

**Prayer:**

**Slide # 1**  
**Romans**

**Theme:** The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

**Outline:**

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39  
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20  
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21  
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical: 12:1-15:33** (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

Paul, in the early part of the book of Romans, shows very clearly that justification is by faith alone.

Essentially the entire chapter of Romans 4 puts forth Abraham as the example showing that we are saved by faith alone. There he shows us that Abraham was saved by faith alone apart from works (Rom. 4:1-3); he was saved by faith alone apart from circumcision or religious rites (Rom. 4:9-12); and he was saved by faith alone apart from the law (Rom. 4:13-17). He then shows that Abraham had a persevering faith (Rom. 4:18-22). And then he applies it showing that the nature of saving faith that applied to Abraham also applies to all true believers today (Rom. 4:23-25). The nature of saving faith has not changed – it remains the same in all dispensations.

Yes, revelation was progressive and God held people to believe in accordance with the revelation given. But now after the resurrection of Christ, Paul says that “now God commands all men to repent” and to put their faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30). Now there is “no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Well, having at great length put forth Abraham as the premiere example of saving faith and making application to where we live, Paul then segues into this statement in Romans 5:1...

**Slide # 2****Romans 5:1 (NKJV)**

**1** Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Having developed the truth of justification by faith alone, Paul then in the practical section of the book (chapters 12-15) emphasizes how we should then live as believers. Here he spells out many duties and responsibilities, but the thing he spends the most time on is HOW BELIEVERS SHOULD GET ALONG! We should take note of that. The whole of Romans 14 and half of chapter 15 deals with this subject. It is a MAJOR emphasis.

Christian living is not that complicated – we are called to radically love one another. It is not complicated but it is HARD – yea, it is impossible apart from God’s enablement by the Holy Spirit.

Imagine a whole bunch of people from all kinds of different backgrounds, all kinds of different temperaments, all kinds of different levels of spiritual knowledge and maturity; and all kinds of differing perspectives on a whole range of things. Are they going to ever be able to get along?

*“To live above, with saints we love, that will be glory.  
To live below, with the saints we know, that’s quite a different story!”*

One of the great testaments to the power of God at work in people is for them to get along in a Spirit-filled manner. It is one of the most important things a church ever does. Jesus said all would know we are His disciples by our love for one another (Jn. 13:35). This is our calling – we are called to get along with one another! We could almost summarize the book of Romans like this: ***You are saved by faith now get along!***

Apart from outright sin, nothing shatters the fellowship, the spiritual growth, and the witness of a congregation so much as disharmony among its members. – ***John MacArthur***

Paul writes to weak and strong Christians – those that are still green in their understanding and those who are mature in their knowledge. In chapter 14 he emphasizes they should not despise or condemn one another in regard to secondary matters. He emphasizes that the strong should not run roughshod over the sensitive consciousness of the weaker brother. They must not learn to violate their conscience – but rather must be brought along in love.

Now in chapter 15 he adds that we should follow the example of Christ Who did not please Himself but went through what He did for the good of others.

### **Romans 15:1–6 (NKJV)**

**1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.**

The Romans 15 chapter break is an unfortunate chapter division because the discussion of how the stronger and the weaker brother should interact continues from chapter 14.

Paul here once again identifies with the stronger brother – that is, the one who has knowledge and, therefore, freedom from certain scruples that the immature are still working through.

Remember the weaker brother is not carnal. In this context, he is serious about the Lord. He holds to what he does as unto the Lord (Rom. 14:6). This is not a case of rebellion but rather one not yet fully understanding. It is therefore a matter of sincere conscience.

Scruples are questions of doubt about certain things. For example a converted Jew might still think it is wrong to eat pork since that has been his practice throughout his entire life. He needs to be taught. In love he needs to be brought along. But as Paul has shown he must not be forced or pressured to violate his conscience. But such a person would have scruples about diet. Such a person is still weak – still green.

In such a case the stronger brother should **“bear with the scruples of the weak and not please ourselves.”** (cf. Gal. 6:2) The burden here is on the strong. They need to be sensitive to the weaker brother and not force their liberty upon him. Maturity is a lot about learning to not just please ourselves. Even though we may have the liberty to do something yet, it might not be the most loving thing to do.

Notice Paul says the strong OUGHT to do this. This indicates it is an obligation. This is a moral obligation. To “bear with” means not merely to tolerate but rather “to carry,” “to support,” and “to bear patiently with them in a helping manner.”

It is one thing to be STRONG in knowledge and another thing to be mature in love. As Paul says in 1 Cor. 8:1, “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

Biblical love and maturity thinks about the good of the other person instead of just pleasing myself. Selfishness is always opposed to true love. This is always key: Am I thinking about myself or the good of the other person? The challenge for the strong is to also be loving. The challenge for the strong is not to have a critical spirit. The challenge for the strong is to not come off like “a know it all”. The challenge for the strong is to not insist on having it my way where there are other extenuating factors.

**Let me illustrate:** When you are out driving you know the laws. You stop at a red light, show caution at a yellow light (clear the intersection), and go through a green light. But the wise driver will always consider his surroundings and use caution. Imagine having a green light – you have the right away, but then you see another vehicle coming right through a red light. You do have the right to go through but if you do it is going to cause great damage. If your liberty is going to put you on a collision course with a weaker brother then by all means yield for the greater good of all. Love considers the greater good of all! Be a good driver – spiritually speaking! Proceed with caution for the good of all!

The weak need special care – and love provides it!

### **Slide # 3**

#### ***Responsibility of the Strong towards the Weak...***

- 1) Receive the weak (Rom. 14:1).
- 2) Do not despise the weak (Rom. 14:3).
- 3) Do not be a stumbling block (Rom. 14:13).
- 4) Walk in love (Rom. 14:15).
- 5) Do not grieve or destroy the weak (Rom. 14:15).
- 6) Pursue peace (Rom. 14:17).
- 7) Seek to edify (Rom. 14:19).
- 8) Do not flaunt your liberty (Rom. 14:22).
- 9) Bear with the scruples of the weak (Rom. 15:1).
- 10) Don't seek to please self (Rom. 15:1).

The strong believer is exhorted not to think of self and his liberties, but rather to think of the weaker brother's good. Not pleasing ourself means saying “No” to self for the good of the other.

**Note:** Paul in Galatians 1:10 emphasizes that he was not a man-pleaser. But the context there is in relationship to compromising the gospel. Paul would not compromise the gospel or essential doctrine. But in secondary matters he would for the conscience sake of others give space for the weak to mature and grow. Paul was always thinking in terms of the spiritual good of others and that is the exhortation here.

## **2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.**

The principle is this. Think about the good of your neighbor and not just what pleases you. This is being other centered and not self-centered.

**A lady took my seat** in church a while back. It's not that important really. She is a very nice lady, kind and considerate. A good friend, in fact. There were several other seats available. I can sit anywhere. The people in our congregation are as friendly and caring as you will find anywhere in the world. A person should be comfortable sitting anywhere. It's no big deal.

My seat is in the seventh row back from the front of the church. I'm sure she didn't intend to take my seat. She just wouldn't do that. Nor would anybody else in our fine church. It doesn't make that much difference. My seat is on the end of the pew, on the north side by the windows. On your left as you come into the sanctuary. I can rest my left arm on the end of the pew. It's a good seat. But I would never raise a fuss about a seat. She probably didn't intend anything personal by taking my seat. I would never hold a grudge...

Actually, it was about three months ago when she took my seat. I really don't know why she took it. I've never done anything to her. I've never taken her seat. I suppose I'll have to come an hour early now to get my seat. Either that or sit on the south side.

She really took it because it's one of the best seats in the house. That's why she took it. She had no business taking my seat. And I'm not going to go to church two hours early to get what was rightfully mine from the beginning.

This is the way great social injustices begin: abusive people taking other people's seats in church. This is the way the seeds of revolution are sown. A person can only stand so much. Where is it going to end? If somebody doesn't stand up and be counted, nobody's seat will be safe. People will just sit anywhere they please. And the next thing they'll do is take my parking place, too. World order will be in shambles...

- Zean Carney, Editor *The Banner-Press*

Often it's the little things that don't really matter. When SELF gets in the mix it is always a problem! Let each of us ( with application for all and especially for the strong in this context) – let each of us please his neighbor for his good. Let the rights of self go! Think about the GOOD of the other!

The spiritual goal is always to be about the edification of the other (cf. 14:19). Edification means “**to build up**”, “**to make strong**”. The goal is always to help make people spiritually stronger even if that means setting aside my personal preferences or my spiritual rights.

This does not mean that the weak control the church – that they have only to express a scruple and all rush to conform. That would mean that the church would be permanently tied to the level of the weak and that life and growth would cease. Paul is not laying down a rule of conduct but enunciating a principle of tender concern....A genuine concern for the weak will mean an attempt to make them strong by leading them out of their irrational scruples so that they, too, will be strong. – **Leon Morris**

Paul in 1 Cor. 10:33 says, “I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit”. In 1 Cor. 13:5 he says love, “does not seek its own”. It's not about SELF!

Love in the Bible consistently involves sacrificial giving. It hurts! Dying to self for the good of others is not always easy – rather it is consistently hard. And to make his point even sharper, Paul now brings out the ultimate example as found in Christ Himself.

**3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”**

It's not always easy to put up with people – to bear with them. Christ is the ultimate example of putting up with a lot for the good of others!

The quote here is from Psalm 69:9 which is a Messianic Psalm.

#### **Slide # 4**

**Psalm 69:9 (NKJV)**

**9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.**

This was the experience of Christ in His state of humility in the incarnation. As a man – as the God-man this is what He went through. What people actually thought of God is how they treated Him. And it wasn't pretty!

**Reproaches** is the idea of insults, slander, false accusations, put downs. Christ's march to the cross was not a pleasant experience. It was not a "self-pleasing" experience, and yet for the sake of others Christ allowed Himself to go through it.

### **Slide # 5**

#### **Isaiah 53:3 (NKJV)**

**3** He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

The example of Christ is that we should be willing to put self down, to deny pleasing self for the ultimate spiritual good of others. This is the way of Christ.

Christ came into a God-hating – a God reviling world. He perfectly represented the Father and the world hated Him for it. Should we expect better treatment? Should we expect to be pampered?

### **Slide # 6**

#### **Hebrews 13:13 (NKJV)**

**13** Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, **bearing His reproach.**

The willingness of Christ to not please Himself for the benefit of others serves as our ultimate example of how we should now live. It's not about SELF – it's about the good of others. This is the example of Christ.

### **Slide # 7**

#### **Philippians 2:3–8 (NKJV)**

**3** Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in **lowliness of mind** let each **esteem others better than himself.**

**4** Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the **interests of others.**

**5** Let **this mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

**6** who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

**7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

**8** And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** and became **obedient to the point of death**, even the death of the cross.

If you think you put up with a lot from people – consider Jesus! The old question “What would Jesus do?” is made clear in the Scriptures. Jesus took tremendous abuse for the sake of others. He tolerated a lot! Can’t we set aside a few of our “rights”?

A lot of Christian living has to do with dealing with difficult people! It has a lot to do with working with people who think and practice differently than you do. They have different ideas! They can be irksome – especially when in their immaturity they are WRONG! It is the responsibility of the strong to work with sincere immature believers for their ultimate good – even though it can be frustrating. Part of being a living sacrifice involves patiently dealing with other people for their ultimate good. This is Christ-like!

How can we cope? How can we get to where we properly deal with difficult people?

Paul has just quoted from the OT giving the ultimate example of putting up with difficult people as found in the example of Christ. Now Paul widens the application to the whole of the OT Scriptures. The Scriptures show us how to deal with life – with difficult people and situations.

**4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.**

I love this verse! It says if you want to know how to cope when you don’t feel like pleasing others – when you don’t feel like putting up with the frustration of your neighbors irksome ways. What should you do? Go to the Scriptures. They are expressly written to help you with this!

In view here is essentially the OT Scriptures. There is a wealth of spiritual wisdom there for our learning and application.



Years ago at the church I pastored in California, I referred in a sermon to the story of when Sennacherib had surrounded Jerusalem with his army. He sent a threatening letter to King Hezekiah, which the king took to the temple and spread out before the Lord, praying for deliverance. As I referred to that story, I could tell from the looks on people's faces that many had no clue of what I was talking about. So I asked everyone to bow their heads and close their eyes. Then I asked everyone who had never read that story to raise their hands. More than half of the hands in the congregation went up. I was stunned. That isn't an obscure story in the Bible. It occurs in three different places ([2 Kings 18-19](#); [2 Chron. 32](#); [Isa. 36-37](#)). That meager show of hands told me that my people were not reading the Old Testament. – **Steven Cole**

Now of course we put an emphasis on the New Testament, but there is a wealth of spiritual treasures in the OT that we need to mine. In fact, the NT builds on the OT and so if we know the OT well it will enrich our study of the NT. When you get to the end of the book in Revelation it ties together all that has gone before. Of the 404 verses in Revelation 278 of them either quote or allude to the OT Scriptures. You really can't deeply understand Revelation if you haven't first studied the OT.

Notice the broad sweeping emphasis here in Romans 15:4 where Paul says, "***For whatever things were written before were written for our learning***". Yes, these things had special application in the day they were written but they also pertain to us. There are things we need to learn from the OT -important principles related to dealing with hard things, hard words, and hard circumstances.

### **Slide # 8**

#### **2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)**

**16 All Scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable** for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped** for every good work.

### **Slide # 9**

#### **1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)**

**11** Now all these things happened to them as **examples**, and they were **written for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

The things written before (the OT Scriptures) were written for our instruction. And specifically, he says they were written, “that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Note the three key words here of **patience** which means endurance or steadfastness; **comfort** which means encouragement; and **hope** which means confident expectation. These three realities are grounded in the Scriptures and our study of them.

Want to build spiritual ENDURANCE – study the OT. Want to be ENCOURAGED in your spiritual struggles – study the OT. Want to be strengthened in your HOPE – study the OT. It was written for this purpose – to strengthen, encourage, and give hope.

Consider some OT examples.

**Joseph.** Oh my what he went through. Those miserable brothers of his first left him for dead and then when opportunity knocked sold him into slavery where he ended up in Egypt. For a young man that had to be really unbelievably hard. But in the midst of that context we find the consistent refrain, “But the LORD was with Joseph” (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23). And when it was all over Joseph was exalted to the second highest position in the land right under Pharaoh. And looking back Joseph could say to his brothers....

### **Slide # 10**

**Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)**

**20** But as for you, **you meant evil** against me; but **God meant it for good**, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

This is the Romans 8:28 “all things work together for good” of the OT. But what a great example. As we study it – it serves to strengthen us so we might endure; it comforts us, and it builds hope as we see that God has an ultimate good purpose in everything.

**What about Moses?** Moses took a stand for God’s people and in the process had to run for his life from the face of Pharaoh. He spent 40 years on the backside of the desert, herding sheep. But then God called him to special service. And that was not easy. Over and over the people he served for their good wanted to stone him (Ex. 17:4; Num. 14:10). But God preserved him and he became the most regarded leader in the history of Israel.

David was a man after God's own heart, but he did not have an easy life. After being anointed as king he ran for his life for about 10 years before officially becoming the king. He had many enemies. Often people that should have stood with him did not.

### **Slide # 11**

#### **1 Samuel 30:6 (NKJV)**

**6** Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.**

Read the Psalms – David is constantly dealing with troublesome people and time after time he goes to God and finds relief for his soul.

The OT is full of examples that serve to strengthen us in our walk, to encourage us, and fill us with hope. They show us what kind of a God we serve and how He works. They show us example after example of how God's people coped by relying upon Him.

Further consider the prophets. They continually spoke truth to God's people for their own good and were consistently rejected. Stephen, the first martyr of the church summarized their lot in this way.

### **Slide # 12**

#### **Acts 7:52 (NKJV)**

**52** **Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?** And they **killed** those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

And then what of the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. Over and over we are told that He would suffer and yet that would not be the end of the story.

### **Slide # 13**

#### **Psalms 118:22–23 (NKJV)**

**22** The stone which the builders **rejected** Has become the **chief cornerstone.**

**23** This was the **LORD's doing**; It is **marvelous** in our eyes.

The OT is full of examples and teaching that serves to build endurance, to encourage us and to build hope.

The word “**patience**” (Gk. hupomone) means “to remain under” or “to remain steadfast” in the midst of trials and affliction.

The word “**comfort**” (Gk. paraklesis) is the idea of consolation or encouragement. It is the idea of a helper that brings solace. In the midst of the battle, we need encouraging comfort.

The word “**hope**” is a very special word in the Bible. Someone has said biblical “hope” is the thing that most strikingly distinguishes the true Christian from his pagan neighbor.

As believers, we have HOPE! The idea of hope relates to the promises of God and the future God has promised. Hope is grounded in the promises of God and looks to the future for God to bring to pass what He has promised.

Without the clear and certain promises of the Word of God, the believer has no basis for hope (cf. Ps. 119:81, 114; Eph. 2:12; Jer. 14:8). – **John MacArthur**

Hope in the Bible is a certain expectation. It is future oriented. It is confidence that God will bring to pass all of His promises. And the NT emphasizes a “living hope” as found in the truth of our risen Savior (1 Pet. 1:3). Come what may we as believers have a BRIGHT future!

**This week I read** of a missionary family. They had six children but their oldest one had cancer. They sought every possible avenue of help and specialist they could find, but the cancer continued. Their daughter was 14 when the cancer took her, but before she died she said, “God is going to heal me, either here on earth or in Heaven, I’m going to be healed.” Indeed, we have a living hope! Hope goes beyond this life! It looks to the after life for ultimate fulfillment!

Paul addressed the issue of HOPE earlier in the letter.

### **Slide # 14**

#### **Romans 5:3–5 (NKJV)**

**3** And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, **hope**.

5 Now **hope does not disappoint**, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

God through all our experience is building HOPE in us. This ultimately is a ministry of the Spirit working in us, but a KEY way He works is through the Word. As we study the Word the Spirit takes the Word and strengthens us in hope! It builds our confidence that the best is yet to be! God has promised!

### **Slide # 15**

**Hebrews 11:10 (NKJV)**

10 for he **waited** for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

**Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV)**

13 These all died in faith, not having received the **promises**, but having seen them afar off were **assured of them**, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

**Hebrews 11:16 (NKJV)**

16 But now they **desire a better**, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God**, for He has prepared a city for them.

This is the stuff of HOPE. It looks to God to bring to pass what He has promised. And for those with this kind of HOPE God is not ashamed to be called their God. This defines the people of God.

### **Slide # 16**

**Hebrews 11:24–26 (NKJV)**

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for **he looked to the reward**.

Looking to the reward that would be in the future beyond this life is the stuff of HOPE! As we study the Scriptures, the common denominator in the people of God is that DEATH is not the end – we have a hope beyond this life. It truly is what sets us apart from the world.

**Slide # 17****Titus 2:13 (NKJV)**

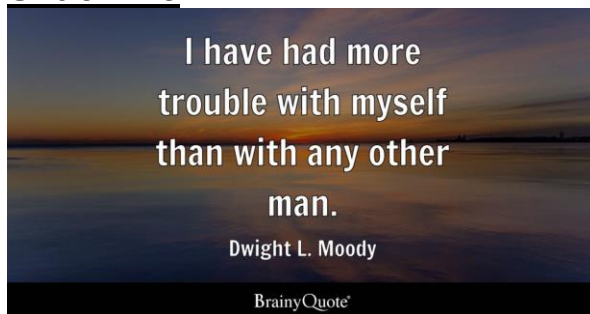
**13** looking for the **blessed hope** and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Note that in verse 4 Paul begins with our learning and ends with HOPE. You can't bypass the learning and be strong in hope. Hope builds on the learning of what has been written in the Scriptures. Faith comes by hearing the Word (Rom. 10:17), and so does hope. Hope is actually a type of faith – it is faith in relation to the future – it is faith that God will bring to pass in the future what He has promised.

During World War II, some men in a German prisoner of war camp received a secret message that Germany had surrendered to the Allies, but it was three more days before the Germans heard that news. During those three days, their grim circumstances were no different than before, but their spirits were uplifted because they now had hope. The news was certain, but not yet realized. – **Steven Cole**

This illustrates the effect that HOPE has in the heart of the believer.

Working with people is challenging and sometimes difficult. And sometimes we have the most difficulty with those very close to us – whom Paul in verse 2 calls a “neighbor”. A neighbor is literally “one who is close”. I am reminded of what D.L. Moody said...

**Slide # 18**

And then after that those we often struggle the most with are those in the body that are our brothers and sisters. I have heard both Chuck Swindoll and John MacArthur say that their greatest challenges in the course of their many years of ministry have not been from the outside but rather from within the professing family of God. That is often the case.

We need to get along, but it is challenging. It might even be very difficult at times, but there is something in the Scriptures to deal with every situation that we might face – no matter the people problems we are dealing with. And saturating our hearts and mind with the Scriptures builds endurance in working with people; it comforts us as we see we are not the first to face whatever we are dealing with, and it builds hope as we see how God has repeatedly brought His saints through whatever the challenge has been.

The OT has much to teach us regarding those in the past who lived so as not to please themselves and how God worked amazingly through them.

Do we find the road irksome, this character-developing road of shouldering the weaknesses of others? Are we apt to lose patience with the weak brother and his scruples? The antidote is in the Scriptures. We must get back into the Book and see how God helped others over the hard places and comforted, for He has not changed. He will help us too. – ***John Phillips***

The record of God in the OT Scriptures in the lives of His OT saints is one long record of patience in putting up with people with the goal of bringing them along! This is our calling too.

I fear we are often way too quick to give up on people. Consider the long and enduring ministry of the prophets. Consider the ministry of Jesus and what He put up with concerning the disciples. They were not a quick study!

**5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,**

Paul now expresses a prayer desire that God would grant that they be like-minded toward one another. The overarching theme throughout this whole section is that the family of God get along well to the glory of God. That is the essence of this prayer wish.

### **Slide # 19**

v. 4 - God's Word the SOURCE of patience and comfort.

v. 5 – God Himself is the SOURCE of patience and comfort.

What is attributed to the Word in verse 4 is attributed to God in verse 5, which means that it is ultimately God Himself who is behind spiritual endurance and encouragement. He mediates it through His Word.

The Word truly is living and powerful and is used by God to strengthen and encourage us in battle (Heb. 4:12).

God is the ultimate source behind endurance, comfort, hope, and peace.

**Slide # 20**

- v. 5 – “God of patience” (endurance)
- v. 5 – God of comfort (encouragement)
- v. 13 – “God of hope”
- v. 33 – “God of peace”

When Paul prays that they be like-minded toward one another according to Christ Jesus he is desiring that they exhibit the character traits he has been emphasizing as they relate to one another.

He is not saying they have to think identically the same thing on everything.

I read about 25 commentators for my Sunday morning sermons. These commentators essentially agree with each other on almost everything significant, but on the details, they often disagree. No two commentators agree on absolutely everything. I don't agree with any of them on absolutely every detail. And so it is when you have two thinking people they are not going to agree on absolutely everything.

Paul has already said earlier that when it comes to matters of opinion, “**Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.**” (Rom. 14:5). So, Paul realizes that in differing levels of maturity, there will be differences of opinion on secondary matters. Therefore, Paul has already previously laid out that there is a place to agree to disagree. He knows there will not automatically be a unanimity of thinking across the board.

Note the phrase, “toward one another”. What Paul is really saying here is that “**like-mindedness**” here should be seen in not being self-centered but rather other-centered; in being love oriented (14:15); in being peacemakers (14:17); in seeking each other's highest spiritual good and edification (15:2).

His prayer is that they would be like-minded toward one another which is consistent with the character of Christ Jesus. May they be like-minded in a Christ-like attitude in terms of how they treat one another – that is the prayer (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27).



## **6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

The result of being like-minded toward one another with a Christ-like disposition is that the people will with one mind and one mouth glorify God. To glorify God means to ascribe glory or praise to Him. It means to exalt Him!

When we are like-minded in accordance with Christ then our minds will be all about bringing glory to God. And when that is true in our minds it will be expressed through the mouth. What's in the mind/heart comes out of the mouth. For those properly like-minded, it is no longer about SELF – but now it is all about God!

Note the progression through the letter concerning the mouth.

### **Slide # 21**

3:14 – “mouth is full of cursing and bitterness”

3:19 – “every mouth may be stopped”

10:9 – “confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus”

15:6 – “mouth glorify God”

In conversion, our mouth is brought from cursing and repudiation to confessing and glorifying God. Indeed, this is to the glory of God and we testify of it.

This is the end goal for God's people – to be in absolute HARMONY in giving glory to God. This is a little taste of heaven. We are called to be one giant praise team – to the glory of God!

### **Slide # 22**



Paul here speaks of the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. This reference emphasizes the humanity of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). In His incarnation Jesus constantly spoke of God the Father in terms of “My Father” (Mt. 10:32-33). On the cross He said, “My God, My God...” (Matt. 27:46). In the resurrection in John 20:17 He said, “I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.”

In His incarnation Jesus perfectly represented God the Father to us. To see Jesus was to see God clothed in flesh. This is the God we glorify – the One Whom Jesus perfectly represented to us and the One we have come to know through Jesus (cf. 1 Jn. 5:20).

### **Slide # 23**

#### **John 17:3 (NKJV)**

**3** And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Note what is often referred to as the full name of our Lord is used here, namely “our Lord Jesus Christ”. Note again this is WHO He is to all of us as true believers. He is OUR Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord – means God-Master.

Jesus means God-Savior.

Christ means Chosen One Who fulfills all the OT prophecies.

This is who Jesus is to us and as such He perfectly represents the one true God to us.

How should we, as believers, then live? How should we carry on to the glory of God?

### **Slide # 24**

#### ***Profile of a Spiritually Healthy Church***

A place where the weak are carried. – 15:1

A place where people are built up. – 15:2

A place where Christ is modeled. – 15:3

A place where the Word is taught, which serves to strengthen, encourage, and give hope. – 15:4

A place of “like-mindedness” in a Christ-like disposition. – 15:5

A place of unity that brings glory to God. – 15:6

In this matter of getting along we all have a part to play. We all are dependent upon God, but we all need to do our part.

One day after D.L. Moody had preached his heart out in a soul-stirring sermon a little lady approached him and in a condescending tone said to him, "**Mr Moody, you made 30 grammatical errors in the speech you just gave.**" Moody responded, "**You are so very kind, I'm sure there were many more.**" Then he added, "**There's one thing about it: I did my best.**" And then gently leaning toward her he looked into her eyes and searchingly inquired: "**My friend are you doing your best?**"

God help us to do our BEST in seeking the edification of the body to the end that we all, with one mind and one mouth, may bring glory to God!

It's all about Him!