

Romans 15:7-13

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[0:00] Good morning to everyone. Join me in your copy of God's Word in the book of Romans. We're getting closer and closer to finishing this wonderful book we've been working through! Today we'll be in Romans chapter 15, starting in verse 7.

But as I usually like to do a really quick recap. But throughout most of Paul's letter, he's been establishing the strong biblical and doctrinal foundations of our salvation and our redemption in Christ.

And very important, like if you ever want like a legal argument for our salvation, it is the book of Romans. That's like what you want to take in your heart and in your soul to God's court one day. It is a wonderful, wonderful arguments for our salvation all from the Word of God. And so in these latter chapters, chapter 12 all the way up to chapter 15 here, Paul is working out the practical gospel implications of everyday living.

Like what does saving grace look like in the life of believers in light of all that God has done for us? Namely, what he's written about up until this point.

[1:20] All these wonderful things about salvation, redemption, justification, reconciliation, all these wonderful things that Christ has brought to us. Therefore, live this way.

And in fact, what I would argue is these are just as important chapters as the ones who have gone before. They're linked because your ability to and desire to live out these things kind of display what you actually believe about the first few chapters.

So in light of these things, we live a certain way to glorify God. And last week we talked about verses chapter 15, 1 through 6, which Paul calls the strong believers, the mature believers, those who are further along in their relationship with Christ, to bear with the failings of the weak believers. We talked about that at length last week. To seek to please your brethren as Christ did. And with the help of God, the scripture, be patient so that you will with one mind and mouth glorify God. That was sort of where we were last week. And where we're going today in verses 18 through 13, Paul gives us more reasons for accepting one another by showing mutual acceptance, not just between the strong and the weak, but Jew and Gentile.

[2:50] I know it may feel like Paul has beaten this to death in Romans, but he continues to, and there's a reason why he does. To show mutual acceptance between Jews and Gentiles is an essential outworking of God's great plan of salvation throughout history.

One commentator wrote, Paul sets the local conflict in Rome against the panorama of salvation and history in order to stimulate them to obedience.

So Paul is holding up these Jews and Gentiles in Rome who are in danger of falling out of fellowship with one another because of differences. And he brings them together, pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished.

So let's read our text today. Romans 15, starting in verse 7. Connecting it to last week. Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

[4:04] As it is written, Therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing to your name. And again, it said, Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.

And again, praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let the peoples extol him. And again, it says, The root of Jesse will come, even one who arises to rule the Gentiles.

In him would the Gentiles hope. 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 with me. Lord, so much in your word for us to treasure. I pray that your word would be applied to my heart and the hearts of all who are here, that you would have your desired effect, that your word would pierce, your word would convict and challenge and encourage and build up, exhort, that you would just have your way during this time.

In Christ's name, amen. So we're going to walk through this with four points. Didn't have five for you. Just four. So point number one, how we can walk through this text together, is receive one another in Christ.

[5:35] It's verse 7. Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God. And Paul understands, just like we see today, that division in the church is a stain on the gospel.

Like true division in the church, fighting among true believers. And so this verse is the summary verse of the ones that he just talked about before.

So welcome means to accept, to receive with the utmost special concern. It's used in Acts 28 when Paul was shipwrecked off the coast of Malta. And it says that the native people showed us unusual, extraordinary kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold.

So show one another this extraordinary, unusual kindness that goes beyond what normally is expected. Paul calling all believers to live in unity with not just the strong, the weak, the immature, the mature, the Jew, the Gentile.

He's calling all of them to love and welcome, to receive one another with the utmost concern. So why are we to do this? It's far easier, even as believers sometimes, just to ignore those people that get on our nerves, or ignore people that we have minor differences with, just to disassociate from believers that we have those disagreements with.

[7:12] But why are we to have the utmost concern for our fellow believers? Paul gives us the answer, because of all that God has done for us in Christ.

So, a question for us. What does your willingness to accept and be patient with other true Christians reveal about your own faith in Christ, and your understanding of the Gospel?

What does your willingness to accept and love one another reveal about your understanding of the Gospel, or lack thereof? We have to be reminded of this. Paul constantly is reminding us, don't forget where you once were, and where Christ has brought you from.

I have just one place for you to turn today, outside of our main text, but keep your hand in Romans, and look at Titus chapter 3. Titus chapter 3.

One of those great Gospel passages. Titus chapter 3, verse 3. Paul wrote, So, do not forget that.

[8:42] That's where we all once were. Even if you quote, were a good person before you became a Christian. The book of Romans has thoroughly proven that no one is good.

We all lived this way. This is once who we were. Separator from God. And then verse 4. That great word. But, when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration, renewal of the Holy Spirit.

So, never forget where you come from, that we all have our common origin in sin. That's what brings us together in one way. And the other way is to remember that we have been brought out of that together by the mercy of God.

His mercy alone. We're never to let that grow old in our minds. So, we're to welcome one another, to accept, to show the utmost concern for our fellow believers.

Your willingness and mind to accept others in the body correlates directly to your understanding and faith of how God has graciously accepted you in Christ.

[10:06] Do you see that? It's connected. If you aren't able and unwilling to love and accept others, especially the ones that are hard to deal with sometimes, Christ says it's easy to love those who love you.

So, that idea, if you fail to do that, that shows you, it reveals that your understanding of the Gospel is weak.

Right? That's what this reveals. So, welcome one another in Christ. Spurgeon wrote about this passage, Christ did not receive us because we were perfect, or because He could see no fault in us, or because He hoped to gain something from us, not at all.

But, in loving condescension, He covered our faults and sought our good. He welcomed us into relationship with Him. So, in the same way, and with the same purpose, we as Christians must receive one another.

So, does your willingness to love and receive others in the church reflect the faith of the One who has welcomed us unto Himself? That's what is important to remember.

[11:20] So, failure to accept or welcome one another in love and compassion is an affront to the Savior who has welcomed us. I hope you can see that.

At the very least, this indicates our immaturity, if we're unwilling to do that. Maybe we're the weak that Paul just spoke of. And at the very most, it might lead us to question our own standing with God if we have no regard for our fellow believers.

So, in conclusion, the strong, the weak, the Jew, the Gentile, are exhorted to accept one another, for they have been graciously accepted by God in Christ.

Even though we were sinners, even though we were separated, He's welcomed us. And such mutual acceptance brings, look at the end of that verse, great glory to God.

Look, nothing else matters, alright? Nothing else matters. Like, if you fail to grasp the concept of God's glory, then you're lost. You are lost.

[12:22] You will never understand the Word of God and what the purpose of history is. My glory fades. Yours fades. And a few generations will probably all be forgotten.

There's many people, being a history guy, I can name a whole list of names, and most of you would have no idea who they are. Most people. And they did great things in their time. Our glory is fading like the flower of the field.

And this life is brief, but the glory of God remains forever. Nothing else matters. And so he's saying, your unity, your ability to love and accept one another, is one of these ways that brings great glory to God.

point number two. Point two. Christ has fulfilled God's promises to save the nations.

Christ has fulfilled God's promises to save the nations. Verse eight. It goes on. For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs.

[13:33] So there's one of those startling phrases. A phrase that confused many people in his own time. Christ came as a servant. He was the suffering servant that Isaiah spoke of 700 years before Christ came on the scene.

He was the servant who would act wisely and be exalted. Jesus, when he was with his disciples, he said, even the son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10, 45. So who did he come to serve? In one regard, all of us. Yes. But what is Paul referring to in this instance? To whom?

Christ came to serve, came as a Jew to serve the circumcised. And he's just referring to the Jewish people there. Thus demonstrating God's truthfulness. That word means faithfulness, trustworthiness.

He's demonstrating that and keeping his promises of redemption that he had made to the patriarchs, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. He had promised them.

[14:45] And in displaying this immense faith by showing his willingness to obey God, even to the point of sacrificing his own son, Isaac, after that happened, God said to Abraham in Genesis 22, it's one of those verses you've got to like, it's one of those verses that you use to read the rest of the Scripture a lot of the time.

You see like God fulfilling this promise. Genesis 22, verse 17, God said to Abraham, I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore.

Your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.

So this promise was reiterated multiple times. It continued to Isaac in Genesis 26 and it continued to his son Jacob in Genesis 28.

So in fulfilling God's saving promises to them, God's truthfulness, His faithfulness has been upheld. It's been established for all time.

[15:59] God's track record in keeping His Word is flawless. And I hope that comforts you in our troubling days. He is a perfect promise keeper.

It may not seem like it comes when you want it to, or when we think it should come. It comes when it's supposed to, in God's perfect ordained time. And so, in fulfillment of God's promise, many, many Jews, not all, but many, would come to repent of the sin, believe in Christ as the Messiah, and as the days go by, eventually even more and more will do that.

But this was a reminder for the Gentiles to be humbly reminded that even their faith came in a way through the Jewish people.

And so they are to welcome their Jewish believers in Rome, where they are. So it was a reminder to them. So, it came through the patriarchs. God fulfilled His Word.

Point number three. Christ brought praise and glory to God for His mercy. Verses 9-12. Christ brought praise and glory to God for His mercy.

[17:16] Look at verse 9. In an order, so that, right, in order, that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.

As it is written, therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing to your name. And again, it is said, rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people again and again. Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol Him.

And again, Isaiah says, the root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles, and Him will the Gentiles hope. So, furthermore, right, Christ came as a servant to the Jews, but furthermore, for the purpose of bringing blessing and salvation to the Gentiles.

what Paul described in chapter 11, verse 11. As Jewish Christians in Rome heard this, they were being reminded to remember this, to accept and fully welcome their Gentile brothers and sisters who were in Rome, which might be hard for them.

Think about that, them, and subdued them. Now, they're in Rome, and they're being told, hey, don't look on Him as that person. Look at Him as a brother in Christ.

[18:39] Look at them with love and compassion, like you belong to the same family now. And it was foretold of old, as you see here, the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.

So, great words spoken by, you know, the ancient prophet. Even those words that ring true even for us today who are sitting here.

1 Peter 2, 10. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

If you're a Gentile today, which I'm just going to assume is most of us, the majority of us, if you recognize that God's showing you mercy was for the purpose of being glorified, to bring glory to His great name, to live for Him daily, and to make everyday choices that reflect His greatness.

And so, as usual, this is testified in the Scripture, and man, this is one of those times where Paul just like lays it on thick. I remember I like killed a baby copperhead with a huge load of my shotgun.

[19:57] It wasn't there anymore once I shot it. It was just gone. This is kind of what Paul desires to do here. He's like, in case you have any doubt, I'm going to lay it on thick to prove to you that this is what God was doing all along.

And I'm going to give you four, not just one, but four Old Testament passages. And how about this? How about one from each part of the writings too? Like each section of the Old Testament.

Taking one quotation from each of his part and just lay it on thick. Like, here's one of your Bible study tools. Look at this. As it is written, and then you go a little further, he says, and again. And then he says it again.

And again. And again. That's how he begins like each verse. He's like, alright, I'm going to lay it on thick. Don't miss this. So look how many times he's saying that God foretold.

This has always been his plan. That the Gentiles would glorify him and praise him for his great salvation over and over and over again. That's what Paul is trying to say.

[20:58] This should be no surprise to you. And this should make you marvel. In verse 9, he takes one from the former prophets, the older prophets.

From 2 Samuel 22.50. Therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing to your name. So God's great salvation would lead the Gentiles to nations singing songs of deliverance and great praise to God.

Describe the greatness due his name. Right? Verse 10. Now he takes one from the law. The Torah. He's like, well, okay, how about this part of our scripture?

And he goes to Deuteronomy 32.43. Rejoice, O Gentiles, and don't miss this, with his people. So, such a great redemption from sin, darkness, and hell leads to the Gentiles rejoicing and celebrating on behalf of God's saving mercy.

And then it says, with his people. So do this with the Jews. You see that? Like he's adding this in, like, with the salvation that the Jews can already have, the Gentiles will come alongside them as one people.

[22:16] One united people redeemed. And that they will rejoice. Great celebration over God's saving mercy along with those who are Jews.

Verse 11. He takes this from the poetry, the writings. Psalm 117, which I found out interestingly is supposed to be like the very middle verse of your entire Bible.

That's kind of interesting. I don't think Paul was thinking about that, but, like, that's the middle of the whole Bible. This is one verse. If you, like, cut it all up and all that.

But Psalm 117, it says, Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let the peoples extol Him. So all the nations, everybody together now, bless the Lord, bless His grace, extol Him, give Him law, right? And then, like, in the Old Testament. So, like, in case you've lost this, like, I'm going to, like, pick one right out of Isaiah for you, right? And he says, this is from Isaiah 11, verse 10, The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles, and him will the Gentiles hope.

[23:30] And, right before that, just by way of reminder, in verse 9, previously, he says, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. That's what Isaiah foretold.

So that promise, the root of Jesse, Jesse was David's father, through David, right? Would be the one to whom all the nations would gather, and He would rule them in strength, in justice, in faithfulness, in love, in truth.

The Messiah's resting place will be glorious. And all Gentiles, as Paul's addressing this, should humbly be reminded that their own salvation stems from that Jewish root.

That's 1118. These are the right and proper responses to what God has done by redeeming us and saving us. But do you realize, you have to think about this daily.

I try to and fail to, but there was a time that you were cut off from God, separated because of your sin. Think about Romans 5.

[24:39] Do you see that you once were on the outside of that saving knowledge that Israel possessed? That doesn't mean all Israel was saved, but it means that Israel possessed at least the ability and the knowledge to know God because God had manifested Himself to them.

Think of Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well. He said, you Samaritans worship whom you do not know. We Jews worship who we do know because salvation is from the Jews. That's what he's trying to say. Like, God showed us who He was and we were to be a witness to the rest of the world. Like, He's reminding these Gentiles that they are connected to them.

And so, we once were not a people. We were cut off of that knowledge, but now, do you realize that salvation has come to the nations? What does that do to your soul this morning?

Ephesians 2 reads this. Paul is reminding them, remember that you once at one time were separated from Christ. Like, there's only darkness and death and agony away from Christ.

[25:47] And he says, alienated or estranged from the commonwealth of Israel. You see that? The connections here? And the strangers to the

covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

But now, in Christ Jesus, you who are once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. So rejoice. If you are a Gentile, you should never forget that God has chosen by His mercy to include us in His great salvation.

And this would result in the praise of His great name. So in summary, these passages prove that the whole of Scripture testifies to the inclusion of the Gentiles into God's uniting, saving purposes to bring one nation under Him.

Every kind of person, every kind of nation and tongue under His sovereign rule for the purpose of bringing great glory to His name. So if the believers in Rome, or if even we today truly understand this, what God is doing throughout redemptive history, this will make those little minor, puny, pathetic disagreements we have in the church just pale in comparison.

We have so much more in common. If you truly are in Christ, you have more in common with anybody. Even if they might share a different political view, if they share a different skin color, this is what unites us all.

[27:16] That Scripture right out of Galatians 3, 28 is what Paul is trying to say. Look, there's neither Jew or Greek. There's neither slave nor free. There is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3, 28. It's that you have all things in common if you are in Christ with your fellow believer. And you should dwell on those things.

Recognize what God is trying to do here. Look at what Jews and Gentiles hated each other. Do you understand that? Like the animosity was there? Like you think that we have differences today? Not much in comparison to how they felt back then.

But God's desire is to reach the nations for His glory. And recently, I was just reading some from Voice of the Martyrs and ran across this story from a man named Waleed.

And he's from India. and he grew up in the Muslim part of India and was recognized very early as this guy's smart, this guy's gifted.

[28:23] We're going to get him to be an Islamic scholar. So they sent him away to Mecca to study the Quran. He became just a great teacher.

He was there for four years, fully paid for, and he became a sheikh. He was an Islamic teacher that taught at one of the mosques. And he wore the white robe and had great dignity and respect of the culture.

He said, at that time, I was very proud and I thought that I was just like the best person ever. And here's what's interesting. Because he was a scholar, he was reading the Quran and he got to the part of the Quran that talks about Jesus.

And he recognized there was just something tremendously different about Jesus that just struck him, the details. It talks about how the man who does these things that Jesus is being spoken of, he is incomparable.

This is from the Quran. He is incomparable because no other prophet written about in the Quran is doing those things. So he was just mind blown by Surah 19:33.

[29:31] You can look that up. But he dealt deeper into the Quran and just trying to figure out who Jesus was. And he started asking his fellow sheiks like, we should probably pay more attention to this.

What does this actually mean about Jesus? As someone who does the things that he does is supposed to be incomparable. Like, what about him? So they began kind of blowing off his questions and eventually got to be kind of hostile towards him.

They didn't have any good answers and eventually they started turning away from him and he said, they started to hate me and at one point they ambushed him and attacked him and threw stones at him and the shrieper just inquiring more about Jesus.

But he says, this served only to drive me closer to Christ. After the attack, I prayed to Jesus for the first time. His prayer was just simply, Jesus, if you are above and you see how I am, please help me.

And eventually he was kicked out and rejected and he kind of fled his community and he sought Christians. He's like, I've got to find Christians to tell me about Jesus and oddly enough he fled to Ethiopia and wasn't able to find many people even there to tell him who Jesus was and answer the

questions he had.

[30:51] But eventually he began to read the Bible and he says that the Bible greatly increased his knowledge of salvation and he kind of wrote something he said, I know everything on earth shall pass away but God's word will never pass away.

I am learning more and I love to learn. And as he became a believer and he got connected to the church and began to see where he had come from, he says, when I came to Christ, I lost my position, my health, my job, my community and my family but God gave me double now I am so blessed.

So meaning it sounds like what Jesus told his disciples like when they're like we've sacrificed so much to follow you and he goes no one has sacrificed to follow me they will not be repaid right? And so now he has shifted his focus to reaching young Muslims with the gospel and this is what he said and this ties into what we're reading about in Romans I believe I have a responsibility I remember the reason I am saved is to be his witness I live for his glory to witness his glory to the unreached people that's what he said so even today this is being carried out and I hope that that challenges you in the busy but often comfortable and easy life that we can have he says I'm here I'm saved to be a witness to bear witness to the glory of God especially to the unreached peoples in conclusion our last and fourth point Paul gives us a benedictory prayer of intercession in verse 13 he goes back to prayer and he says may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace and believing so that by the power of the Holy

Spirit you may abound in love and so back to prayer he's praying to the God of hope so hope here is the link word to verse 12 if you can see that in the passage as we just saw that before Christ he says remembered that you were separated alienated we just read that in Ephesians having no hope in the world and without God that's what we just read in Ephesians 2 but praise the Lord he is both the source of hope right and the supplier of hope it comes from him Paul is trying to say something about the character of God not just that God has some hope in his pocket like money and he just goes like that he's saying that he really is he in himself is hope and then if we flee to him we will have that hope biblical hope is this joyful confident expectation!

[33:58] God will bring about it's not wishful thinking and just hoping that things turn out well it is a grounded act of faith for us to hope in God so then he asks because we're weak Paul asks you look at the verse the power of the Holy Spirit to pour out to graciously feel right his people with this divine hope joy and peace he expresses his deep desire for all believers to have complete satisfaction in our beloved savior who makes us all one people so in conclusion we are to welcome to accept to show the utmost special concern for our fellow believers that stands out from a world of sin and selfishness and in light of that magnificent providential plan of

God Jews can have no grudge against Gentiles because their calling was to reach the Gentiles for the salvation and glory of the Lord and on the other hand Gentiles can have no grudge against Jews because again it was through the Jews that God had brought that salvation so he concludes right going back to where he began therefore welcome one another as Christ is welcome to you for the glory of God so I want you to think about how this has a bearing on your soul this reflects what you truly believe about the gospel if we very least is just very weak our understanding of what Christ has done is weak so I pray this morning that we will grow in our understanding and knowledge of what Christ has done for us like man he has given us everything I pray that would fuel you and give me the strength to love those who are around us particularly those who are difficult like myself to love sometimes so let's pray!