Romans

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Introduction:

A. When Paul took up the practical part of the epistle to the Romans, the emphasis on love, peace, and unity is significant, which can be seen from 12:3 to 15:33.

B. Knowing the membership at Rome was part Jews and part Gentiles, he spent considerable time, including part of this chapter dealing with Christian liberty (14:1 – 15:7).

C. For more about Christian liberty.

D. For a great deal more about Christian liberty … Christian Liberty Expanded.

Suggested reading:

Romans 1

Romans 14

Simple Outline:

A. 1-3 The example of Jesus should help the strong compromise.

B. 4 The purpose and value of O.T. scripture for N.T. saints.

C. 5-7 God cannot be rightly glorified without likeminded worship.

D. 8-12 The general division of Jews and Gentiles has been eliminated.

E. 13-14 Prayer and desire for their joy, peace, hope, and edification.

F. 15-16 He defended his bold instruction on the ground of his apostleship.

G. 17-21 His ministry was unique by Christ's blessing and his strict use of it.

H. 22-24 His hindrances and plans to visit Rome in person.

I. 25-27 He must first go to Jerusalem carrying gifts from the Gentile churches.

J. 28-29 When he does make it to Rome, he will bring spiritual blessings.

K. 30-32 He solicits their prayers

L. 33 He blesses them with peace by the God of peace.

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

We then that are strong.

A. The use of then here by the Holy Spirit makes a connection that our chapters and verses disguise.

1. Ignoring the chapter division, you can easily see that Paul continued his teaching about liberty.
2. His last point in chapter 14 regards the weak damning themselves by eating against conscience.

3. His first point in chapter 15 is more warning to the strong to consider them and their weakness.
4. Notice Paul again includes himself with the strong, for he was, and it would appeal to them.

B. The chapter and verse divisions of your Bible are not inspired and can be times a little distracting.
1. The books of the Bible were true from first writing, for each had unique writers and audiences.
2. The chapters of the Bible were made by Stephen Langton in about 1205 in the Latin Vulgate and adopted by other churches and versions. Wycliffe had them in his English Bible of 1382.
3. The verses of the Old Testament were made by a Jewish rabbi named Nathan in 1448. The verses of the New Testament were made by Robert Estienne, or Stephanus, in about 1555.
4. We do not consider them inspired any more than the impossible Gothic typeface used in 1611!
5. However, we certainly do appreciate them for their usefulness as a very fast reference system.

Ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.

A. What are the infirmities? Lack of knowledge and superstition from Moses about meats and days.
B. Who are the weak? The Jews still holding on to their Old Testament ceremonial laws and rituals.
C. How do the strong bear the infirmities? Keep their own liberty private and allow the Jews theirs.
D. Though the strong are correct and right, they sacrifice their liberty publicly to protect the Jews.

And not to please ourselves.

A. The opposite choice is to press your public liberty and cause weak Jews to sin against conscience.
B. It is selfish and self-pleasing when we arrogantly press our liberty in public regardless of others.
C. If each Christian could learn to forget himself in every way but necessity, it would do much good.
D. Selfishness is the cause of strife, because immature persons will not let go and pass over matters.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

Let every one of us.

A. This is addressed to each church member, for church peace requires participation by each member.
B. Paul includes himself in the plural, first person pronoun to encourage the strong to the assignment.
C. No matter who you are; no matter how highly you think of yourself; your selfishness is not right.

Please his neighbour.

A. The rule of Christianity is that God comes first and then your neighbor, after which you are last.
B. The neighbor here is not those living next door to you, but rather fellow church members in Christ.
C. Instead of tempting them to sin, we help them keep their liberty to God and their conscience free.

For his good to edification.

A. Building them up in this context is the opposite of tearing them down with persecution or pressure.

B. The edification here is not instruction in the doctrine of liberty except by the minister called to it.
C. Each member should do everything they can to help each member be the best Christian possible.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

For even Christ pleased not himself.

A. All relationships soon come back to Christ whether servants or wives (Eph 5:22-24; I Pet 2:18-23).
B. Not only did Paul include himself pronominally in 15:1-2, but he now added Jesus Christ for force.
C. Jesus Christ did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister to others instead (Matt 20:25-28).
D. If there was ever a "strong" in God's kingdom, it was Jesus Christ, but He sacrificed for others.

But, as it is written.

A. This quotation of scripture comes out of Psalm 69:9, the first half of which applies to John 2:17.
B. Psalm 69 is a psalm of David, which by the Holy Spirit he wrote concerning Christ by application.
C. This is one of those places where the apostle by inspiration applies the words for our knowledge.

The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

A. Jesus received His ministry from God, which meant that God's enemies reproached Him instead.
B. Jesus took all the cruel, diabolical, false, hypocritical, and violent attacks of enemies for His elect.
C. We cannot minimize the fact that included should be His substitutionary atonement for reproaches.
D. If Jesus did such for us, surely you can grow thick skin for matters as foolish as Christian liberties.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime.

A. The focus here is Old Testament scriptures, for Paul had just appealed to Psalm 69:9 for a lesson.
B. Paul's use of Psalm 69:9 applied to Christ as an example for us is a proper use of the scriptures.
C. We often use this verse without a context for a general rule of scripture, but there is also context.

Were written for our learning.

A. Scripture is given to perfect His ministers, throughly furnished unto all good works (II Ti 3:16-17).
B. The Bible is not a relic, a book of verses to be chanted five times a day, but rather to convey truth.
C. The Bible's value is the words of God conveying truth and wisdom to a person that obeys them.

That we through patience and comfort of the scriptures.

A. The scriptures themselves are not patient or comfort, but rather the facts they relate about others.

B. By reading about David and/or Christ, we can learn patience and be comforted by their example.
C. Joseph took ridicule of his brothers and David of his, yet God delivered and exonerated both men.

Might have hope.

A. There is certain expectation for any believer that can learn to trust and obey like scripture teaches.
B. Did things turn out acceptably for Jesus Christ, Who showed an example of patience and comfort?

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

Now the God of patience and consolation.

A. The verse before declared that scriptures teach us patience and comfort by God's dealing with men.
B. The God of Joseph, David, and Christ provided patience and consolation to His children in stress.
C. From scripture we gain the experience and knowledge that God will take care of all who obey Him.

Grant you to be likeminded.

A. God can supply patience and consolation; He can also supply peace, concord, unity, and charity.
B. Unity is something God grants – like for the Spirit and repentance (Eph 3:16; II Tim 2:24-26).
    1. Paul had already instructed the church toward this end of being of one mind (Rom 12:16).
    2. Since God grants it, the church must not only endeavor for it but also pray for it (Eph 4:3).
    3. When Paul addressed how members can care for pastors, he called for peace (I Thess 5:12-13).
C. Church members should be likeminded by being agreeable, cooperative, peaceful, and harmonious.
    1. This likemindedness is about to be defined or described as one mind and mouth before God.
    2. To be likeminded is to be of the same mind, to be of one mind, to think the same things, etc.
    3. The Spirit used the word two other times to mean think the same thing (I Cor 2:13; Phil 2:2,20).
    4. It includes being united in peace without divisions or strife – concord with harmony (Pr 6:19).
    5. Being likeminded here is not at all taking the same position on each matter of Christian liberty.
    6. This goal of church members includes agreeing to disagree on matters God does not care about.
    7. The goal of a church about Christian liberty is for each member to fully allow others' liberty!
D. Those who make differences are guilty of variance and a host of others sins contrary to the gospel.

One toward another.

A. Each church member must be likeminded, agreeable, and at peace with each other church member.
B. There is no one in the church that in these matters of liberty you can excuse any selfish conduct.
C. If a church were to practice this rule, and it is possible, that church would have unbelievable peace.

According to Christ Jesus.

A. His doctrine is one of peace and unity, whether taught by Himself or by His apostles (Jn 13:34-35).

B. His command was for each of His followers to be servants rather than masters (Matthew 20:25-28).

C. His example, already stated in this context, was to not please Himself but to bear for others (15:3).

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That ye may with one mind and one mouth.

A. God wants a unified church that will think the same and speak the same thing (I Cor 1:10; Ep 4:3).
   1. A short but whole Psalm is dedicated to the beauty and precious unity of brethren (Psalm 133).
   2. Like a father and mother with a family, they want children to love one another and be at peace.
   3. Paul warned in another setting that without charity they could devour one another (Ga 3:13-16).
   4. Before and after Pentecost, Jerusalem Church was very united (Acts 1:14; 2:1,42-47; 4:24,32).

B. There is no reason why Christians bound together in a church cannot be of a single, united purpose.
   1. If we differ on matters of liberty, we all know the differences are nothing and quite irrelevant.
   2. If we disagree on matters of liberty, we choose to agree to disagree in these unimportant things.
   3. The one mind and mouth is obtained by each member fully allowing all others their liberty.

C. For the ultimate in praising and worshipping God, a church must be of one mind and mouth in it.

D. The final reason Paul used to demand godly compromise in matters of liberty was for God's glory.

Glorify God.

A. For worship of God to be pleasing to Him and all that it should be, church unity must be in place.
   1. A church that is divided and harboring contention and strife will not be heard on high (Is 58:4).
   2. If a husband not treating his wife rightly costs him his prayers, what of an acrimonious church?
   3. God is glorified with a church at peace and unity, loving one another, protecting one another.
   4. God is not glorified when there is bitterness, grudges, envy, or other signs of the devil or flesh.

B. If you love the glory of God and want to glorify Him, then you must build church unity and peace.

Even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. The object of our obedient lives and worship is ultimately God Himself, just as it was for Jesus.

B. Jesus glorified God by always doing those things that pleased Him without the slightest deviation.

C. Paul referred to Jesus Christ in the verse before and after this one – but here to God as His Father.
   1. How do we identify our God from pagan idols? Our God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ!
   2. How do we glorify God in the New Testament? As Father through His Son Jesus our Lord!

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

Wherefore.

A. Paul began teaching the strong to receive the weak (14:1); he concluded with the same exhortation.

B. Based on coming personal judgment (14:10-12), rules of charity (14:13-21), the example of Christ (15:1-4, and the high calling of God's glory (15:5-7), receive one another regardless of liberties!

C. The conclusion of Christian liberty is not more freedom, but less freedom, to receive others better!

Receive ye one another.

A. This is an individual and personal matter of loving one another in spite of differences in liberty.

B. The doctrine of Christian liberty is to give rules and press church members to receive each other.

C. The section began with his exhortation to receive one another, and it ended with the identical duty.

D. This is receiving into membership, fellowship, friendship, and embracing one another as brothers.

As Christ also received us.

A. Here comes Paul again with the example of Jesus Christ, Who exceeds all others in receiving men.
   1. He came unto his own, but they did not receive him, so He saved some anyway (John 1:11-13).
   2. Pharisees and scribes hated Him for receiving sinners (Lu 15:1-2), but you should be thankful!
   3. Strong Gentiles had no clue or claim to true religion, but He saved many of them (15:8-12).
   4. Did Jesus differ from the thief in liberties? How much did he require of the thief for His love?

B. Jesus Christ is not ashamed to call Jews and Gentiles His brethren (Heb 2:13). What about you?

C. Can you calculate how many times you have disappointed, frustrated, and offended Jesus Christ?

To the glory of God.

A. Jesus Christ's salvation of sinners and presentation of them to God is the great act of the universe.

B. God's salvation of all kinds of sinners, especially base and poor, exalts His glory (I Cor 1:29,31).

C. He made all things for Himself (Pr 16:4; Rev 4:11) – for His glory (Rom 9:23-24; Eph 1:3-6; 2:7).

D. For much more about Christian liberty (see also).

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Now I say.

A. Paul had just spent thirty verses regarding Christian liberty or things indifferent (Rom 14:1 – 15:7).

B. While the issue was ostensibly the weak and the strong, he would now identify Jews and Gentiles.
   1. The issue in the previous thirty verses was greatly due to the differences of Jews and Gentiles.
   2. A church of Gentile members in America in the 21st century can hardly appreciate the conflict.
   3. But Paul had not identified either group by name, which he will now do based on compatibility.

C. A thorough explanation and application of Christian liberty leaves one panting for higher ground!
   1. Christian liberty is inspired in general and in specifics, and there is definite value for churches.
   2. After much dealing with controversies of unimportant things, let men find unity in great things.
   3. Here is the study of Christian liberty we finished … Christian Liberty.

That Jesus Christ.

A. Here is the sweetness of the gospel! Nothing else should ever be more important than Jesus Christ.
   1. Jesus Himself gloriously declared that the Jewish scriptures were about him (John 5:39-40).
   2. Paul declared his preaching was Jesus Christ crucified and sacred things (I Cor 2:5; 3:11-17).
   3. Paul declared that he should not glory in anything as much as in Christ crucified (Gal 6:14).
   4. He is to get all the preeminence in the church (Col 1:18; Jn 1:27; 3:30; Heb 1:5-6; Rev 5:9-10).

B. The great unifying fact and Person of the kingdom of God and of the universe is Jesus Christ.
   1. He was the great divider to the Jewish nation (John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; Matt 21:33-46; 22:1-7).
   2. The preaching of Jesus Christ will quickly identify the dead and the living (II Cor 2:14-17).
   3. Blood is thicker than blood, since two believers have the tightest of any bonds – Christ's blood.
   4. Communion is best seen at the Lord's Table, where we show our unity in and around Christ.

C. The difference between Jews and Gentiles was ripped down and to shreds in Christ (Eph 2:11-22).
   1. This profound fact was crucial to the fellowship and love of the Roman saints for one another.
   2. Paul carefully declared several times that there was no more division (Gal 3:28; 5:6; Col 3:11).

Was a minister of the circumcision.

A. Jews were often noted for their circumcision, which strictly distinguished them from the Gentiles.
   1. This use of language to describe a people was common with Paul (Rom 3:30; 4:9,12; Gal 2:7).
   2. This distinction of the Jews was one they were very proud of and for good reason from Abram.
   3. On the other hand, they despised the Gentiles for not having such a glorious or spiritual rite.
   4. Without the actual rite in view, Paul referred to the Jews by a beloved ritual as Christ's people.

B. Jesus was born to two Jewish parents (one biological and the other legal), who were fully Jews.
   1. The Jewish ancestry of both Joseph (Matt 1) and Mary (Luke 3) are recorded in great detail.
   2. He was circumcised the eighth day according the Law of Moses as a Jew (Luke 2:21-24).
   3. Paul testified by the Holy Spirit that Jesus was born under the law for our redemption (Gal 4:4).

C. Jesus Christ's ministry did not extend beyond Israel's borders but for very exceptional dealings.
   1. He came unto His own (those of His own nation), and His own did not receive Him (Jn 1:11).
   2. He told His apostles He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mat 10:6; 15:24).
   3. He was constantly in the temple in Jerusalem and in the synagogues in the nation (John 18:20).
   4. Consistent with His own ministry, the Great Commission started with the Jews (Acts 1:8).
   5. This was so much the case the apostles had difficulty receiving Gentiles (Acts 10:28; 11:1-2).

For the truth of God.

A. After Christian liberty, where there is hardly any truth or truth worth differing over, this is sweet.
   1. It does not matter whether a person ate meat or not; it did not affect God (Rom 14:6; I Cor 8:8).
   2. It is wrong for Christians today to argue about the "truth" of their liberty, but neglect this truth!
   3. Do you really know what truth is? Do you really think your Internet research arrives at truth?
   4. Do you really know what truth is? The real truth that impacts the universe and eternal destiny?

B. There is truth and there are lies, and most men live a lie and then get to go to a truly eternal hell.
   1. A brother we have known for several decades departed this week. What happened to him?
   2. There is a body of truth that relegates all other facts to the garbage disposal in comparison.
   3. Are you able to identify real truth? Do you crave and love that truth? Do you live accordingly?

C. The gospel of Jesus Christ is based on the truth of God, and it is the truth of God revealed to men.
   1. The only truth in the world was from God to Israel, for they had His revealed will (Deut 29:29).
   2. Israel had the only revealed truth in the world (Ps 147:19-20), and it all pointed to Jesus Christ.
   3. Gentile nations admired their precepts (Deut 4:5-8), but the glory of Christ they could not see!
   4. Mind-boggling events took place before the world began, do you know about them (Titus 1:2)?

To confirm the promises.

A. The infinite and invisible God of the universe had made promises to Israel of great future blessings.
   1. God cannot lie, and He promised eternal life before the world began (Titus 1:2; II Tim 1:9-10).
   2. It was Jesus Who fulfilled the greatest promises given to Israel – a coming God-King-Saviour!
   3. It is wonderful that the Bible's prophecies are called promises – because fulfillment is certain!

B. Pick your favorite prophecies of Jesus Christ! It will not be easy! There are very many of them.
   1. Genesis 3:15 is the promise of the male seed of the woman to fatally bruise the serpent's head.
   2. Genesis 22:15-18 was given to Abraham of blessing on all nations through his seed (Gal 3:16).
   3. Genesis 49:10 has Jacob's inspired blessing of Judah's perpetual Ruler to gather the kingdom.
   4. Deut 18:18-19 was Moses prophecy of a another prophet to Israel like unto him (Acts 3:22-24).
   5. Psalm 2:1-12 and 45:1-7 and 110:1-7 are three that should be precious from the pen of David.
   6. Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6 and 11:1-5 are three that should be precious to you from the book of Isaiah.
   7. Jeremiah 23:5-8 and 30:9 and 33:14-22 are three that should be precious to you from Jeremiah.
   8. Ezekiel 34:23-24 and 37:24-28 are two that should be precious to you from book of Ezekiel.
   9. Daniel 2:44 and 9:24-27 promise a kingdom and the time from Cyrus to Messiah's blessings.
   10. Hosea 3:4-5 describes a latter day in which a King should arise, and His would be David!
   11. Micah 5:2 describes an eternal ruler arising out of this little and obscure village to rule Israel.
   12. Haggai 2:6-9 describes greater glory for Zerubbabel's temple due to the Desire of all nations!
   13. Zechariah 6:12-13 and 9:9 among others describe Jesus as king and priest entering Jerusalem.
   14. Malachi 3:1-3 and 4:1-6 promise the coming of John Baptist and Jesus before Israel's total ruin.

15. Outside the fathers, there were prophecies given to Job, Balaam, etc. Which is your favorite?

C. Why did God create the world? For His glory, and He promised the means of salvation very early.
   1. There is no confusion why He created the universe and man (Pr 16:4; Rom 9:21-24; Rev 4:11).
   2. The great drama of the universe is for the glory of Jesus Christ for the greater glory of God!

D. For much more about the prophecies of Jesus … the lengthy sermon series outline is not in e-format at this time.

E. For more prophecies from David's Messianic Psalms.

Made unto the fathers.

A. Adam was a father (Lu 3:38), but Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are great ones, and there were others.

B. Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others recorded many precious promises of Christ's kingdom.

C. It was the Jews that had the personal and written revelation of God of blessings (Psalm 147:19-20).

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

And that the Gentiles.

A. This is one of the precious conjunctives in the Bible – and – bringing Gentiles up alongside Jews.
   1. The Jews had the scriptures and many precious promises of Christ – the Jews' Messiah (15:8).
   2. But in the New Testament church after Christ's death, the Gentiles were every bit their equals.

B. From the beginning of the practical part of this epistle, Paul has stressed love, peace, service, unity.
   1. He laid a formidable and overwhelming foundation (12:1 – 15:7), now he will unite further.
   2. It is hard for us to imagine the differences between Jews and Gentiles trying worship together.
   3. This is not altogether new information, for Paul had written it earlier (Rom 1:16; 2:24-29; etc.).

C. Having most recently spent thirty verses about getting along in matters of liberty, he proceeds.
   1. Though unspoken in the previous verses, Paul now identifies the underlying church division.
   2. The conflict in Paul's dissertation on liberty can be seen as Jewish-Gentile though not stated.

Might glorify God.

A. The worship of God is the greatest use of a life on earth or in heaven, for the highest angels do it!
   1. Only the Jews had the carefully detailed instructions as to how Jehovah was to be worshipped.
   2. The Gentiles showed ignorant folly for 4000 years by worshipping things from stumps to bugs.
   3. The Gentiles had no knowledge of God, nor His unique worship, nor any heart or motive for it.
   4. But now Paul described Gentiles participating in what had been entirely Jewish for 1500 years.

B. Paul had introduced already that glorifying God acceptably required complete unity (Rom 15:5-7).

C. When Gentiles glorify God, it is a spectacular display of God's grace in us and eternal plan for us.

For His mercy.

A. We had no right to the commonwealth of Israel and God's worship like Israel did by the fathers.
B. There is the added element of Gentile worship – God's mercy is more evident and more recent.
C. If David could sing of the mercies of the LORD forever, how long should you sing (Psalm 89:1)?
D. By every comparison, we were Egyptians, Amorites, Hittites, Philistines! It is only by His mercy!

As it is written.

A. The greatest leverage Paul had to influence Jews for Gentiles was to prove it from Jewish scripture.
    1. The Jews knew their unique scriptures identified them as God's chosen people (Ps 147:19-20).
    2. Paul did not stop at one obscure verse that could be ignored or overthrown by sharp opponents.
B. This first of four quotations in favor of the Gentiles is from David in Psalm 18 and II Samuel 22.
    1. Psalm 18:49 has it this way: "Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name."
    2. II Samuel 22:50 has it this way: "Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name."
C. Keep in mind Paul's main purpose of the four quotations is for the Jews to fully accept Gentiles.

For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles.

A. David did confess and worship Jehovah among Gentiles from time to time, but this is prophecy.
    1. Ittai and Gittites and Hiram of Tyre are examples of those who may have been Gentile elect.
    2. The future tense here is not David reflecting on his past worship but identifying one to come.
    3. These words help conclude Psalm 18, which summarized David's victories by God's blessing.
    4. You should see David the prophet combining himself and Jesus in Psalm 18's last two verses.
    5. The words and prophecy here are very similar to that of Jesus Christ by David in Psalm 22:22.
B. The words of prophecy here have the obvious sense of Gentiles and Jews worshipping together
    1. David and Jesus, the greatest representatives of the Jews, would worship among the Gentiles.
    2. They have not done this literally and physically on earth, but the prophecy has been fulfilled.
    3. The next three quotations used by Paul help confirm we have correctly applied the words here.
    4. Gentiles would be confessing and worshipping God right alongside the most illustrious Jews!
C. Dear Gentiles, do you like to be called heathen by David? Yes, for it shows God's great mercy!

And sing praise unto thy name.

A. David was a singer and musician second to none, and he led or assigned the leadership of worship.
    1. You should see David the prophet combining himself and Jesus in Psalm 18's last two verses.
    2. The words and prophecy here are very similar to that of Jesus Christ by David in Psalm 22:22.
B. Singing is the music of the New Testament church, for it is the only form of music mentioned in it.
    1. The Bible knows all about musical instruments as any reading of David's Psalms will reveal.

2. However, how did the Romans worship God? The same as we do, by fervent a capella singing!
3. For more about instruments in the church.
4. For yet more about instrumental church music … www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/instrumental-music-word.pdf.

C. The mercy and power to get Gentiles to sing to God's glory is stupendous! Like a resurrection!

D. Keep in mind Paul's main purpose of the four quotations is for the Jews to fully accept Gentiles.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

And again he saith.

A. Paul did not settle for one obscure verse that could be ignored or overthrown by sharp opponents.
   1. If you have a Bible case for something, you should have two or three witnesses (II Cor 13:1).
   2. For this reason we will not change our doctrine short of a tsunami of Bible evidence (Titus 1:9).

B. This second quotation is from Deuteronomy 32:43, "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people."
   1. Buried in the vengeful threats of God against Israel if they disobeyed was a prophecy of you!
   2. Yet it was God's vengeance that opened up the vineyard to Gentiles (Matt 21:33-46; 22:1-7).

C. Keep in mind Paul's main purpose of the four quotations is for the Jews to fully accept Gentiles.

Rejoice, ye Gentiles.

A. Hear the word of God and Moses to those outside Israel to worship the LORD Jehovah of Israel.
   1. From one of the most Jewish sections of scripture there is a call for Gentiles to worship God.
   2. The Jewish members at Rome had to be impressed and convicted by Paul's four quotations.

B. What did God save you for? So you would not get burned in hellfire that you so well deserve?
   1. God saved you to praise Him and laud Him, which you will do in heaven, but should start now!
   2. This is the personal and spiritual destiny for which you were created. Who will fulfill it best?

With his people.

A. This is the combined congregation of the Lord – the New Testament church made up of both.

B. Yes, Jews were His people; He had chosen and named them, but the Gentiles joined up with them.

C. The gospel went first to the Jews but quickly thereafter to Gentiles throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

D. Paul introduced the order (1:16) and then extended God's gracious election to Gentiles (9:21-24).

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

And again.

A. Paul did not settle for one obscure verse that could be ignored or overthrown by sharp opponents.

1. If you have a Bible case for something, you should have two or three witnesses (II Cor 13:1).
2. For this reason we will not change our doctrine short of a tsunami of Bible evidence (Titus 1:9).

B. The third quotation is of Ps 117:1, "O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people."

C. Keep in mind Paul's main purpose of the four quotations is for the Jews to fully accept Gentiles.

Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles.

A. David used the word nations – Paul used Gentiles. This is proper internal commentary (I Cor 2:13).

B. God accepting the praise of the Gentiles said a great deal to the Jewish member in Rome's church.
1. They had obviously obtained mercy from Him, or they would not know Him or be accepted.
2. They had obviously obtained mercy from Him, or they would have no desire for the action.

C. What did God save you for? So you would not get burned in hellfire that you so well deserve?
1. God saved you to praise Him and laud Him, which you will do in heaven, but should start now!
2. This is the personal and spiritual destiny for which you were created. Who will fulfill it best?

And laud him, all ye people.

A. David used the word praise – Paul used laud. This is proper internal commentary (I Cor 2:13).
1. Laud. To praise, to sing or speak the praises of; to celebrate. Often to laud and bless (praise, magnify). Originally implying an act of worship. [OED]
2. How often do you laud the Lord? Out loud? Privately? Publicly? Do others know it (Mal 3:16)?
3. A trait of the righteous with friends is to bless, praise, boast, magnify, and exalt (Psalm 34:1-3).

B. David and Paul used the word people, which helps us consider its use in other Psalms (I Cor 2:13).
1. The vast majority of the human race have always been Gentiles, the people referred to here.
2. It is one of David's favorite words, used 122 times in the book of Psalms to be rightly applied.

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

And again, Esais saith.

A. Paul did not settle for one obscure verse that could be ignored or overthrown by sharp opponents.
1. If you have a Bible case for something, you should have two or three witnesses (II Cor 13:1).
2. For this reason we will not change our doctrine short of a tsunami of Bible evidence (Titus 1:9).

B. The fourth quotation is from Isaiah 11:10, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

C. Keep in mind Paul's main purpose of the four quotations is for the Jews to fully accept Gentiles.

There shall be a root of Jesse.

A. Paul appeals to this prophecy by Isaiah of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David.
1. Throughout scripture, Jesus is the Son of David (Matt 1:1; 21:9; 22:42; Luke 3:31; Acts 2:30).

2. Jesus is so much the Son of David He is called David (Jer 30:9; Eze 34:23; 37:24-25; Hos 3:5)!
3. Paul introduced this basic gospel fact in the very beginning of the epistle (Rom 1:3; II Tim 2:8).
4. For much more about Jesus the Son of David.

B. Why is Jesus called a root of Jesse and not a branch, since it is obvious Jesus was a branch of him?
1. The prophecy from Isaiah 11:10 says root, so believing Bible study will justify God's words.
2. Rejoice to compare scripture, for the Spirit calls Jesus both root and offspring (Rev 5:5; 22:16).
3. The future tense is used after David died, by Isaiah, so you can know it is David's descendant.
4. Job perfectly explained the issue by describing how a root produces after a tree dies (Job 14:7).
5. And the Spirit had already explained the matter by Isaiah before the prophecy (Isaiah 11:1)!
6. Is it okay with you that God may use both root and branch for Jesus Christ (Jer 23:5; 33:15).

C. When shall this be? It is future tense by reason of the word shall. Remember prophetic perspective.
1. Dispensationalists and premillennialists say it is in the future when Jesus will reign as a king.
2. But we know from many different angles that Jesus has been reigning as King for 2000 years.
3. The future tense is only to Isaiah; it was past or present for Paul to quote it for existing things.
4. Prophetic perspective separates the future tense of a prophet's view from its N.T. fulfillment.
    a. The future tense of Acts 2:17 was future only to Joel, not to Peter who limited it to then.
    b. The future tense of Acts 15:16 was future only to Amos, not James who limited it to then.
    c. The future tense of Heb 8:8-12 was future only to Jeremiah, not Paul who limited it to then.
    d. The future tense of Heb 12:26 was future only to Haggai, not Paul who limited it to then.
    e. The future tense of Mat 17:11 was future only to Malachi, not Jesus, who limited it to then.
    f. The future tense of Rom 11:26-27 was future only to Isaiah, not Paul who limited it to then.
5. It is 2000 years past, and we defy Futurists of every variation that deny this event to be history.

And he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles.

A. The words in Isaiah 11:10 for this clause are these: which shall stand for an ensign of the people.
1. Ensign. Especially, A badge or symbol of dignity or office; chiefly plural – Latin insignia.
2. Gentiles have rallied to the banner of their King and Saviour by the gospel for 2000 years.
3. The council at Jerusalem listened to the consecutive exploits of Peter and Paul (Acts 15:7-12).
4. Can you imagine the hippie at the garden door with an ensign? He is contrary to military terms!

B. Who will rise to reign over the Gentiles? This is Jesus Christ the Prince of the kings of the earth!
1. Psalm 2 gloriously prophesied of this event that was fulfilled at Christ's ascension (He 1:1-14).
2. Jesus declared to John that He had already taken His rule over Gentiles (Rev 2:26-27; 3:21).
3. So much more than Gentiles, Jesus was also promoted over all angels/devils (Eph 1:20-22).
4. But even better than His rule over enemy Gentiles is His rule over His believers (Gen 49:10).
5. Men have pressed into the kingdom of God since the days of John Baptist (Luke 11:20; 16:16).

C. When we will He do so? He did so at His ascension into heaven according to prophecies of it!
    1. Dispensationalists and premillennialists say it is in the future when Jesus will reign as King!
    2. The future tense is only to Isaiah; it was past or present for Paul to quote it for existing things.
    3. Prophetic perspective separates the future tense of a prophet's view from its N.T. fulfillment.
    4. It is 2000 years past, and we defy Futurists of every variation that deny this event to be history.
D. For more about the reign and kingdom of Christ.
E. For the millennial reign of Christ.

In him shall the Gentiles trust.

A. In whom? Gentiles would come to trust a Jew as God in the flesh for salvation and everlasting rule.
    1. This is a phenomenal change for ignorant barbarians adoring stumps and bugs (Rom 1:21-23).
    2. David's leadership was excellent over Israel; His Son's ministry is better by including Gentiles.
    3. The great Shepherd of the sheep promised to gather Gentiles into the gospel fold (John 10:16).
B. When? By 144,000 Jewish missionaries during the tribulation or millennium? Not at all and never!
    1. Dispensationalists and premillennialists say it is in the future when Jesus will convert Gentiles.
    2. But Paul here and James in Acts 15:15-16 apply these prophecies to the apostolic Commission.
    3. The future tense is only to Isaiah; it was past or present for Paul to quote it for existing things.
    4. Prophetic perspective separates the future tense of a prophet's view from its N.T. fulfillment.
    5. It is 2000 years past, and we defy Futurists of every variation that deny this event to be history.
C. As Isaiah wrote it, the Gentiles did seek to Christ for His saving grace, for they had no other hope.
    1. Why in the world was the Ethiopian eunuch in Jerusalem and reading Isaiah 53 (Acts 8:26-40)?
    2. Why in the world was an Italian centurion in Caesarea praying always to God (Acts 10:1-48)?
    3. Why did a Philippian jailor cry out to be saved? Because there was no Saviour but Paul's Jesus!
    4. Jesus commissioned the apostles and they took the gospel to the world (Mat 24:14; Col 1:6,23).
    5. You should seek to Christ as well for this is no other name under heaven for you (Acts 4:12).
D. As Isaiah wrote it, the gospel rest of Jesus Christ's kingdom is glorious and should be appreciated.
    1. The real rest is in the gospel, not in anything of the O.T. ceremonial law or place (Heb 4:1-11).
    2. One High Priest and one sacrifice have forever destroyed any other priests or offerings. Glory!
    3. Jesus finished the work the Father gave Him to do and guaranteed our eternal life (John 19:30).
    4. Baptism is the wonderful event when good consciences thank God for Jesus Christ (I Pet 3:21).
    5. The N.T. church is made up of believers, those who trust in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles.
E. Do you trust in Him today? Do you have a good conscience for all He has done for you? Have you given God the answer of a good conscience by virtue of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead?
F. The Lord's Supper is the church ordinance of mutual affection and appreciation for His death.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Now the God of hope.

A. Paul began the very lengthy conclusion to his epistle with this benedictory blessing on the Romans.
   1. There is a change from Paul exhorting the church to Paul blessing and explaining to the church.
   2. The remaining verses, 48 of them, are of a different character than the previous 12:1 – 15:12.
   3. Having exhorted them about liberty and divisions (15:15), he blesses and encourages them.

B. The God of hope is a wonderful expression, but let no man be confused connecting God and hope.
   1. Hope. Expectation of something desired; desire combined with expectation. [OED]
   2. In order to be hope, its object cannot be seen; it is truly patiently waiting for it (Rom 8:24-25).
   3. God does not wait for things as we do; His will and purpose are in past tense (Rom 4:17; 8:30).
   4. Our God is the object of hope, the source of hope, the basis of hope, and the certainty of hope.

C. Let the world worship their god, Abaddon and Apollyon, who has no hope and denies all hope.
   1. Satan has been a destroyer from the beginning, for his proud rebellion brought certain torment.
   2. The devils know well what is coming, and it is not annihilation, but rather torment (Luke 4:34).
   3. The world follows the prince of the power of the air, who is totally dedicated to destruction.
   4. If you look in scripture, history, or current events, those giving place are wretchedly miserable.
   5. One of the worst aspects of worldly entertainment I have observed is the total lack of hope.
   6. One of the biggest problems for youth (actually children) is the lack of hope for their future.

D. Our God, the LORD Jehovah, is the God of hope. Nothing is ever hopeless to those trusting Him.
   1. Notice the condition of trusting Him, for the verse predicates its blessings on those believing.
   2. This is the only place in the Bible where we have this precise construction – the God of hope!
   3. God does not have hope as we know it; He waits on nothing to fulfill His will and expectations.
   4. He is God of hope by providing precious promises and power for His children to see the future.
   5. Lack of wisdom steals hope, when you do not know what to do, but Jehovah always knows!
   6. Lack of power steals hope, when you know what to do but cannot, but Jehovah is omnipotent!
   7. Lack of change steals hope, if you cannot imagine things better, but Jehovah makes changes!
   8. Lack of rewards steals hope, if you think this life is it, but Jehovah has great riches in store!
   9. Lack of knowledge steals hope, if you doubt it for you, but Jehovah swore with an oath for it!

E. For much more about the basic nature of hope for Christians.

F. For even more about hope in face of difficulties.

Fill you with all joy and peace.

A. If this is a benedictory blessing from Paul, then it is certainly available and sure upon the condition.
   1. Do not lightly read and presume upon this text without carefully noting the condition of faith.

2. There is no limit to God's will or power to grant joy and peace, but lack of faith forfeits both.
3. How happy and content do you want to be? This superlative description should grab you well.
4. Because God is infinite and you finite, it is easy for Him to grant you things beyond measure.
5. Such superlatives and measures beyond comprehension are elsewhere (Phil 4:6-7; Eph 3:19).

B. A connection with Paul here and 14:17 cannot be overlooked – the one a duty, the other a blessing.
1. The governing rules for church member relationships are righteousness, peace, and joy (14:17).
2. This joy and peace should be seen first and foremost as the corporate relationship of members.
3. Lest you be discouraged, your little heart, mind, and life are much easier to fill with all of both!
4. The God of hope is able to fill church members with joy and peace to rightly love one another.
5. In both places, it is the power of the Holy Ghost that accomplishes this glorious and great feat.
6. Men seek joy and peace only by grace, but when you seek with God's blessing, you are filled.

C. Is it possible to be filled with all joy? Can a Christian be happy beyond description or measure?
1. God is a happy Being filled with pleasure in all He is, all He does, and all He sees around Him.
2. Do not think at all God's joyfulness is destroyed by the wicked (Ps 37:13; Pr 16:4; Rev 4:11)!
3. God gives happiness and joy even to the wicked as a witness (Acts 14:17; Matt 5:45; Ps 4:7).
4. The prophet Habakkuk brought his book to a close with a benediction of joy (Hab 3:17-19).
5. A proper understanding of our God and praising Him will result in great joy (Psalm 149:1-5).
6. Circumstances have little to do with this, for Paul could do it at night in prison (Acts 16:25).
7. If you lack this joy, it is not due to a deficiency with God but rather a problem with your faith.
8. Those whose God is the LORD are happy people (Deut 33:29; Ps 33:12; 89:15; 144:15; 146:5).
9. This should be understood first and foremost as corporate joy and then as your individual joy.
10. For more about a Christian's great joy in the Lord.

D. Is it possible to be filled with all peace? Can a Christian be at peace past description or measure?
1. God is a peaceful Being filled with total contentment that man cannot add to or detract from.
2. Do not think for a moment God's peace is destroyed by the righteous or wicked (Job 35:5-8).
3. God promised perfect peace to those with their minds stayed on Him and trusting (Is 26:3-4).
4. A care-free life with peace is had by turning needs over to Him with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6-7).
5. Circumstances have little to do with it, for Paul could be content in any situation (Phil 4:10-12).
6. If you lack this peace, it is not due to deficiency with God but rather a problem with your faith.
7. He is the God of peace in five places, and Jesus Christ is called the Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6).
8. Those whose God is Jehovah are at peace (Psalm 37:11; 119:165; Jer 33:6; John 14:27; 16:33).
9. This should be understood first and foremost as corporate peace and then as individual peace.
10. For more about a Christian's great peace in the Lord.

E. Paul gave a benedictory blessing and further encouragement of joy and peace to prevail at Rome.
1. If a church is not filled with joy and peace, from God and by the Spirit, it condemns their faith.

2. As the following phrase indicates, their faith in Christ was their means to God's joy and peace.

In believing.

A. In one respect, this is the key word in this wonderful blessing – the word of condition for blessing.
   1. Blessings of joy, peace, and hope are from God and given by God's power – but to believers!
   2. By feasting on God's word and believing all that is there that you can and will be so blessed.
   3. If you let your faith waver, the warning is severe – let that man not plan any blessings (Jas 1:7).

B. The object of faith had been just declared to both Jews and Gentiles, with Gentiles last (15:8-12).
   1. If both Jews and Gentiles would rightly appreciate Jesus Christ, their division would disappear.
   2. If Jesus Christ were made preeminent, for He was for both parties, their strife would then end.
   3. It is a rule that those most concerned about matters of liberty have the least interest in Christ.
   4. The more your affection and fascination with Jesus Christ, the less you will care about liberties.
   5. Church unity, or a church's common union, is by greater and greater focus upon Jesus Christ.
   6. From initial acts of faith and baptism to the end of our earthly lives, Jesus Christ is all in all.
   7. The more you seek Christ and delight in him and help others to do so, you cause joy and peace.
   8. As carnality creeps into churches one soul or family at a time, division and strife follow behind.
   9. The agenda most important should be to exalt Jesus Christ by any means at every opportunity.

That ye may abound in hope.

A. The God of hope, Who has every ingredient for hope, is able and willing for you to abound in it.
   1. Hope. Expectation of something desired; desire combined with expectation. [OED]
   2. In order to be hope, its object cannot be seen; it is truly patiently waiting for it (Rom 8:24-25).
   3. God does not wait for things as we do; His will and purpose are in past tense (Rom 4:17; 8:30).
   4. Our God is the object of hope, the source of hope, the basis of hope, and the certainty of hope.
   5. A person or church not abounding in hope has failed to love Christ and find His joy and peace.
   6. For more about dealing with hopelessness.

B. Hope is confident expectation that God your Father will deliver, teach, prosper, and glorify you.
   1. God in Jesus Christ is the object of hope as the thing we desire and expect most (I Tim 1:11).
   2. God is the source of hope by regenerating us and giving us a view by faith of the unseen glory.
   3. God is the basis of hope by promising us incredible blessing now and blessings later (I Pet 1:3).
   4. God is the certainty of hope by never changing Himself and able to perform all His promises.
   5. Though individual hope certainly follows the formula here, church unity in hope is foremost.

C. A church full of joy and peace by great love and appreciation for Jesus Christ will abound in hope.
   1. Jesus Christ has overcome this world, and the things of this world should grow strangely dim.
   2. Hope looks forward, not backward; Christian liberty deals with those things past, not future.
   3. To fuss about the lint on a suit before the most important interview of your life is confusion.

4. Love of Christ bringing joy and peace lifts hearts from the mundane to the sublime in heaven.
5. Jesus is the hope of glory (Col 1:27), and looking at Him lifts churches upward and forward.

D. The God of the Bible is God of reversal of fortune, so He can change absolutely anything for you.
1. Who will you consider? Joseph? Moses? Hannah? David? Manasseh? Daniel? Esther? Jesus?
2. If you ask about Jesus, consider that He in perfect hope expected the joy He would get in glory.
3. A just man may fall seven times … so? (Proverbs 24:16).
4. Consider the poor beggar Lazarus thanking the dogs – he was soon taking a chariot ride up!
5. The Christian religion is full of hope for this life and afterlife. Faith without sin brings hope.
6. For more about reversal of fortune in Christ.

E. The basis for hope in the believer is grounded upon his great joy and peace in a world of neither.
1. Faith in Jesus Christ choosing joy and peace with self and others will lead to hope. Believe it!
2. Both the sentence structure and its use of commas indicates a nonrestrictive phrase in use here.
3. By removing the nonrestrictive phrase, God fills men with joy and peace by the Spirit's power.
4. Abounding in hope is the result of Holy Ghost filling with all joy and peace through your faith.
5. God gave you faith, put that faith in Christ, God will mightily give you joy and peace for hope.

F. Notice carefully that this is not the mere existence of hope, but rather abounding in hope. Glory!
1. Abound. To be present in overflowing measure; to be plentiful; to prevail widely. To be full, to be rich or wealthy; to have to overflowing. To abound in: To be plentiful, wealthy, or copious in; to possess to a marked extent, so as to be characterized by; to have wealth of.
2. One of the worst conditions of a person is to lack hope, which is where all sinners are, thus their horrible dependency on all sort of dysfunction, drunkenness, drugs, divorce, etc. to cope.
3. Christians are without hope only by losing their view of Jesus Christ, scripture, joy, and peace.
4. Christians should be able to face any adversity, complexity, difficulty with joyful confidence.
5. A church fixed on Jesus Christ will be full of hope rather than bitterness, confusion, strife, etc.

Through the power of the Holy Ghost.

A. The main or preliminary work of the Holy Ghost here is to fill you with joy and peace in believing.
1. Both the sentence structure and its use of commas indicates a nonrestrictive phrase in use here.
2. By removing the nonrestrictive phrase, God fills men with joy and peace by the Spirit's power.

B. Your flesh, the world, and devils can take you down or lift you for worldly pleasure or depression.
1. These euphoric moments are based on fulfilling the lust of the eyes, the flesh, or pride of life.
2. Destructive periods of moodiness are due at best to not ruling your sinful spirit of the old man.

C. The Holy Spirit of God, filled with His own independent joy and peace, can fill you with the same.
1. Your ghost, or spirit, is the thinking, feeling, choosing apparatus you have in you from God.
2. The Holy Spirit and your spirit can communicate as the Bible indicates in passages used below.

D. Rather than abuse mood-altering chemicals, Christians should be full of the Holy Ghost (Eph 5:18).

1. It is excess of wine that Paul condemned in the text, but how many go there to find soul relief.
2. The Holy Spirit has no such excess, for there is no law against bearing His fruit (Gal 5:22-23).

E. God the Holy Spirit can alter a man drastically from the inside out as the scriptures plainly declare.
1. Saul of Benjamin was hardly fit to be a king, but God gave him another heart (I Sam 10:6,9).
2. John leaped for joy in Elisabeth's womb in the presence of Jesus by the Spirit (Lu 1:15,39-45).
3. God's elect cry, "Abba, Father," under influence of the Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6).
4. The Spirit bears witness of God's love in your heart until you grieve or quench Him (Rom 5:5).
5. The Spirit can increase faith in Christ until you are filled with God's fullness (Eph 3:14-19).

F. The power of the Holy Ghost is greater than any spiritual weakness of yours or any wicked spirit.
1. Various temperaments struggle with faults of fear, folly, anger, impulsiveness, moodiness, etc.
2. No matter how powerful you think your spirit or moods or impulses are, the Spirit is greater.
3. The devil and his devils seek to destroy believers, but the Holy Spirit is far greater than Legion!
4. You can overcome foes within or without, by the Spirit in you greater than any spirit (I Jn 4:4).

G. The progress and success of any church depends on the formula of this verse against differences.
1. The church is the habitation of God through the Spirit, the temple of the Holy Ghost. Believe it.
2. Every true member of the church drinks from that one Spirit for the health of the overall body.
3. Any church member living in the flesh, no matter how minor, detracts from the church's glory.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren.

A. Paul knew the Romans were a believing church and God would do the work of 15:13 and more.
1. Paul, the Gentile apostle, had personal persuasion of them by the reflexive pronoun myself.
2. Paul had great confidence in this church, which he had expounded upon much earlier (1:8).
3. By comparing the next verse, Paul dealt delicately with the Gentiles and praised them here.

B. The faith of the Romans was known throughout the whole world, and Paul also believed the report.
1. There are three uses of also in this verse, which are often helpful to discover the comparisons.
2. This first also connects Paul to others that were convinced or persuaded of the Roman faith.
3. This church, in the shadow of death itself, had shown exemplary confidence in God (1:8).
4. Keep in mind Paul wisely praised, exhorted, and promised by various degrees in great wisdom.
5. He had never met this church, unlike close and personal relationships with churches he started.
6. He had been pretty hard on them, but now he backs off while closing out. See the next verse.
7. Some tritely say, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Paul was wise.

C. He described them as his brethren, further showing a tender spirit and meek wisdom toward them.

D. Rather than pursue only the details of the text (God forbid!), there are questions we should ask.

1. Would Paul be persuaded of you like Rome? Or are you inferior to the description (1:8; 15:14)?
2. Who is persuaded of your traits and abilities? Is the church of God or those without impressed?
3. What are those that know you persuaded about you? Where would they rank you spiritually?

That ye also are full of goodness.

A. Paul was confident the Roman saints had goodness and knowledge like he Paul had them as well.
   1. The also must make a connection, and he will in the next verse justify his pointed instruction.
   2. The Roman saints were not so deficient in spiritual grace that they totally depended on Paul.

B. God does more than fill believers with joy and peace; He also fills with goodness and knowledge.
   1. The Holy Spirit uses His power for more than joy, peace, hope; see much fruit (Gal 5:22-23).
   2. The previous verse was a blessing by God's choice and power; this was by known evidence.

C. There is a slight difference between the things of 15:13 and 15:14, though not to be magnified.
   1. The joy, peace, and hope of 15:13, though church traits, are usually in a person for self use.
   2. There was another class of things that Paul exhorted the Gentiles toward that benefit others.

D. Goodness in the large sense is moral purity and benevolence. It is opposite of bad, evil, or sinful.
   1. Goodness the fruit of the Spirit is a wide category of grace and virtue but not fitting the context.
   2. It does not behave in an ungodly way to anyone or anything. It does what is right and proper.
   3. It will seek good men (Tit 1:8); it is opposite severity (Ro 11:22); the world hates it (II Ti 3:3).

E. Goodness here is mainly the benevolent and loving kindness to care for growth and profit of others.
   1. The context is receiving one another for joy, peace, and unity by admonition (Ro 14:17; 15:14).
   2. Do not be distracted by the good thing that goodness in general is (Ps 37:27; Ro 7:21; Tit 2:5), though it certainly is laudable for any and every Christian to be known by all as being good.
   3. Do not be content with good you can do toward the Lord by yourself alone e.g. holiness, reading, meditation, prayer, fasting, giving, memorizing, church chores … but avoiding others.
   4. Do not be deceived by goodness to yourself (Prov 11:17), but rather how you can help others.
   5. When measuring your goodness, be sure to measure by those that show you none (Luke 6:33).
   6. When measuring your goodness, be sure to include two classes with one emphasized (Ga 6:10).
   7. When measuring your goodness, be sure to include those good things you did not do (Jas 4:17).

F. Rather than a little goodness here and there to brethren, we should be known for abundance of it.
   1. If a church was full of goodness toward one another, it would spiritually prosper and be great.
   2. Paul admitted doing good to others began with a willing mind (II Cor 8:12). Do you have one?
   3. There is every motive when the church is rightly viewed to motivate much good (Ps 122:1-9).

Filled with all knowledge.

A. The apostle exaggerated a little here in wisdom to get the Roman saints to accept his exhortation.
   1. If the Romans were literally filled with all knowledge, the last thing they needed was an epistle.

2. Since Christian liberty has been the topic since 14:1, Paul refers to no more than such things.
3. Since the application is entirely practical, it is the issues of liberty and division that are primary.
4. Many use similar expressions when they press men to duties by acknowledging their ability.
5. He corrected his kind exaggeration all knowledge in the next verse, where he used nevertheless.
6. Paul told the Thessalonians they did not need teaching about love … but then exhorted them!

B. God gave His word and preachers for your knowledge and understanding (Jer 3:15; Eph 4:11-16).
1. Paul had to write the Hebrew audience and rebuke them for Bible ignorance (Heb 5:12-14).
2. How good of a teacher are you? How much teaching do you do? Would Paul be pleased?
3. We have certain words of truth to give solid answers to those that ask (Pr 22:17-21; I Pet 3:15).

C. Have you so learned Christian liberty in the previous chapter and this one to rightly know it well?

D. If a father, can you teach children (Eph 6:4)? If a husband, answer your wife (I Cor 14:34-35)?

E. Can you keep simple church member duties (I Thess 5:14; Heb 3:12-13; Gal 6:1-2; Jas 5:19-20)?

Able also to admonish one another.

A. Paul had not written Rome as an overbearing apostle presuming that they were ignorant children.
1. He is delicately balancing his exhortation with praise for Gentiles in a church he had not met.
2. He exhorted them here by kind encouragement to the holy duty of admonishing one another.

B. A pastor, especially an apostle at a distance, must rely on much more than his periodic preaching.
1. It is a very few minutes out of 168 hours of a week when a pastor tries to persuade your mind.
2. Paul told Philippi how much he appreciated their obedience in his absence (Phil 1:27; 2:12-13).
3. Believers must first be competent in knowledge to teach others (Hebrews 5:12-14; I Cor 3:1-3).
4. Believers must then be affectionate and considerate for opportunities (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).
5. Church members must then actually do the work of admonishing (I Thess 5:14; Jas 5:19-20).

C. The duty of admonition is not exciting to the flesh, but there are sure rewards and loving recipients.
1. Admonish. To put (a person) in mind of duties; to counsel against wrong practices; to give authoritative or warning advice; to exhort, to warn.
2. This is a one another duty of saints, which each member owes all other members individually.
3. For much more about one another duties.
4. This is real brotherly love (Lev 19:17); it is not a softball team, singing groups, or hospitality.
5. We are our brothers' keeper, whether you like it or not, and you should care much for souls.
6. For more about being your brothers' keeper.
7. If you see a brother sin, you should gently and humbly correct him (Gal 6:1-2; James 5:19-20).
8. There is soul-winning in Proverbs that we want to aspire to (Prov 11:30; 12:18; 15:4; 16:24).
9. Solomon taught the duty of admonishing wise men (Proverbs 9:6-8; 17:10; 19:25; I Thes 5:14).
10. Solomon taught the reward of perfecting a body (Proverbs 1:5; 9:9; 15:31-32; 25:12; Eccl 7:5).
11. Solomon taught the expected response from good Christians (Pr 9:8; 27:5-6; 28:23; Ps 141:5).

12. It is part of Christian character to take admonition with grace and love (Matt 5:23-24; 18:15).

D. How persuaded would Paul be of your ability and your performance in this matter? What of Christ?

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

Nevertheless, brethren.

A. In spite of Paul's high praise in the previous verse, he had not been wrong to exhort about liberty.

B. In spite of Paul's high praise in the previous verse, they were not perfect and needed reminding.

C. As part of his delicate treatment of this church he had not met, he called them brethren in wisdom.

I have written the more boldly unto you.

A. Paul had written rather boldly and thoroughly to them primarily about the issue of Christian liberty.
   1. The preceding context runs back 37 verses on the subject of indifferent things for Christians.
   2. Where is boldness in chapters 12-13? And the first 11 chapters are only didactic and doctrinal.

B. The lengthy lesson of Christian liberty was bolder in the sense of being more than they expected.

C. The lengthy lesson of Christian liberty was bolder in light of his high praise of their character.

In some sort.

A. His boldness was only in some sort by virtue of the fact that he did not consider it all that bold.

B. His boldness was only in some sort due to their possible defensiveness at his strong exhortation.

C. His boldness was only in some sort due to his high office of the apostle to the Gentiles for God.

D. His boldness was only in some sort due to the fact that it was primarily to remind them of duties.

As putting you in mind.

A. His intention, consistent with his high praise preceding, was simply to remind them of liberty rules.

B. Saints, like children and sheep, need constant reminding, thus the need of parents and shepherds.

C. Paul wrote Thessalonica, commending them for love, but exhorting them to love (I Thess 4:9-10).

Because of the grace that is given to me of God.

A. The primary basis for his boldness to this church was his unique and lofty kingdom role from God.

B. As he will explain, his office of apostle to Gentiles justified his care, even if bold, of the Romans.

C. Since much of the division and strife at Rome was likely due to Gentiles, he invoked his office.

D. There was incredible grace in Paul's ministry, not just his high office, but from what he was saved!

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the

Holy Ghost.

That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

A. What glorious grace, that God took Saul of Tarsus and made him Jesus Christ's apostle to Gentiles!
B. What a job – servant of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1)! What a job – take gospel to the Gentiles!
C. What a conversion – on his way to Damascus with Jewish authority to arrest any Christians there!
D. Gentiles, like those in Rome likely causing the liberty problems, should respect Paul's reminder.
E. Gentiles, like us in 21st century America, should praise God's grace for redirecting this great zealot.

Ministering the gospel of God.

A. What is it to be an apostle or minister? Be a servant of Jesus Christ, serving God's pure gospel.
B. There are servants that clean, cook, or drive, but God's servants or stewards give out the gospel.
C. The analogy here is likely the priests understood by Jews and Gentiles – Paul was like a priest.
D. Paul had no role in an earthly temple or of teaching the law, but the good news of God in Christ.

That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable.

A. Paul's ministerial work was to present Gentile converts to God as well as he could instruct them.
B. His high calling was from God to convert and perfect Gentiles for the glory of God (Eph 4:8-16).
C. This is not the Gentiles making spiritual offerings acceptable to God as elsewhere (Rom 15:9-12).
D. Notice in verse 18, that Paul's ministry in Jesus Christ was to make the Gentiles obedient to God.
E. There may be a further allusion to priests killing and offering up animal sacrifices under the law.
F. Is the offering up of your own conversion and sanctified life to God acceptable in His sight?

Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

A. The final determining factor for ministerial success is the Holy Ghost blessing ministerial efforts.
B. Sanctification means to make holy for God's use, and the Holy Spirit must do that for the Gentiles.
    1. The Holy Ghost sanctifies before the gospel by regenerating sinners (Titus 3:5; II Thess 2:13).
    2. The Holy Ghost sanctifies by the gospel with understanding (Eph 1:17; 5:25-27; Ps 119:18).
    3. The Holy Ghost sanctifies after the gospel with further understanding (Eph 3:14-19; 5:8-10).

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ.

A. Due to his high office, Paul could glory in his ministerial role in Christ Jesus to exhort the Romans.
B. When necessary, Paul would appeal to his office and use of it to remind an audience to hear him.
C. God would not let David build the first temple, but he prepared for it to be exceedingly magnifical, and our beloved brother Paul had no less zeal for the temple of the New Testament – the churches.

In those things which pertain to God.

A. Paul had no confidence in the flesh or superior thoughts regarding his person apart from the gospel.
B. His appeal to the Romans to accept his bolder exhortation was based purely on kingdom privileges.
C. He had no personal basis from which to solicit attention of the Romans, but only from and for God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

For I will not dare to speak of any of those things.

A. Paul was not at all interested nor did he deem it right to boast in anything but God's work in him.
B. Paul's appeal to his office was done very carefully to avoid any presumption in his flesh or person.
C. Paul had accomplishments in his flesh and person, but he would not waste any time on such things.
D. Outside his ministerial call to Gentiles, Paul had no appeal to any other factor for any hearing him.
E. We can find his pedigree and accomplishments, but he did not speak of them unless forced to do so in foolish boasting, which he could do quite well (Acts 22:3; II Cor 11:12-33; Phil 3:4-7).

Which Christ hath not wrought by me.

A. Paul's achievements by God's grace in Christ were the only things he used for ministerial leverage.
B. It is by God's grace, and it only, that Paul ascribed his diligence above other apostles (I Cor 15:10).
C. No matter what other personal or religious abilities or attainments Paul had, he appealed only to his ministry from Jesus Christ, his power through Christ, to the audience Christ had chosen for him.

To make the Gentiles obedient.

A. What was Paul's calling? Why should the Romans listen? He was God's servant for obedience!
B. What is a minister's job? To move his assigned audience to obey God for His glory and their profit.
C. It can be compared to warfare, but the motive is affection, though there is this strife (II Cor 10:4-6).
D. Ministers must strive for fruit and godliness, never numbers, popularity, income, or orphanages!
E. Paul told Timothy to preach good works in detail and to let no man hinder him (Titus 2:15; 3:8).
F. A careful review of Paul's epistles to Gentile churches will show lessons for every part of life.
G. How much do you fulfill the ministerial goal of Paul from God for your life to be acceptable?

By word and deed.

A. The word and deed here are not those of Gentiles, which were the object of Paul's word and deed.
B. The word and deed here are Paul's speech and actions, both of which were for Gentile conversions.
C. He used anything he could to persuade men from his speech to his conduct in and out of the pulpit.
D. He used anything he could to persuade men from speech to mighty signs and wonders next written.

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Through mighty signs and wonders.

A. The apostles displayed mighty signs and wonders, for the Gentiles, and Paul came behind no man.
   1. Jesus charged them to preach worldwide, and He gave an assortment of power (Mk 16:15-20).
   2. The miracles were to confirm their word, and it adds to listeners' responsibility (Heb 2:1-4).
   3. A useful and scriptural distinction exists sometimes between sign gifts and revelatory gifts.

B. From healing by napkins and handkerchiefs to handling deadly venomous snakes, Paul had power.
   1. Peter could heal by his mere shadow among other things as recorded by Luke (Acts 5:12-16).
   2. There were specific marks of an apostle; Paul had them and boasted of them (II Cor 12:11-12).

C. Those who claim to be apostles today, from the pope to the Mormons to local preachers, are liars.
   1. Roman Catholic dogma includes apostolic succession for all its bishops with the pope as Peter.
   2. Mormons have the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and many more in their so-called churches.
   3. Charismatics and Pentecostals are notorious for their charlatans naming themselves apostles, as in the case of William Branham, who claimed to be Elijah the prophet and other such nonsense.
   4. Where is apostolic reverence that followed the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:12-16)?
   5. God forbid we should ever make such presumptions! God forbid we should forget our respect!

D. It is the duty of Christians ancient and modern to test and disprove any claiming to be an apostle.
   1. Men opposed Paul as apostles at Corinth, which he considered of the devil (II Cor 11:12-15).
   2. Jesus commended the Ephesians, for they had proved and rejected false apostles (Rev 2:2).

By the power of the Spirit of God.

A. The power for the apostles to perform mighty signs and wonders came from God the Holy Spirit.

B. The Spirit of God can do great things through a man, as His use of Samson shows (Judges 13:25).

C. The apostles were told to remain at Jerusalem until they got power from on high (Acts 1:8-9).

So that from Jerusalem.

A. Jerusalem was the center of Christianity; Christ died and rose there, and the apostles started there.

B. They had been charged to this progression – Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, worldwide (Acts 1:8-9).

C. Though Paul first preached in Damascus (Acts 9:19-22), but soon went to Jerusalem (Ac 9:23-28).

And round about unto Illyricum.

A. Illyricum. A Roman province covering the northwestern part of the Balkan Peninsula in Europe.

B. In the 20th century it was Yugoslavia; it is now Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, and other small countries.

C. Paul preached all over the place in Macedonia all the way to northwest to this country (Ac 20:1-2).

I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

A. In the history, Paul testified that he was free from the blood of all men in Asia (Acts 19:10; 20:26).
B. He did not wait for convenience, but in everyplace and at anytime, he would declare Jesus Christ.
C. So great was his zeal and thorough his efforts, he had nowhere else to preach in those parts (15:23).

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named.

A. In scrupulous care to be a true evangelist to the Gentiles, he went where no one else had preached.
B. This was no mere coincidence or providential result, but a matter important to his heart and mind.
C. He could mock false teachers who boasted of their efforts by comparing his own (II Cor 10:12-18).
D. His gospel work among the Gentiles was original work, pioneer work, without example or help.
E. The use of "evangelist" today to describe a man holding a week of meetings is entirely ridiculous.

Lest I should build upon another man's foundation.

A. His authority and ability were so great that he did not and would not take advantage of other labors.
B. He was the evangelist – he was the father of the conversions of many and the founder of churches.
C. He could tell the Corinthians that he had a very different role than all their teachers (I Cor 4:15).
D. He could mock false teachers who boasted of their efforts by comparing his own (II Cor 10:12-18).

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

But as it is written.

A. Isaiah 52:15, "So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.
B. Paul adapted the general prophecy to his own ministerial method and philosophy, yet a fulfillment.

To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

A. The general prophecy of the gospel is that the message of the Messiah would go to total strangers.
B. Do you grasp the fabulous blessing of term #4 and #5 of the mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16)?
C. Those outside the privileges of Israel, that never had scripture, believed the gospel (Ps 147:19-20).

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

For which cause also.

A. To this point, Paul had used his apostolic office and labors to justify his bold address to them.

B. But now he explained that this ministry had also been the reason for his slow arrival in Rome.

I have been much hindered from coming to you.

A. He had introduced his epistle by stating his desire to visit them for their spiritual benefit (1:8-15).

B. As church members in the Empire's capital, they could and might presume upon a speedy visit.

C. How could anyone, no matter how much Paul's exhortation had irritated him, object to this reason?

D. He proceeded to further explain his reasons for the delay and his plans to include the city of Rome.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

But now having no more place in these parts.

A. At the time he was in Corinth, so considering Greece and Macedonia, he had covered the region.

B. What a statement by the apostle to the Gentiles! He had no other place to preach in these regions.

C. Thus from some statements in Acts (19:10; 20:26) and those here, he had been quite thorough.

And having a great desire these many years to come unto you.

A. As stated in his introduction, he had hoped for a long time to visit the brethren in Rome (1:8-15).

B. What a moving statement for the Romans to hear that he had desired to see them for many years.

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.

Whensoever I take my journey into Spain.

A. Was the man ready to retire? Not a chance! He had plans to carry the gospel to the nation of Spain.

B. He could not see his schedule and availability that far in the future, but he had every intention of it.

I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey.

A. In wisdom, Paul gave out rather personal information to convince them of his noble intentions.

B. He had specific intentions to see the Roman church as part of his general plan to get to Spain.

And to be brought on my way thitherward by you.

A. Thitherward. Towards that place; in that direction; thither.

B. Paul expected the Roman believers to assist his plans and help him in his travels into Spain.

If first I be somewhat filled with your company.

A. When writing of going beyond them, he reassured them he would stay long enough for fellowship.

B. He had explained his spiritual intentions for their profit in his earlier reason for visiting (1:8-15).

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

But now I go unto Jerusalem.

A. Before Rome and Spain (Rom 15:24), Paul intended to visit Jerusalem from his location in Achaia.

B. We assume Paul wrote from Cenchrea by reference to Phebe and the epistle's subscript (16:1-2).

C. Luke recorded Paul's intention to visit Rome after a needed trip to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21; 20:22).

To minister unto the saints.

A. Paul included in his defense before Felix that he came to Jerusalem bringing alms (Acts 24:17).

B. He wrote much about this carrying of Gentile money to Jewish saints (I Cor 16:1-4; II Cor 8 – 9).

C. This contribution would have been invaluable to turn Jewish affections toward Gentile believers.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia.

A. These two names were areas of Greece that encompassed cities having churches planted by Paul.
   1. In the area of Macedonia, there were churches at Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea.
   2. In Achaia, there was a church at Corinth and likely at Athens after Paul's testimony there.
   3. Paul's epistle to Corinth shows that he used the areas to exhort each other to giving (II Co 8-9).
   4. And beyond even all of Greece, Paul had also ordered the churches of Galatia (I Cor 16:1).

B. Jesus loves cheerful givers, and these two churches were pleased to help poor Jews (II Cor 9:7).
   1. The warning is against giving grudgingly or miserly wishing you did not have to give.
   2. The warning is against giving out of necessity like you have to rather than you want to.
   3. Your chosen and favorite use of money should be the kingdom of heaven and its needs.
   4. If you would like to connect the dots, take at peek at giving (Pr 3:9-10; Mal 3:7-12; Luke 6:38).

To make a certain contribution.

A. Paul had specified the contribution and detailed its collection when writing Corinth (I Cor 16:1-4).

B. The contribution was for poor saints, and giving should usually have a certain or specific objective.

For the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

A. Christian charity and giving have rules and limits that should be remembered and taught often.
   1. The order is family, own church, other churches of same faith, and acts of God in your path.
   2. The giving should be for real needs e.g. food, shelter, clothing, or emergency medical care.
   3. But when a real need can be identified and justified, there should be an eagerness to help.

B. Consider the severity and strictness of Paul compared to the television money-beggars today.
   1. There is no collection or giving in either testament for the poor of pagan nations around Israel.

2. Paul and companions passed by many poor of all ages and conditions traveling to Jerusalem.
3. We let the dead bury the dead, and we let the pagans take care of the pagans through the world.
4. However, when God puts one right in our ordinary path of business, we help (Luke 10:25-37).

C. For more of Christian charity.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

It hath pleased them verily.

A. If the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, then givers, as the Greeks here, should make sure of great cheer.
B. The Greeks responded to Paul's plan for a Gentile-Jew transfer with sincere desire and excitement.
C. It is a shame so many lose and miss God's full reward for giving by not getting excited about it.

And their debtors they are.

A. The Greeks were truly the debtors of the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem in gospel blessings received.
B. Giving for poor brethren among the Jews had more to it than just caring for the lowly or oppressed.

For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things.

A. The Gentiles were made partakers of Jewish spiritual things, for the gospel came out from them.
B. Paul chose to reason this way with the Corinthians regarding his ministry to them (I Cor 14:36).
C. God's revealed religion under the O.T. was exclusively Jewish and in the N.T. began with them.
D. Remember that Jesus was a minister of the circumcision (15:8) and added Gentiles later (15:9-12).
E. Jesus limited His apostles to preach to the Jews only in the beginning (Matt 10:5-10; Acts 11:19).
F. Even after His ascension, their progressive labors were Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, then worldwide.
G. Even when they were preaching worldwide to the Gentiles, the preachers were themselves Jews!

Their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

A. There is a debt created when you benefit from another, especially in spiritual things toward God.
B. The Gentiles were obligated to serve the Jews for that nation producing the Saviour and preachers.
C. The easiest check you should write is for kingdom obligations due to the spiritual benefits received.
D. The greatest motivation to work hard is to have more to give to varied needs of Christ's kingdom.
E. If you are just scraping by and like such a leisurely approach to life, you do not match the scripture.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

When therefore I have performed this.

A. Paul had committed himself to accompany the Gentile gift to Jerusalem for the Jews (II Cor 8:4).
B. All good intentions, especially toward giving, must have a performance (II Cor 8:11; Prov 25:14).
C. Talk is cheap, and it is clearly warned against in charitable giving (James 2:15-16; I John 3:16-19).
D. Great Christians have conduct that exceeds talk, requiring under-committing and over-performing.
E. Faith-promise giving by nature and application can encourage over-committing and under-paying.
F. Bible giving depends on what a man has, not on what he hopes to have, so be careful (II Cor 8:12).

And have sealed to them this fruit.

A. Giving is called fruit, because it is one of the evidences and results of eternal life and God's grace.
B. While it would benefit recipients, getting it transferred would seal fruit to the Gentiles (Phil 4:17).
C. You cannot buy your way to heaven, but it proves you're going there (I Ti 6:17-19; Mat 25:31-46).

I will come by you into Spain.

A. As he had previously stated, his hope was to preach in Spain and visit Rome on the way (15:24).
B. Not only would he go to Rome, but he also hoped they would help him further on toward Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

And I am sure that, when I come unto you.

A. Paul was confident that when he eventually did arrive in Rome he would be of spiritual benefit.
B. Great Christians that walk with God have great confidence in God and know labor is not in vain.
C. God has promised to bless His word, and bless it He will; it will not return void (Isaiah 55:10-11).

I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

A. Paul had more confidence than most, for He had greater grace and the Spirit's presence than most.
    1. God had gifted him with the Spirit above others, so he could provide whatever they needed.
    2. He had tested and proved this spiritual ability many times before to many in other places.
    3. Great Christians learn to trust God and by experience have confident hope in His use of them.
B. He had stated his intent to bless them spiritually with confidence in his opening (Romans 1:11-15).
    1. The gospel, or good news, or glad tidings, of Christ is a wonderful thing to share with others.
    2. By the Spirit's power and revelation, he could carry precious and sweet gospel things to them.
    3. The blessing of the gospel includes its content (I Tim 3:16; II Tim 1:8-11; 2:8-10; Rom 11:12).
    4. The blessing of the gospel includes power and benefits (Acts 26:17-18; II Cor 7:1; Jn 10:7-10).
    5. The blessing of the gospel includes glorious promises (I Cor 2:10; 15:1-58; II Peter 1:4; etc.).

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

A. Paul, as his manner was, appealed to them for obedience based on spiritual motivation (Phil 2:1-2).
B. Rather than appeal for prayer based on his personal office or reputation, appeal to Christ is greater.
C. When we pray for the spread and work of the gospel, which we should do, we do for Christ's sake.
D. The desire of all sincere saints should be to see the kingdom increased in any way for His glory.
E. You can only pray this way or expect such prayers if all you do is for Christ's glory (Col 3:17).

And for the love of the Spirit.

A. This is not the Spirit's love for you or your love for the Spirit, but rather the Spirit's grace of love.
    1. Nowhere else in the word of God is the Holy Spirit presented as the lover of God's children.
    2. Nowhere else in the word of God is the Holy Spirit presented as the object of saints' love.
    3. The context indicates this affection is for Paul and the poor saints he would help in Jerusalem.
B. We should use love for the children of God, the fruit of the Spirit, to motivate us to gospel prayer.
    1. Any other child of God of any culture, nation, or race is a blood brother by special adoption.
    2. Paul loved as a parent for a child, willing to spend and be spent (II Cor 12:14-15; 6:11-13).
    3. Men in the Spirit, like Paul, have great heaviness and heart's desire for souls (Ro 9:1-3; 10:1).
    4. For more about love of souls, including Jesus and Paul.

That ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.

A. Prayer is striving, with the best example being Jacob's wrestling match with God (Gen 32:24-32).
B. It is fervent prayer the apostle commended, which is to put forth great effort toward God (Jas 5:16).
C. Importunity fits well here, for striving means you do not quit (Luke 11:5-9; 18:1-8; I Thess 5:17).
D. For more about prayer and especially effectual prayer.

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea.

A. The true gospel has many enemies, and our prayers should include praying for gospel deliverance.
B. Contrary to the way most Christians assume to pray, Paul prayed to be delivered from unbelievers.
C. Rather than such unbelievers be delivered to him for salvation, he prayed to be saved from them.
D. He used the same language with the Thessalonians and the gospel enemies there (II Thess 3:1-2).
E. He prayed for elect Israel based on God's choice of them and their zeal of God (Romans 10:1-5).

And that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints.

A. Not only did Paul need deliverance from enemies in Jerusalem but also reception by the believers.
    1. It would not have been strange for Jews to reject money, even if needed, from Gentile pockets.
    2. It would not have been strange for Jews to reject money, even if needed, from Paul's hands.
    3. Note the Jewish distrust, both saints and enemies, of Gentiles and Paul (Acts 21:20-24; 22:22).

B. It was Paul's service for Jerusalem, that is, the believers in Jerusalem, in two very different ways.
    1. It was Paul's service, because it was he that had given the order for the collection (I Cor 16:1).
    2. It was Paul's service, because it was he that carried the Gentiles funds all the way to Jerusalem.

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

That I may come unto you with joy.

A. The goal for their prayer was for Paul to get to Rome safely and to finish his ministry to Jerusalem.
B. If he were delivered from the dangers in Jerusalem and received by the church, he would be joyful.
C. The best way for events to turn out is comfortable and pleasant, producing joy in those benefiting.
D. While the apostle could sing and praise God in Philippi's jail, he would choose to have it different.

By the will of God.

A. Prayer is to seek the will of God, even if we state the desired petition or request, subject to Him.
B. When you submit things to the will of God, then it is Him and not you that is the hindering factor.
C. Paul, as James taught, always submitted his plans, even spiritual ones, to God's will (Jas 4:13-15).
D. Paul had stated this identical, conditional desire in his opening statement about visiting (Ro 1:10).

And may with you be refreshed.

A. Enemies and friends in Jerusalem needed overruling, but it would be good in Rome (Rom 1:12).
B. Christians ought to always refresh the spirits of other Christians, whether in persecution or peace.
C. When Paul landed in Italy, the church sent brethren that met and encouraged him (Acts 28:13-15).

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Now the God of peace.

A. Here is his preliminary closing before his postscript of various greetings and general information.
    1. He closed officially at 16:24 with his particular salutation identifying Paul (II Thess 3:17-18).
    2. He closed again at 16:27 after a more spectacular postscript of blessing, praise, glory to God.

B. This is how we bless one another in the Christian religion, by the name and attributes of our God.
    1. Paul had identified their God as the God of hope very recently (15:13), but here God of peace.
    2. We worship the living God, so the saints often referred to the fact the Lord liveth (Ruth 3:13).
    3. We worship a God deserving glory and praise, so we call for His magnification (Psalm 35:27).

C. He is often God of peace (Ro 16:20; II Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9; I Thes 5:23; II Thes 3:16; Heb 13:20).
    1. He made peace by sending His only begotten Son to reconcile His enemies (II Cor 5:18-21).
    2. He can give perfect peace to those who trust in Him and walk with Him (Is 26:3-4; Phil 4:6-7).

D. Paul in wisdom closed with God as the God of peace to further exhort this church toward peace!
    1. Compare how Paul had appealed to the God of patience and consolation for their unity (15:5).
    2. Compare how Paul had appealed to the God of hope for corporate joy, peace, and hope (15:13).

Be with you all.

A. Though He is the God of peace, we ask by our blessings, almost as by prayer, for Him to grant it.

B. We make no distinction among our brethren, for we wish such general blessings to be upon all.

C. The desire for peace in the church is ancient and blessed, as David showed (Ps 122:6-9; 144:7-15).

Amen.