

**Romans 15** We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written “Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

10 And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

11 And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles and let all the peoples extol him.”

12 And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

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

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How does this passage connect with the previous themes/thoughts from Romans chapters 12-14? What are the consequences for the Church (global) and our church (local) if we focus only on pleasing ourselves? How does that change if we think about pleasing our neighbor, building others up? (v. 1-2)

How does it sit with you that Christ took on the reproaches (insults) that humans throw at each other? (v.3)

What is your definition of “hope”? (v. 4)

Where in the Old Testament do you see instruction and encouragement that gives you hope? Do any specific texts come to mind? (v.4-5)

In what way(s) have you experienced God being “of endurance and encouragement”? (v.5)

Is it possible to live in harmony without welcoming one another? What makes you answer that way? (v.6)

Why do you think Paul writes so much about welcoming one another? Does this apply to us today? Why? Why not? (v.6-7)

In your own words, how would you describe what it means to “glorify” someone or something? What about glorifying God? (v.8-9)

How do you think the Roman church first received these reminders of what the Old Testament scriptures say about Gentiles praising God? (v. 9-12)

What is the connection between hope, joy, peace, and believing? When have you been filled with joy and peace in your beliefs? What takes away joy and peace? (v. 13)

Is it possible to abound in hope apart from the Holy Spirit? How did you come up with that answer? (v.13)

If you were to summarize this passage in your own words, what would you say?

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#### NEXT STEPS:

Think about how you are welcoming others and building up those who are weak in their faith.

How hopeful are you right now? What’s the connection between your hope and the Scriptures you are reading?

Where do you see God granting you an opportunity to live in harmony with others, to glorify God with one voice? Is there any action to take?