

Romans 15:14-33

Romans Chapter 15 overview: Paul is changing the theme from considering other people first over yourself to the topic of the role and place of the Roman church and what Christianity is all about.

- 14 *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.* The Roman church is full of goodness and able to admonish (love each other, bring each other up in the spirit, raise each other's self esteem) one another.
- 15 *But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God,* I'm writing these things to you in love, be they positive or negative. In your Christian life you will be put upon to tell someone something that is not nice, but should be said in Christian love.
- 16 *that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.* Paul understood thoroughly that he is to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul reminds both the Jews and the Gentiles that offering up of the Gentiles is acceptable, and that the Gentiles are getting God's blessings as well. The Jews then and now believe they are the only chosen ones, not the Gentiles, and Paul has to remind them that there are chosen Gentiles as well. Everyone who has Jesus Christ in their heart act different than they did before, trying to behave nicer and kinder to everyone around them. We are not better than anyone else, only more serene.
- 17 *I have therefore my glorifying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God.* Paul is saying that any glory that comes from me is because Jesus Christ is working through me. I myself am to get no glory. Jesus Christ is using me as an instrument, working through me, and no man deserves glory.
- 18 *For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,* Paul says I want you to remember, the message to the Gentiles didn't come from me, it came from Jesus Christ. Don't put that to my account. The Gentiles were given a message by Peter and others from God.
- 19 *in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;* In those days, they didn't have the written word so they were working miracles (curing the sick, raising the dead, etc) to use as their credentials, and that disappeared after they got the written word because it wasn't needed anymore. *I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;* some preachers/teachers will get on one subject of the bible and not move off it. They will teach one topic only and not move on for their whole preaching career. The whole word of God needs to be taught.
- 20 *yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation;* Paul says I looked for areas where Christ's name wasn't ever heard before. Paul didn't want to follow behind others and repeat the same message.
- 21 *but, as it is written, They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, And they who have not heard shall understand.* God told the apostles to get away from Jerusalem and go spread the word.
- 22 *Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you:* We don't know what Paul was talking about here, but something was hindering him that he didn't tell us about. Something hindered Paul from getting to Rome to talk to the Roman church.
- 23 *but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you,* Paul makes a statement that his ministry is ending here and it's time for him to move on. People find it hard when preachers leave a church, but God moves people around to spread the word. People know when it's time to go – they get a great desire to leave.
- 24 *whenever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—* This is the same Spain of today.

- Paul says whenever he comes to Spain during his journey, he'll stop by and visit the Roman church on his way, and he hopes some of them will make the trip with him sometime.
- 25 *but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints.* Paul was headed to Jerusalem. This was his desire, to go to Jerusalem. A man told Paul, "If you go to Jerusalem, you're going to be bound." And that is exactly what happened. He went to Jerusalem as prisoner and not a free man. God wanted him there, even in chains.
- 26 *For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem.*
- 27 *Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things.* Great persecution of Christians was going on at that time. 2000 years later, the same thing is going on again. Israel has many Jews in poverty because the cost of living is enormous. There are many Gentiles in America sending gifts to the Jews in Israel to support them and help build hospitals and schools and such. The world as a whole does not like the Jewish people, but we as Christian Gentiles should pray for them and send gifts whenever we can.
- 28 *When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain.* After Paul has taken gifts to them, something he calls a fruit or love offering, after he does this, Paul is going to visit them on his way to Spain.
- 29 *And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.* When Paul does get to them in Rome, he will arrive with the full blessing of Christ. He did get there, but he was a prisoner. God used him, even in chains.
- 30 *Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; Beseech is a strong word that means I beg of you, listen.* Paul says I want you here in partnership with me, pray for me, and get in step with me.
- 31 *that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints;* Paul knew the attitude in Judea about him. They didn't like him and they followed him around and were stirring up trouble and got him arrested. Paul also had concerns about the Christians there. This is where he started, in this land of persecution. People wanted to kill him because they thought he was teaching a false religion.
- 32 *that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest.* Paul says when I get there with you, I want it to be joyful, and I want to have a good time having fellowship with you. When you go hang out with a group of Christians, it's great because you can share. When you go hang out with a group of seculars, you can spread the word.
- 33 *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*

Chapter 16 is an outflow of love that Paul has for these people. We will finish up the book of Romans next week.