.
2. He's distinguished doing the Law from works/deeds of Law.
3. He discussed the advantages and disadvantages of past upbringing as a Jew or Gentile.

4. He introduced the simple Gospel of Salvation (Justification, Redemption, Reconciliation) and distinguished it from the more complex Gospel of the Kingdom (Perfection, Completion, Christlikeness).
5. He helped us clarify what righteousness is and introduced the two types, imputed righteousness (free) and earned righteousness (practiced).
6. He solidified our identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and what that means both spiritually (in heaven) and physically (on earth).
7. He introduced the legal basis for redemption from the Old Testament; without death and blood you cannot be born again.
8. He used marriage to explain how there must be a death to release us from our old life.
9. He uncovered the sources of personal struggles and how they are overcome.
10. He distinguished the Law of Moses from the law of sin and death.
11. He elaborated on killing the flesh and the power of walking in the Spirit.
12. He taught us about the prophetic future, the "revealing of the sons of God," and about the

necessity of human initiative in Yahweh's eternal plans.

13. He helped us understand God's sovereignty.
14. He reminded us exactly what we confessed when we got born again. And what it means to live with grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience.
15. He alleviated the confusion about the fate of natural Israel and the three eternal fates of mankind.
16. He helped us understand what it truly means to sacrifice everything and live a life in the faith.
17. He showed us the outcome of a transformed mind and how to obtain one.
18. He helped us understand the true nature of Godly authority.
19. He gave us real clarity about the how different it is, because of their upbringings, for a Jew and a Gentile to come to faith.
20. He emphasized how we should we treat each other and why we must prioritize others.
21. He coached us on how to honor and support those who are weak in the faith.
22. And throughout the entire letter, he formulated "Christian Doctrine" and proved it all from the Old

Testament. That alone should encourage us to become experts in God's Word.

(b) Paul calls himself a "minister to the Gentiles."

1. Don't you find it fascinating that Yahweh would choose the great Jewish scholar to disciple the Gentiles?
2. When you think about it, it makes perfect sense. Who better than an expert to elaborate on what the Old Testament means relative to their newfound faith?
3. And who better to explain the "complicated" relationship between "former" Gentiles and those who "already" called themselves the chosen people of God.
4. The Jew and Gentile have come from very different places, but they are traveling to the same destination.

C. Don't take credit

(1) It's Not just lip service!

(a) It's Word AND Deed

1. "For **I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—** in mighty **signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit** of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to

Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

Romans 15:18-19 NKJV

2. This is why Paul had to “get away alone” for so long!
 - a) He had to sort through what his encounter with Y’shua meant relative to his previous faith, his new faith, and the faith of these new Gentile converts.
 - b) In his own life, he had to move from self-determination based obedience to grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience, so he could deliver an authentic message about what that looked like to all people, both Jew and Gentile.
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 - d) In fact, he would boast only in his weakness and infirmity and count everything that he had gained on his own a loss!
 - e) That does not mean you don’t take action with your faith in mind. Faith is in word and deed. Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves because faith without works is dead.

- f) Make this your witness so you can also expect the Gentiles to become obedient to the faith, otherwise your testimony is hypocrisy.
- g) The initial message to the Gentiles is “Christ Crucified” and then stand back and watch the Holy Spirit move in signs and wonders.
- h) But, then the message changes as God’s people are called to move from childhood in the faith (weakness) to adulthood in the faith (maturity), as the Holy Spirit partners with human initiative.
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D. Now, Go!

- (1) One Final Time: Why the Bible was Written
 - (a) Paul again returns to his favorite Prophet.

1. **“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written: **“To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand.”**”**

Romans 15:20-21 NKJV

2. Paul wants to drive home a message.
 - a) Go where you have not gone before. Preach the Gospel in places no one has heard of Jesus.
 - b) Besides, there is no other foundation that anyone can lay than that which is laid in Jesus Christ.
 - c) This is the third time he has called upon the same chapter in Isaiah. In Romans 2 Paul quotes Isaiah 52:5. And again in Romans 10 he quotes Isaiah 52:7.
 - d) And it would seem that he is teaching us that the testimony will first come from Jerusalem. That aligns with Isaiah’s prophecy.
 - e) Yes, Paul says “from Jerusalem” and beyond I preached this message. I was called to lay down new tracks where “no man has gone before.”
 - f) It’s Isaiah’s revelation in Isaiah 52:15

- g) This is a new revelation added to his existing knowledge “from Jerusalem.” They must get it right first, and from there the entire world will say, “Yahweh reigns!”

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. Utilize the sermon notes and sermon video for Romans 15:1-21 to write an detailed essay addressing the following verse:

- A. “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4 NKJV
- B. Your essay should address two main topics:
- 1) How what was written before influenced the doctrine Paul is teaching in Romans 15, and how it relates to the main theme in Romans 14.
 - 2) How what was written before informs the life you live today as a Christian.
- C. Your essay should be between 2000 and 5000 words!