

Roman 15:13

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[0 : 00] Turn to the book of Romans, chapter 15. And as you're doing that, let me say to those of you who are guests with us this morning, you probably have discovered, maybe shockingly, that we have the kids remain with us in the service.

I hope that's not been too much of a shock for you. We believe that it's of value to the family to meet together for worship. And we do have some amenities across the hall if you need a place to go. There's both video and sound over there. It's a place that you can let the kids be a little more loud versus over here. And we'd invite you to use that space if you feel that you need it. Also, I am not easily distracted.

So don't be too terribly concerned with little noises as far as I'm concerned. And I think the people around you will be very gracious to you as well. We've been working our way through the book of Romans.

We don't always but believe that the best form of preaching is verse-by-verse exposition. And we have found ourselves today in chapter 15 at verse 13.

[1 : 05] Let's read that together and then we'll pray. Romans 15, verse 13. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Let's pray. Father God, we do praise you this morning that by your grace we have been set free. That those of us who were once far off, which was all of us, have now been brought near through the blood of Christ.

And I pray, Lord, I plead that that's the case for everyone here this morning. That all of us have placed believing faith in Christ.

That the Spirit of God has regenerated our hearts. That we have been caused to love you. And I pray, Father, for those here who may not know you.

This will be the last day that that will be true of them. And for those that do, our hearts will be continually warm to the gospel. We might live in light of it. We will honor you with all that we do as we go about this next week.

[2 : 21] And we pray this in God's name. Amen. So Romans 15, 13. I'd say I've been incredibly sick this week.

I'm on antibiotics now. I'm feeling a little bit loopy. I'm actually going to work at keeping this brief this morning. As Paul does in his benedictory prayer.

His conclusion here at the end of what I would call his formal letter to the Romans. He certainly goes on beyond this. We have the rest of chapter 15 and all of chapter 16.

Which are really his closing remarks. The Romans. So this is the end, verse 13, of his formal letter. The case that he's been making to the believers in Rome.

And he ends it with a simple benediction. A prayer on their behalf. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. So that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

[3 : 19] And I want to just look at three observations. First, Paul's desired outcome for the believers in Rome. The means for the desired outcome. And the source of the means for that desired outcome.

So firstly, what is it that Paul wants to see happening in the lives of these Roman believers? He wants to see all joy and all peace and abounding hope in their lives.

So notice here that the word all, the adjective all here, is in the original text. And I would assume that all of your translations included. If it doesn't, you may not want to use the translation you're using any longer.

Because it is in fact in the original text. And all both applies to joy and peace. So Paul doesn't wish that they'll have just some joy.

A little measure of joy. A smidgen of joy. And some peace at times in their life. But he desires that they have all joy.

[4 : 22] And all peace. Sufficient measure for every aspect and part of their life. For any circumstance in their life. That they would have all joy.

And all peace. Which will lead them to so that they may have abounding hope. Again, not just a little bit of hope.

Not hope in times of trouble alone. But abounding hope. An overflowing hope. An extra measure of hope. That continues to flow and to flow and to flow.

An abiding hope. An abiding joy. An abiding peace. This is Paul's desire for the believers in Rome. So what then is the means for this desired outcome?

How is it that we have this type of peace? And this type of hope? And this type of joy? Right? It's by.

[5 : 24] The means is by our faith. Notice here that he says that you may have all joy and peace in believing. The means is our faith.

Faith in what? Faith in the promises of Scripture. Which speak of the person and the work of Christ. Recall contextually where we've just been.

He's given to us four Old Testament quotations from each of the four literary types of writing that we find in the Old Testament. To show to us that God's eternal purpose for the world was to make his name known not just among Israel, but amongst the world.

Right? To the nations. Paul uses here in these four references starting in verse 9 through 12 Gentiles. To show the Jewish believers here in Rome that it wasn't just them.

It was the Israelites and everyone else. So he has just talked about, beginning in verse 8, that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness.

[6 : 35] In order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs. And those are the quotes that we give here. So that the Gentiles will glorify God for his mercy.

If we back up beyond that, we see in verse 5 that the God of endurance encouragement would grant them to live in harmony with one another in accord with Christ Jesus.

Because of the encouragement of the Scriptures which give us hope in verse 4. So notice the flow and the connection that he's making here. So we're to have faith in what?

In the promises of Scripture which speak of the person and the work of Christ. We talked a little bit about some of the liberties that Paul seems to take with his Old Testament quotations.

And why it was certainly permissible for him to do so. In his inspiration, he quotes lastly here in verse 12. He says, The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles.

[7 : 33] In him will the Gentiles hope. And this is taken from Isaiah chapter 11 verse 10. Now I want you just to listen to it as you look at what's found in verse 12.

Okay? And notice the difference here. Isaiah 11 verse 10 reads, In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

A little bit different there. Am I right? A little prophecy on Isaiah's part. And here we see the way Paul quotes it as it's been fulfilled. So Paul, living in the days that the gospel has now been expanded beyond just the borders of Israel and has now gone out to the Gentiles, adds some commentary to it.

But he's also referencing Isaiah chapter 11 verse 1, which says, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

A sure promise of God given to us. And here, as he gives his commentary to it and quotes it differently, says, The root of Jesse will come, and in him will the Gentiles hope.

[8 : 47] A sure promise given to us. A promise that we can believe in. That we can place our faith in. If you've been following us and following Paul's argument all along here throughout the book of Romans, he's continually said to us that we're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

If I could just easily sum up the point, the treatise put forth in the book of Romans, it's that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

That's what he's been driving at us all along. Recall, we've spent now, I think, almost two years in the book of Romans, but this would have been read to the congregation. It would have taken about

an hour.

A good hour-long sermon read here. So let's just back up and look, just in one spot, Romans chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, to connect you back to what he's been saying all along here.

And I want to show you the beautiful connection to chapter 15, verse 13, about joy and peace and hope. Chapter 5, verse 1.

[10:01] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Okay, so notice the means. We have been justified by what?

By our faith. And now, as a result, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him, we have also obtained access by what? Again, the means, by faith, into this grace in which we stand.

And we rejoice, okay, which is an exaltation, a glory in, right, the result of the salvation, which is birthed out of joy. That's what the original language means.

Exaltation comes from joy in a reality. Okay, so there's joy again. And what do we rejoice in? Hope, right, of the glory of God. So you see the connection there.

So, the means by which these things come about is our faith, our belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

[11:01] It has nothing to do with our action. It has nothing to do with what we can earn of our own merit. Because anything that we can do, any attempt on our own, is as filthy rags, soiled garments to God, right?

It is by His grace through faith in Christ. Christ. And this is the means by which we have joy and peace and hope.

But how is it that we have this faith? How is it that we believe? And Paul tells us, quite frankly here, and simply, in chapter 15, verse 13, that it is by the power of the Holy Spirit.

He's not introducing this as a new idea. He turned to Romans chapter 8, verse 9. He says to the believers in Rome, you, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him. And again in verse 14, for all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

[12:18] So we see that the faith that works in us works in us by the Spirit. And as we were born, our hearts were hard. Our hearts were utterly devoid of the ability of believing in God.

Some people believe in a doctrine called pervenient grace, which is taught nowhere in the Scriptures, that there's somehow some shred of good remaining within us.

That's all that's good in us, but we have this little ability left to believe. The Bible teaches the opposite. The Bible teaches that we're dead in trespasses and sin. Not mortally wounded, not so sick we're about to die, but we're dead in our trespasses and sin.

Totally incapable of righteousness of any kind whatsoever. Until the Spirit of God comes into our lives, regenerates our hearts, and we believe.

There's much debate in Christendom about whether or not regeneration precedes faith, or if faith precedes regeneration. And I put forth to you that regeneration precedes faith.

[13:26] How exactly this all goes down, I don't fully understand, and I don't think it's ours to understand. But what we need to recognize is that this is the work of the Spirit of God in our hearts.

It's not our own doing. Ephesians 2, verse 8 and 9. If you struggle with the statements I just made, it says, For by grace you have been saved through faith.

For by grace you've been saved through faith. If we stop there, it would be very easy to say, I had faith, therefore I was given grace. Paul is careful to say, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God.

Referring to the faith, not the grace, as some would argue. It's referring to the faith. It is the gift of God, and it's given to us by the Spirit. It's not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

So none of us have any right, any claim to boast in our own action, any part in our own salvation. Our salvation was not synergistic, it was not a work of God, and we came alongside Him to accomplish it.

[14:36] It was fully a work of God. It was monergistic. He accomplished it in our hearts. If He didn't, we would have willingly rejected Him forever.

Willingly rejected Him. Our lives reflected this before Christ. Everything that we did was absolute, utter rejection of Him.

These doctrines are so key to our understanding of the Gospel. And our proper understanding of the Gospel, our belief in the promises of the Scripture, is what brings about all joy, and all peace, and abounding hope.

So that whatever circumstance you're in, whatever trouble you experience, whatever sins you commit as a believer, however desperate and dark and removed from God you may feel, you can remember the promises of God.

That the work of salvation is fully His work. That you have joy and peace and abounding hope. Because God is a God who is sure to keep His promises.

[15:51] It doesn't depend on you. It depends on Him. It's His work in our hearts. Praise Him forever and ever. As weak as I was just bouncing around, doing some reading, I'm going to come across a great quote from Martin Luther, who was a great champion of these doctrines.

Talked often about grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Lived in a day when the Catholic Church was teaching quite the opposite. They were selling indulgences. They were selling time out of hell for their family members.

That there were works that could be committed to gain heaven. And Martin Luther being troubled by this became a monk.

And as he continued to be troubled by how is it that I can do enough to gain righteousness? How is it that I could possibly achieve this holy standard that God has set?

They put him to work to keep him busy translating the book of Romans. What a bad move on the Catholic Church's part. And he began to see this.

[17:00] God revealed to him that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone and Christ alone. And we all know that Martin Luther was no great fan of the Pope and what the Pope was teaching and proposing.

And I say to you this day that there are many Christians who are claiming to have great hope in the new Pope. Right? He's going to be the champion of the poor.

Good. That is great. But as he stands he's still a liar until he begins to teach that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

And I hope that we'll be praying for him because he has the ability to see that and to do that and to influence billions with that truth. But listen to what Martin Luther said of the Pope of his time.

I can't remember who it was but in his commentary on Galatians. He said, If the Pope would concede that God alone by his grace through Christ justifies sinners we would carry him in our arms.

[18:02] We would kiss his feet. Now Martin Luther who was set up as this great enemy of the Pope said if the Pope would just concede that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone I'll carry him and kiss his feet.

Right? Because he would be a herald of this great truth. Right? So this is the means for these outcomes for having all joy all peace abounding hope is that we believe by the power of the Spirit in the gospel of God.

Does that seem too simple to you? Want me to now unpack all the ways that we practically carry this out in our lives?

How is it that we apply this type of truth? Right? We could go on and on and on about how this works out in our lives. The gospel is the answer to every one of our ills.

Right? It speaks to all of it. Let me just give you an example. Many of you this week probably became aware for the first time of a man named Kermit Gasnell I think I'm saying his last name right.

[19:18] Who operated in a legal abortion clinic in Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh. Yes. This story's been going on for quite a while. Right? It was shut down in 2011.

I don't share a lot of the things I follow with you. I've been keeping up with this story from the beginning and it has been wrenching at my heart for quite some time now. Many of you for the first time have seen these atrocities. Are becoming maybe for the first time aware of how horrible abortion actually is and the degree to which it's carried out.

But listen. Even in those things. Even as our heart breaks for the sinfulness of man. How horrible man is to commit such acts.

Right? We can have all joy and all peace and abounding hope because included in the gospel of Jesus Christ is the fact that he will return and he will make all things right.

He has a perfect and a sovereign plan that it's his work and not our work being accomplished. That he will in fact make it all right and new one day.

[20 : 32] So the gospel ministers to my soul as it breaks for these conditions and these situations these things that are going on as I long to do something radical to change things.

As I want to be involved in making this world a better place in saving those who can't save themselves the gospel ministers to my heart because I know that these promises are sure that God is a good God that God is working out his sovereign plan that he is fully in control I can believe in those things and have joy and peace and abounding hope.

Now notice I find in this text maybe you don't maybe this is the first time you've been thinking about it but the order seems a little bit backwards to me because he says that he hopes he will be filled with by the God of hope with all joy and peace so that will have hope and it seems to me that the hope would precede having joy and peace that having hope in God believing in the promises of God would then lead to us having joy and peace and as I began to ponder this my mind was pulled back to our context and I recalled back up at the end of verse 4 Paul says that through the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope right so that's where he began talking about where the source is and then he says and I think very cleverly intentionally says may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace and believing and so we see that

I believe here that it's a cycle that's what he's trying to say to us that having hope in the promises of God makes us sanctified in him regenerates us brings to us joy and peace as we believe which births more hope right because it's evidence of the fact that we are his that we're found in him the fact that when we go through difficult times in our lives and we can have joy and peace in those times shows us that we do in fact rest in the promises of God that we do hope in the promises of God and it births more hope right it's like a perpetual wheel of joy peace and hope right and the axle of which is our belief that term abounding in hope to abound in it means that it goes on and it goes on and it goes on and here's the cycle which we find ourselves in listen beloved the Christian life is not an easy life that promise is never given to us in fact quite the opposite is given to us he said we'll be persecuted for our faith it's not an easy life but it is a simple life it's a life of believing being filled with joy and peace in believing the gospel of Jesus

Christ and then abounding in hope and I think that the trouble is that when we don't have joy and we don't have peace and we don't abound in hope is that we look to the world for the answers we look to pop psychology to the answers we look to some pulpits that aren't giving us the real answer to where these things come from and we fail to look to the gospel we fail to behold Christ on the cross on our behalf we fail to recognize the fact that he's promised to return he will complete the work we get distracted by this world and we fail to look at the simple source of all of these things and that is the person and work of Jesus Christ so we see the desired outcome here and we see now the means for that desired outcome what is the source then of the means for the desired outcome what is the source simply he begins verse 13 by saying may the

[24 : 46] God of hope our God is the God of hope who reigns over hope who is the source of all hope our God the great I am the one who exists apart from any other exterior circumstance from any other control the one that everything plugs into but he plugs into nothing he is self existent he is the God of hope the source of all this of our joy and our peace and our abounding hope so we could read verse 13 this way the God of hope fills us with all joy and all peace which leads to abounding hope by working in us faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ by the power of the

Holy Spirit this is the way that Paul decides to conclude the formal part of his letter to the Romans that their lives would look like this and he's not suggesting that their lives don't already look like this that God's not already accomplishing this in them but it's his prayer that he will continue to carry that out that that will continue to go that cycle will run notice in verse 14 he says I myself am satisfied about you he's seeing already this progression in their lives this great work of God he's confident that the work that God began in them will be completed back in Romans chapter 8 we can see that he knows that the things that God begins he finishes from the beginning to the end we're secure in God's hand he knows that this will take place and this is his desire that their lives will be flavored with joy and peace and with abounding hope and it's my prayer for us this day the benediction for you at the closing of this service that the

God of hope will fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope let's pray together