

“Christ Our Example”
Romans 15:1-33
6/11/23
Message 29

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Christ Our Example”
- **Chapter 15 picks up where 14 left off**
 - **Regarding...**
 - Strong & Weak Christians...
 - Walk in UNITY
 - **Review - Last Two Week – The Subject of UNITY – Majoring On Majors - Not Minors**
 - **1st Unity Has Been a Problem forever**
 - In the OT –
 - It records the civil wars and family fights among the people of Israel!
 - In the NT –
 - Almost every local church mentioned in the New Testament had divisions to contend with
 - **2nd The Problem Today – Romans 14**
 - **Christians Dividing over EATING MEAT**
 - Some found eating meat to be a wrong other thought it was okay
 - **Non-Essentials**

- Facebook / Social-Media
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Etc...

▪ **NOTE – There are Essentials – That DO DIVIDE**

- PLEASE NOTE
- The RIGHT way to JUDGE (Matthew 7)
- Wrong is still wrong
- There are things in Scripture that are non-negotiable.
- There are some things that are just plain wrong.

1 Corinthians 6:9–10 (NKJV)

9 *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,*
10 *nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

- People whose lives are characterized by these things won't be in heaven.

▪ **At the CORE of ALL DIS-UNITY**

- PRIDE
- SIN
- At the center of both the words sin and pride... “I”

○ **3rd We MUST Strive to Maintain UNITY**

- **REMEMBER - REAL Unity – Not Man Made Unity**

- What is Unity?
 - The Fundamentals
- Unity is not uniformity
 - Unity comes from within
 - Uniformity from without!

- **There is no doubt about the importance which God's Places on UNITY**

- (Psalm 133 / John 17:20-21 / 1 Cor 12)

- **4th Determine Not To Be A Source Of Stumbling vs. 13-23**

- Put your liberties in the back seat – live for Christ and others

- **Now this morning we will look at 3 Powerful Truths in “Christ Our Example”**

- Paul's Exhortation To Be LIKE Christ vs. 1-13
- Paul's Example in Ministry vs. 14-21
- Paul's Expectation To Go To Rome vs. 22-33

Paul's Exhortation To Be LIKE Christ vs. 1-13

- **First: Care and Concern for Others v. 1**

- **1st We then who are Strong v. 1a**

Romans 15:1 (NKJV)

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

- **STRONG =**

- Those who can enjoy certain Liberties (Non-Essential)

- Like eating meat offered to idols

▪ **WEAK =**

- Those that are stumbled by those who enjoy certain Liberties (Non-Essentials)
- They eat vegetables because they can't eat meat offered to idols

▪ **SO - If you consider yourself STRONG**

- Use your strength to serve your brothers in Christ –
 - Instead of using your “strength” just to please yourself.
 - You could translate this phrase,
 - *“We who are strong ought to carry the weaknesses of those who are not strong”*
- HOW

- Scruples = Weakness / Infirmities

Romans 15:1 (NASB95)

1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

Romans 15:1 (KJV 1900)

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

- By Kind & Loving
- To Bear –
 - Greek: Bastazo –

- Means: To take up with the hands; to take up in order to carry or bear, to put upon one's self (something) to be carried
- The word is used in

Galatians 6:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

○ **2nd And not to please ourselves v. 1b**

Romans 15:1 (NKJV)

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

▪ **To Please –**

- This is going to be one of the key words in our passage.
 - We'll see it pop up 3 times
- Greek: Aresko
- Means: To please; to accommodate one's self to the opinion's desires and interests of others

▪ **Lesson**

- NOT to PLEASE ourselves
 - My rights
 - My Liberties
 - My Life
 - My....
- This goes against our times – Against the wisdom of today's world

- Which counsels us to “look out for number 1”
- To despises those who live lives of real sacrifice for the sake of others.
- Paul points the way to true happiness and fulfillment in life –
 - Get your eyes off of MY (Yourself)
 - Start building up others and you will find yourself built up
 - Truly the TRUTH and I have found it to be so personal
 - The GREATEST happiness in life comes from “JOY”
 - Jesus, Others, You

• **Second: Let each of us please his neighbor v. 2**

Romans 15:2 (NKJV)

2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.

- **1st Let each of us please his neighbor for his good:**
 - **What it DOES NOT mean**
 - Paul does not mean being a “man-pleaser”
 - Such a person may want to please his neighbor, but not for his neighbor’s good.
 - We can’t change our morals / character to please men
 - **True Meaning –**
 - Look out for Others

Philippians 2:1–4 (NKJV)

- 1** *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,*
2 *fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*
3 *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*
4 *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

○ **2nd Leading to edification:**

▪ **To Edification –**

- Don't tear people down
- BUT Build UP

▪ **Sadly - Our world and yes even some Christians**

- Find it easier to tear each other down instead of building each other up

• **Third: Christ Our Example vs. 3-4**

○ **1st For even Christ did not please Himself v. 3a**

Romans 15:3 (NKJV)

3 **For even Christ did not please Himself;** *but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”*

- Others First
- Jesus is the ultimate example of one who did not please Himself

Philippians 2:5–11 (NKJV)

5 *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*
6 *who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,*

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,
11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

○ **2nd As it is written v. 3b**

Romans 15:3 (NKJV)

3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

▪ **1st It is Written**

- This is also a KEY Word in our text
 - 3 times in 2 verses
- Taking us Back to the OT
 - What was written

Psalm 69:7 (NKJV)

7 Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face.

▪ **2nd The Reproaches**

- As Jesus took abuse and suffered wrong for God's glory
- He fulfilled what was written in God's word

▪ **3rd Christ our Example**

- A model for us

- We don't need vindicate ourselves, instead we should let God vindicate us.
- Jesus showed how the Father is well able to vindicate us.
- **3rd For Whatever things were Written v. 4**

Romans 15:4 (NKJV)

4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

- **Note 4 things**

- **1st Things Written / Scriptures**

- Clearly a reference to the OT

- We need the whole Bible to make a whole Christians

- Bears repeating, we can't discount from the OT

- Strongly encourage you to come Wednesday nights

- Hosea – We see the parallels today

- **2nd Purpose for the WORD**

- **1st Learning –**

- Greek: Didaskalia
 - Teaching, instruction
 - The Bible Teaches
 - Who God is –

- Who man is outside of God
- What Jesus can do for Souls that believe in Him

- **2nd Patience –**

- Greek: Hupomone
- Means: (“under” + “to remain”) – steadfastness, endurance; the characteristic of a person who doesn’t change direction, even the greatest trials

- **3rd Comfort –**

- **Greek: Paraklesis**
- Means: Exhortation, encouragement; urging to action.
- Note John 15:16

John 14:16 (NKJV)

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

- **4156 παράκλητος (paraklētos), ου (ou), ό (ho): n.masc.; ≡ Str 3875; TDNT 5.800—1. LN 12.19 the Helper, Counselor, Encourager, Mediator (Jn 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7+); 2. LN 35.16 helper, assistant (1Jn 2:1+)**

- **4th Hope –**

- Greek: Elpis
- Means: Expectation of good
- Hope is our goal. Hope is what we all want.
 - Paul gives us a formula that looks like this:

- Learning + Patience + Comfort = hope

- **Lessons**

- **1st Learning**

- Learn the Hard way or the Easy way
- Learning lessons from those that have already gone before us
- We can study the OT and learn from Israel's Mistakes (1 Cor 10:1-13)

1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

- **2nd Patience –**

James 1:2–4 (NKJV)

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- **3rd Comfort –**

- Let it comfort you.
- Let it encourage you.
- Let it urge you to action

Psalms 34:18 (NKJV)

18 The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

- **4th Hope -**

- If you do the first 3 - The Result is Hope

- **Third: A Prayer to God For Help vs. 5-6**

- **1st Now may the God v. 5**

Romans 15:5 (NKJV)

5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,

- **The God of Patience and Comfort**

- Our God is a God of patience.
 - We are often in such a hurry and God often seems to work too slowly for us.
 - Often the purposes of God seem to be delayed but they always are fulfilled.
 - God's delays are not His denials, and He has a loving purpose in every delay.

- Comfort Knowing He is Sovereign

- Like-minded – lit. “same minded”

- Learning to get along with each other
- When you Encounter a Strong Mature Believer –
 - It is Uncanny, Exceptional, Astounding, Astonishing and Supernatural how the minds are on the same page
 - Sadly, when you run into an Immature Believer this is not ten case

- **2nd That you may v. 6**

Romans 15:6 (NKJV)

6 *that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- The goal is to glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We accomplish that goal by having one mind and one mouth – by unity in our thinking and speech.

• **Fourth: Now May the God of Hope FILL YOU vs. 7-13**

○ **1st Therefore receive one another v. 7**

Romans 15:7 (NKJV)

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

▪ **Receive each other**

• JUST as Christ Received Us –

- In the terms of pure grace, knowing yet bearing with our faults.

▪ **Christ our Example**

• Just as Christ also Received US

• We were not perfect when Christ received us

• So why are we expecting each other to be perfect

- *Spurgeon; “Christ did not receive us because we were perfect, because He could see no fault in us, or because He hoped to gain somewhat at our hands. Ah, no! But, in loving condescension covering our faults, and seeking our good, He welcomed us to his heart; so, in the same way, and with the same purpose, let us receive one another.”*

○ **2nd Ministry Of Jesus vs. 8-12**

Romans 15:8–12 (NKJV)

8 *Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers,*

9 *and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: “For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name.”*

10 *And again he says: “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”*

11 *And again: “Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”*

12 *And again, Isaiah says: “There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope.”*

▪ **1st Context**

- In the next 6 verses the apostle reminds us
 - The ministry of Jesus Christ includes Jews and Gentiles
- The implication
 - That our hearts should also be big enough to include both

▪ **2nd As it is written:**

- Paul quotes a Series of Passages from the Old Testament
 - Semonstrating that God intends that the Gentiles praise Him.
 - So Instead of dividing over disputable matters, Jews and Gentiles should unite in Jesus over the common ground of praise.

Psalms 118:1-2 (NKJV)

49 *Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name.*

- David anticipates the day when the Messiah will sing praise to God in the midst of a host of Gentile believers.

Deuteronomy 32:43 (NKJV)

43 *“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people.”*

- The Gentiles are pictured as rejoicing in the blessings of salvation with His people Israel.

Psalms 117:1 (NKJV)

1 *Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!*

- Isaiah - The Gentiles to praise the LORD in the Millennial Reign of the Messiah.

Isaiah 11:1 (NKJV)

1 *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

Isaiah 11:10 (NKJV)

10 *“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.”*

- Isaiah adds his testimony to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the dominion of the Messiah
- The particular point here is that the Gentiles would share in the privileges of the Messiah and His gospel.
- **3rd Now MAY The God Of ALL Hope v. 13**

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

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

- **Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace:**

- As God fills us with the blessings of His joy and peace in believing, we are equipped to live in this common bond of unity God calls us to.

- **What God Gives us**

- **All JOY**

Nehemiah 8:10 (NKJV)

10 *Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

- **Peace**

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)

3 *You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*

- **Abound in Hope**

Psalms 147:11 (NKJV)

11 *The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.*

- **POWER of The Holy Spirit**

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

8 *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

- Power – Dunamis –

- Strength, power, ability.
- Power to be witnesses.
- Power to have hope.

Paul's Example in Ministry vs. 14-21

- **First: Paul's reason for writing vs. 14-16**

- **1st Able also to admonish one another v. 14-15**

Romans 15:14–15 (NKJV)

14 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.
15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,

- **Context**

- In the rest of chapter 15 Paul states his reason for writing to the Romans and his great desire to visit them.

- **Confident**

- Perfect Tense - "I Stand Convinced"
- That you are mature and able to receive and *admonish one another*
- He is confident that they will welcome his admonitions.

- **Boldly**

- Because of Paul's Calling by the Grace of God
- We need this boldness in the body of Christ today

- **2nd That I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles v. 16**

Romans 15:16 (NKJV)

16 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.

- **1st That the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable:**

- When the Gentiles live glorifying God
- Then their offering to God is acceptable
- Sanctified by the Holy Spirit –
- The necessity of such a sacrifice makes Paul's writing necessary.

• **Second: Paul glories in the work God has done through him vs. 17-19**

Romans 15:17–19 (NKJV)

17 *Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.*

18 *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—*
19 *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.*

- **1st Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus:**
 - It is not in his own accomplishments
 - But in what God has been pleased to do through him
- **2nd In word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient:**
 - God used mighty signs and wonders
 - To help Paul fully preach the gospel of Christ everywhere he went – from Jerusalem to Illyricum.

• **Third: Paul's desire to preach the gospel in new places vs. 20-21**

Romans 15:20–21 (NKJV)

20 *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,*
21 *but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."*

○ **1st Not where Christ was named:**

- Paul did not want to build on another man's foundation.
- Rather he wanted to do pioneer work for the Lord –

○ **2nd But as it is written:**

- Paul saw his pioneering heart as obedience to the Scriptures, fulfilling the passage he quotes from the Old Testament.

Paul's Expectation To Go To Rome vs. 22-33

• **First: Why Paul hasn't visited the Christians in Rome yet vs. 22-24**

Romans 15:22–24 (NKJV)

22 *For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you.*

23 *But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you,*

24 *whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while.*

○ **1st For this reason I also have been much hindered:**

- It was his great desire to do pioneer work that hindered him from coming to the Romans, though he did desire to see them.

○ **2nd Whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you:**

- Paul supposes that he will visit the Romans on a future trip to Spain, where Paul will preach the gospel on the frontiers.

○ **3rd For I hope to see you on my journey:**

- Paul had these plans; yet things did not work out according to his plans.
- He did go to Rome, yet not as a missionary on his way to Spain.

- He went to Rome as a prisoner awaiting trial before Caesar, where he would preach the gospel on a different kind of frontier.
- After his release from the Roman imprisonment at the end of the Book of Acts, we have reason to believe that Paul did in fact make it to Spain and preached the gospel there.

• **Second: Paul's present plans vs. 25-29**

Romans 15:25–29 (NKJV)

25 *But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.*

26 *For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.*

27 *It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.*

28 *Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.*

29 *But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

○ **1st But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints:**

- Paul thought he would stop in Corinth on his way to Jerusalem to deliver a collection from Christians in Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 20:1-3).

○ **2nd For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things:**

- The Gentile Christians of the broader Roman empire had received so much spiritually from the community of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem
- It was only right that they help the Jerusalem Christians in their need.

• **Third: Paul's plea for prayer vs. 30-33**

Romans 15:30–33 (NKJV)

30 Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me,
31 that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,
32 that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.
33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

○ **1st Strive together with me in prayers to God**

- Paul knew that danger awaited him in Jerusalem
 - Having been warned several times as recorded in Acts 20:22-23 and Acts 21:10-14
- Paul knew he needed the prayers
 - God's people to see him through the difficulty promised him.
 - Strive together with me:
 - The idea to PARTNER with him in ministry through their prayers.

Romans 15:30 (NLT)

30 Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:30 (NIV84)

30 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

Romans 15:30 (NET)

30 Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to join fervently with me in prayer to God on my behalf.

- *Smith; “Ministers need the prayers of their flocks. With Paul I urge you to strive in your prayers for your pastors. We need your prayers and we thank God for them. Pastors are sustained by the power of the Spirit through the support of their congregations.”*

Closing

- May we ALL GROW in LOVING the Body of Christ
- May We ALL GROW in Partnering (Praying)