

- (2) All food is clean. v. 14 cf. Lev. 11; I Tim. 4:3-5.  
But to him that accounts it unclean, to him it is unclean.
- (3) If we, through our actions or words, cause our brother to stumble in this matter then we had better take note that we are in sin. vs. 15-16.
- (4) The essential character of the kingdom. vs. 17-19.
- (5) Do not overthrow the work of God for a non-essential. That is, in your manner of observance. v. 20.
- (6) Do nothing that would cause others to stumble. v. 21.
- (7) Be careful that you do not judge yourself in the way you seek to bind that opinion upon another. v. 22.
- (8) To act without conviction is a principle condemned by God. This principle of action is condemned in verse 23.

### *Text*

15:1-12. Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, unto edifying. 3 For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: 6 that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God. 8 For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written,

Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles,  
And sing unto thy name.

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

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; And let all the peoples praise him.

12 And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be the root of Jesse, And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; On him shall the Gentiles hope.

374. Chapter fifteen discusses the obligations of one brother. Who is it?

375. Why should the strong "give in"? In what manner should the strong bear the infirmities of the weak?

## REALIZING ROMANS, 15:1-13

598. Why would it be displeasing to anyone to bear the infirmities of the weak?
599. What is the nature of the weakness here described?
600. Should we make some definite effort to please our neighbor, or should this happen in the so-called ordinary way of life?
601. In what sense did Christ not please himself?
602. Who is the "thee" of vs. 3b? What is the meaning of such an expression?
603. Show the connection of vs. 3 and 4.
604. Should not the holy scriptures be a source of comfort to us every day? Why is this *not* true in our life?
605. Our God is one of patience and comfort. How can we find this to be true personally?
606. How was Paul's prayer of verses 5 and 6 to be answered?
607. We are to glorify God with our mouth. If you were to attempt to fulfill such an admonition right now, how would you do it?
608. Verse seven presents a principle whereby all hesitation in receiving one another should be removed. Why?
609. What "truth of God" is referred to in vs. 8? What are the promises? Name two.
610. Who is singing in vs. 9? Why?
611. Why this array of references to the Gentiles? cf. verses 10, 11, 12.

*Paraphrase*

15:1-12. We then, who are well instructed in the Christian doctrine, ought so to behave towards the ignorant, that their errors may hurt them as little as possible; and should not please ourselves only in what we do.

2 Wherefore, let every one of us please his neighbor in things innocent, to the promoting of his virtue and peace, for the sake of edifying the body of Christ.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself: his own pleasure was not the object of his actions, but the glory of God and the good of others; as it is written, The reproaches of them who reproached thee, have fallen on me: the punishment due to the wicked, who by their speeches and actions dishonored God, was laid to me.

4 But whatever things were before written in the scriptures, were written for our instruction, that through our recollecting the patience wherewith holy men have borne reproaches and sufferings for the glory of God, and the consolation which they received, all

recorded in the scriptures, we might have hope of attaining the like patience and consolation in the like circumstances.

5 Now may God, the author of the patience and consolation of the saints, grant you to have the very same disposition towards one another always, according to the will and example of Christ Jesus;

6 That, joining together in religious worship, unanimously with one voice ye may praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his love to man.

7 Wherefore hold communion [have fellowship] with one another, notwithstanding ye differ in opinion about meats and days, even as Christ also hath received us all into his church, to the glory of God.

8 To Christ's receiving the Gentiles, it is no objection that he never preached to them: for I affirm, that Jesus Christ became a minister of the circumcision, on account of establishing the truth of God, in order that, by converting the Jews, and sending them to preach to the Gentiles, he might accomplish the promises made to the fathers concerning the blessing of the nations;

9 And that the Gentiles might praise God on account of the mercy showed them, as it is written, 'Thou hast made me the head of the heathen; therefore I will glorify thee, O Lord, among the heathen: My disciples will glorify thee for making me the head of the heathen; and sing unto thy name, on account of their being saved by me.'

10 And again, Moses, fortelling the subjection of the Gentiles to God, saith, 'Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people.'

11 And again, 'O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people.' Praise the Lord, because ye enjoy the privileges of the gospel along with the Jews, whereby his 'merciful kindness is great towards us.'

12 And again, Isaiah saith, (chap. xi. 10). 'In that day there shall be the root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; and to it the Gentiles shall seek for protection, government, and salvation. 'And his rest shall be glorious.'

### *Summary*

The strong are under obligation to bear with the weak, even though it subjects them to inconvenience. This was the course pursued by Christ, and he is our example. As the Savior has accepted us, notwithstanding our imperfections, so must we accept one another regardless of differences on immaterial questions, such as eating

376. How shall we determine when we are indulgent and not helpful?

377. Give the meaning of the expression "Even Christ pleased not himself."

378. Explain how the Old Testament scriptures are a source of help in our helping the weak.

meat and the like. The whole section is devoted to unity of feeling, forbearance, and harmony in action. Every form of alienation among the children of God is wrong, and therefore to be studiously guarded against.

### *Comment*

#### 3. *Exhortations to Mutual Helpfulness.* 15:1-13

Chapter fifteen continues the thought of fourteen. We are to further understand the proper relationship of the strong to the weak. Particularly is this a discussion of how the strong are to act toward the weak. Those who have no scruples about meats and days should patiently bear with those who do. Since the conscience of the strong would not be violated by observance or lack of observance of these matters, it is altogether reasonable to call on the strong to acquiesce in the matter. Let the strong behave as God does with them—bear (not begrudgingly) with the imperfections of the weak. If the strong in faith were to assert himself and rebuke the weak, it would be on a matter of opinion, and would only please the strong—not God, nor the weak. None of us must act with the thought of self-indulgence.

Our efforts as those who are strong are to be only for the purpose of help. When our neighbor (weak or strong) asks for assistance in doing anything contrary to the will of God, he should be rebuked, not helped. A great deal of wisdom is necessary in determining when we are helpful and not indulgent. If we have a sincere desire to see our fellow Christian advance in wisdom and grace, we shall find ways of helping such a growth.

The attitude of Christ toward others is here given as an example for the action of the weak. Was it always easy for our Lord to bear with the ignorance and misunderstanding of his followers? It would have been easier to please himself—and his pleasure was always right—but this he did not do. If he who had such a divine prerogative did not take it, who are we to insist upon pleasing ourselves? The prophecy of *Psa. 69* finds a fulfillment in the attitude of Christ toward the weak. The reproaches of men fell upon Christ. If Christ was willing to bear so much to help all, can we not manifest something of the same love toward one another?

Paul makes an explanation of the purpose of using this reference from the Psalms. He says: "The Old Testament scriptures were written for our instruction—particularly in the area of helping the weak." The scriptures are a great source of patience and comfort. When we do what is right, we retain our hope.

Verse five seems to have the element of a prayer. It is Paul's deep-

est desire that the God who can produce patience and comfort should so work in their lives as to cause them to be of the same mind, according to the example of Christ.

The true purpose of receiving one another is seen in vs. 6: That we might present to the world one choir of praise to God. This God is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, the conclusion: Let us accept one another in the same way we were accepted by God in Christ. If God is willing to overlook all our imperfections, why should we hesitate, especially when we know it brings glory to God. God will be honored even by the unbelieving when they see his power and love in the lives of his followers.

Verse seven begins a new thought, yet one which is associated with the preceding. Christ came to reconcile both Jew and Gentile in one body, and this he did. The application is—if he came to do this, are we not frustrating his purpose if we divide among ourselves? The details of this argument are: Christ was born of the Jewish race in order to save them. He came in fulfillment of promises made by God to the fathers. Not one promise failed—not one word proved untrue. The end result was the salvation of all the world.

We are yet developing the thought of mutual helpfulness. Verses 9-12 contain a series of Old Testament prophecies which show in their promise and fulfillment the unity of Jews and Gentiles. Note: In 9b David is in the midst of the Gentiles confessing the name of God and singing with the Gentiles. In Deut. 32:43 are the words of 10a. Moses is here called to support the thought. In this example the Gentiles are represented as rejoicing among the Jews. Once again in Psa. 117:1 the acceptance of the Gentiles is stated. The joy they have in this acceptance is described. The inference is obvious: "Christ has accepted all; do you then accept one another."

The final word on the subject is given by Isaiah. The "root out of Jesse" was to be exalted at God's right hand for the purpose of ruling the world. All in the world who accept his rule shall find salvation. This is for both Jew and Gentile. The point still carries of mutual acceptance of one another.

### *Text*

15:14-33. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 But I write the more boldly

379. What new thought is introduced by verse seven?

380. Why the use of the Old Testament prophecies in verses 9-12?

381. How does the thought of Christ ruling the world relate to mutual helpfulness?

unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, 16 that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and around about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; 20 yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; 21 but, as it is written,

They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,  
And they who have not heard shall understand.

22 Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: 23 but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, 24 whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—25 but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. 26 For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. 27 Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. 29 And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; 32 that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

#### REALIZING ROMANS, 15:14-33

612. Paul gives a very generous compliment in vs. 14. If they were full of both goodness and knowledge, why did he write them as he did?

613. Does the phrase "able to admonish one another" suggest the "order of service" in the Roman church? Are we doing today what they did then in this matter of admonishing one another?
614. Paul wrote to the saints in Rome to stir up their memory. What would they be able to remember that would help them? He gives his authority for so writing. What was it?
615. Paul seems to look upon himself as both a minister and priest in vs. 16. Show how. What is the meaning of "sanctified by the Holy Spirit"?
616. Is the word "boasting" a good synonym for "glorying" in vs. 17?
617. Paul had spoken of many other things even to these brethren. How are we to understand vs. 18?
618. What distinction is there between "the power of signs and wonders" and "the power of the Holy Spirit"? cf. vs. 19.
619. Locate Illyricum on the map and marvel with me at the accomplishments of the Apostle. Is Paul here speaking of his own personal preaching or the preaching he directed?
620. Why would Paul be reticent to "build upon another man's foundation"?
621. Verse twenty-one has marvelous application today. There are 120 countries and only 28 of them have gospel preaching. Why is it we do not answer the call of those who have never heard?
622. Why was Paul hindered from coming to the saints in Rome?
623. From where was this epistle written? What is meant by saying "having no more place in these regions"?
624. Paul planned an evangelistic tour of Spain. Did he go?
625. What were the saints in Rome going to do for Paul on his journey to Spain?
626. At the time of the writing Paul was on his way to Jerusalem with an offering. Read the references in his other letters regarding this offering. Why was it taken? How long did it take to obtain it? Who carried it? From whom was it taken?
627. Paul felt Gentiles had a debt to pay to the Jews. What was it?
628. In what sense is money "carnal"?
629. "Sealed to them this fruit"—what a picturesque phrase. What does it mean?
630. Wasn't Paul a little presumptuous to assume help from the brethren in Rome?
631. What is "the fullness of the blessing of Christ"?
632. Is the "love of the Spirit" in vs. 30 the Spirit's love or our love for the Spirit?
633. Note and number the three requests of Paul's prayer.

634. What effect would prayers have on the disobedient in Judea?
635. Give the meaning of the word "strive" in vs. 30. Are we to "strive" in our prayers? Do you do it?
636. There is in vs. 31 a most wonderful picture of unselfishness. Paul requests earnest prayer on behalf of the reception of an offering. Show the unselfishness in it.
637. Paul came to Rome, but not to rest. What were the circumstances of his coming?
638. In all the doxologies and benedictions there is a request. Just how would it be fulfilled? If it were, how would we know it?

### *Paraphrase*

15:14-33. However, my brethren, though I have given both instruction and reproof, I have not a mean [low] opinion either of your knowledge or virtue. For even I myself am persuaded concerning you, that, in general, ye are full of good dispositions; and that, being filled with all knowledge of the Christian doctrine, ye are able also to instruct one another.

15 But, notwithstanding my good opinion of you, I have written the more boldly to you, brethren, partly as calling things to your remembrance, which I am qualified to do through the grace of apostleship given me of God. (Rom. i. 5. xii. 6.)

16 In order to my being a public minister of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, ministering to them as a priest the knowledge of the gospel of God, that by their believing it, there might be an offering of the Gentiles most acceptable to God, being cleansed from their former impurities by the influences of the Holy Ghost accompanying my preaching.

17 I have therefore cause of boasting, through Christ Jesus, with respect to my success in things pertaining to God; my success in presenting the Gentiles an acceptable offering to God.

18 Now, though I might justly claim praise on account of the success of my disciples, yet I will not, in this boasting, dare to speak any thing of what Christ hath not wrought, but of what he hath wrought by me personally, in order to make the Gentiles obedient to the gospel, both in profession and practice, (see Rom. i. 5. xv. 26.)

19 By the power of miracles, performed by me on the sick and maimed, and what is still greater, by the power of the gifts of the Spirit of God, communicated by me to the Gentiles; so that, beginning at Jerusalem, and going through the countries round about as far as Illyricum, I have fully and successfully preached the gospel of Christ.



20 And it became me thus diligently to preach the gospel, not where Christ was acknowledged, that I might not build on another man's foundation: that would have been to perform the office of a subordinate teacher, which is far more easy than that of an apostle.

21 But I have preached to the most ignorant nations, so that, as it is written, they shall know the Saviour, to whom nothing hath been told concerning him by their instructors; and they who have not heard the method of salvation explained, shall understand it fully.

22 For which reason also, that I resolved to preach the gospel to those who had never heard it, I have been oftentimes hindered from coming to you.

23 But now, having no more opportunity in these parts to preach to persons who have not heard the gospel, and having for many years entertained a strong desire to come to you who are in Rome,

24 Whensoever I go towards Spain, I will come to you: For in my journey to that country, where, by preaching the gospel, I expect to turn the idolatrous inhabitants from Satan to God, I hope to see you at leisure, and to be accompanied a part of my way thitherward by some of you, after I shall first be made happy for a while with your company.

25 But at present I go to Jerusalem with the money I have collected for the brethren in Judea.

26 For the churches in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a liberal contribution for the relief of the poor of the brethren who are in Jerusalem in great distress.

27 They have been pleased, verily, to make this contribution: and they have done well; because they are under great obligations to the Jewish Christians. For if the Gentiles have received of their spiritual things, if they have received from them the knowledge of the gospel, they ought certainly to minister to them of their worldly goods in their present need.

28 Wherefore, having finished this business, by delivering the money at Jerusalem, and having secured to the Jewish saints the fruit of the love which the Gentiles bear to them, I will go from Judea by you into Spain.

29 And from my experience of God's working by me, I know that when I come, I shall come empowered to bestow on you abundantly the gifts of the Spirit, (Rom. i. 11.), which are the peculiar blessing of the gospel of Christ.

382. How can God fill us with hope and joy?

383. What is the relationship to the joy of the Holy Spirit in our being at peace with one another?

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by all that the Lord Jesus Christ hath done for you, and by the love which the Spirit hath showed to you, in giving you his manifold gifts, that ye strive together with me, by earnestly praying for me to God;

31 That I may be delivered from the disobedient in Judea, and that my service, in making the collections, which I am performing to the saints in Jerusalem, may be acceptable to them, and contribute to remove the prejudices which they entertain against the Gentile Christians for not obeying the law:

32 That in joy, on account of the reconciliation of the Jewish to the Gentile brethren, I may come to you by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed by the happiness following that reconciliation.

33 Now, may God, the author of peace, and who I hope will produce peace between the Jews and Gentiles, be with you all: and to show my sincerity in this wish, I say Amen.

### *Summary*

The Apostle prays that the God of hope may fill the disciples in Rome with all peace and joy in believing what he has written. Although he has spoken plainly to them, and signified his disapprobation of certain things among them, still he is far from thinking meanly of them. On the contrary, he is persuaded that they are full of knowledge, and altogether able to teach and admonish one another. His bold manner in places is assumed in virtue of his apostolic office. The great object of his labors is that he may be enabled at last to present the Gentiles as a glorious and acceptable offering to God. He mentions the vast extent of his labors, and assigns the reason for wishing to preach where Christ had never been named.

The Apostle's multiplied labors in different countries had often hindered him from executing a purpose long since formed of one day visiting Rome. But now being without a place in those regions to preach the gospel where it had not before been preached, he decides to make the visit soon. But, first, he must go into Judea to carry a contribution from Greece and Macedonia to the poor brethren in Jerusalem. This service performed however, he proposes next a journey to Spain, and decides to see Rome on his way. He very ardently desires to be delivered, while in Judea, from the unbelieving Jews there, and that his alms may be acceptable to the poor disciples for whom they were intended.

384. Why have we said verse fourteen is "a delicate piece of diplomacy"?

385. Why the sharp application in parts of the letter?

386. In what sense did Paul consider himself a priest?

387. How could Paul boast and still be humble?

*Comment*

## II. Conclusion, 15:13-16:27

## 1. Personal Matters, 15:13-33

Paul is to now speak of some of the results of applying the principles discussed in earlier verses. The great God who is the source and foundation of our hope of heaven can fill us with joy and peace if we believe what has been said about getting along with one another. Only when we are thus full of peace and joy can the Holy Spirit produce in us with power the abounding hope of glory. The importance of being at peace with one another is surely here pointed out.

Verse 14 is indeed "a delicate piece of diplomacy." Paul says that he has the greatest confidence in their goodness and knowledge. He suggests that he is not writing to them because he feels they are stubborn and ignorant. On the contrary, most of them were ready to receive his instructions and well able to carry them out. It is not to be thought that all the saints in Rome were "filled with goodness" or "filled with knowledge," but this was true of many of them. Paul wants to compliment them, and by so doing, to encourage those who lacked, to measure up.

"Parts of this letter are very sharp in application to personal life," says Paul. "This is true so that you saints in Rome might recall to mind the truths you learned when you became Christians, and some of those since that time." Paul says he has done this because of his apostolic office. God has constrained him so to write. Most especially is this true because he was called to minister to the Gentiles. The Roman church had many Gentiles. Paul came to them and to all nations, performing his sacred function in administering the good news of God that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Paul looks upon himself in analogy, as one standing before the altar of God as a priest offering the Gentiles who have believed up to God. This sacrifice or offering will be acceptable because it is pure and holy, pure because the Holy Spirit has made it pure. It is here stated that we as Christians are kept pure by the Holy Spirit so that one day we will be accepted by God. What a wonderful, encouraging thought!

Because many Gentiles had been presented to God by Paul, he was enabled to "boast in Christ"—which is something far different from boasting in himself—in matters relating to God. Paul rejoices in God's wonderful accomplishments through him.

388. In what sense was the gospel "fully preached"? Did every person hear?

389. Why was Paul hindered in coming to those in Rome? What caused the hindrance?

390. What did Paul expect from those at Rome?

Verse 18 indicates that Paul will mention only those things in which he was personally concerned. "It would be difficult to evaluate the work of another, but what Christ has done in and through me I can most certainly tell." This seems to be the meaning here.

Now follows in three short phrases the summation of all of Paul's work. What did God through Christ accomplish by Paul? Here it is: (1) Many, many wonderful acts by the power of the Spirit; (2) much inspired teaching and preaching by word and deed; (3) the words and deeds fully confirmed in those who heard and received, by signs and wonders. All of this was to one glorious end, "the obedience of the Gentiles."

In carrying out the commission given to him, Paul says that, considering Jerusalem as a geographical center, he has "fully preached the gospel of Christ" even as far as Illyricum. When Paul was in Ephesus "all Asia" heard the word. Paul so labored himself and so encouraged others that the message was spread throughout the whole district in which he preached. Surely he "labored more abundantly than them all."

It was a matter of personal honor with the apostle to work in virgin territory. There might be several reasons advanced for so doing, but the one Paul gave was that he "might not build on another man's foundation." This has real advantages, as any preacher of experience will agree.

Paul saw in this type of preaching a fulfillment of prophecy from Isaiah. To those who have never heard, to those who do not see— to these shall I bring divine understanding and sight. What a grand objective for every preacher.

For the very reason just cited, that he had found so many places where Christ had not been preached, Paul was often hindered in his desire to visit the church at Rome. At the writing of the epistle the situation had changed. In all of the area around the great city of Corinth he had fully preached the gospel. One cannot but wonder just what is entailed in "fully preaching" to the thousands who lived near Corinth. How was it done and who did it?

Paul is not planning a visit to Rome just to see the saints there, but to be helped by them on his way to evangelize Spain. Did Paul fulfill his wish to see Rome? We know he did, but under far different circumstances than he first planned. Did he preach in Spain? We do not know.

391. For whom was the offering taken? How many participated? How long was it in gathering?

392. The love of Christ was surely perfected in Paul. What indicates this?

393. Name the three requests in the prayer of Paul.

It is both encouraging and different to read of Paul's attitude toward the support of the gospel by those in Rome. Paul had never seen them, and yet he assumes in all confidence they will offer him financial and material assistance when he sees them on his way to Spain. Paul expected to be equipped by the brethren in Rome. While there, Paul also expected to rejoice with them in their mutual faith. In this he could not be fully satisfied, for time would not permit.

The time and place of the writing of the epistle are indicated in vs. 25, 26. By referring to the Acts account and other references, we conclude that Corinth and the third missionary journey were the place and time.

The saints of Judea and Jerusalem were very much in need of food and clothing. This need was met, upon the insistence of Paul. It was more than a year in gathering, and seven men were used to carry it. It was taken from a wider area than just Macedonia and Achaia, reaching even to Galatia.

Paul lays down a principle in vs. 27 that would find application in his relationship with many of the Gentile Christians in Rome. The Gentiles of Macedonia (in the churches of Thessalonica, Philippi, Berea) felt a debt must be paid to those in Jerusalem. The offering was a payment in material means for the spiritual blessings of the gospel. The gospel came from the Jews: we are their debtors.

Verse 28 is very much like vs. 24. The addition in vs. 28 is the route he is to take on his way to Rome, and the reason for it.

When Paul arrived in Rome he would come with the "whole council of God." To the holy in Rome he would impart the marvelous blessings of the gospel. There would be signs and wonders to confirm the word, but the spiritual benefit would be in the teaching and preaching.

Verses 30, 31 give an insight into Paul's feelings regarding his visit and gift to the poor in Jerusalem. He says in thought, "It is my most earnest desire that you battle with me in prayers that I might be protected from the merciless hands of certain who hate me in Judea." In addition to this, he says, "Allow the love of Christ and the love of the Holy Spirit to prompt you to join with me in the most earnest of petitions that none in the Jerusalem church will refuse the money I bring for them." How the love of Christ had been perfected in Paul can here be seen. He prayed for those who hated him, for those who misunderstood him, and not in a perfunctory manner but with all his heart and called upon Gentiles to do likewise.

394. What seems to suggest that Phoebe was the one who delivered the letter to Rome?

395. Was Phoebe a "deaconess"?

We might add vs. 32 to the prayer request, for it is a part of it. The whole request has three parts: (1) To be delivered from evil men; (2) the offering to be acceptable; (3) to arrive in Rome with joy and refreshment. The first part was not answered. The second was. The third was modified. Thus does God grant an answer that is better than our requests. He knows what is best, and we are satisfied to rest in this confidence.

Verse 33 contains a most beautiful and meaningful benediction. What more could anyone ask or wish than to have the assurance that God was with him always?

### *Text*

16:1-16. I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreae: 2 that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.

3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: 5 and salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ. 6 Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you. 7 Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me. 8 Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord. 9 Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Salute Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them that are of the household of Aristobulus. 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord. 12 Salute Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. 13 Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them. 15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them. 16 Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

### *Rethinking in Outline Form*

c. Exhortations to Mutual Helpfulness. 15:1-13.

- (1) The strong to help the weak. v. 1 cf. 14:1; Gal. 6:2.
- (2) To please others. vs. 2-3.

This is to be limited by pleasing them only in the