

Discussion Guide

Romans 15:22-33

Opening Prayer

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed.

Recap

In **Romans 15:22-33**, Paul shares his travel plans and the challenges that come with his mission. He explains that he has long desired to visit the believers in Rome, but his work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles has kept him busy. Before coming to Rome, Paul plans to go to Jerusalem to deliver a financial contribution from the Gentile churches in Macedonia and Achaia. This gift is a tangible way for Gentile believers to show their love and support for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, fostering unity within the church. Paul also asks the Romans to join him in prayer, seeking God's protection from opposition in Judea and for his journey to bring joy and refreshment to the Roman believers. This passage highlights Paul's dedication, reliance on prayer, and his vision for unity within the body of Christ.

Understanding the Text

1. **Paul's Delayed Visit (v. 22-24):** Why has Paul been delayed in coming to Rome? What has been his primary focus, and how does it reflect his priorities?
2. **Gift to Jerusalem (v. 25-27):** What is the purpose of Paul's journey to Jerusalem? Why is it significant that the Gentile churches are contributing to the needs of the Jewish believers?
3. **Mutual Blessing (v. 29):** What does Paul mean when he says he will come "in the fullness of the blessing of Christ"? How does this reflect his view of fellowship and ministry?
4. **Request for Prayer (v. 30):** Why does Paul urge the Roman believers to "strive together with him in prayer"? What specific prayer requests does he mention?
5. **Paul's Desire for Refreshment (v. 32):** How does Paul's request for refreshment reveal his need for encouragement and support? Why is fellowship with other believers so important to him?

Practical Application

1. **Balancing Ministry and Relationships:** Paul had a strong desire to visit the Roman believers but prioritized his ministry obligations. How can you prioritize the obligations that God has placed upon you even when you can't do what you may desire to do?
2. **Generosity Across Cultural Lines:** Paul encouraged the Gentile churches to give generously to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem. Are there ways you can support believers from different backgrounds or cultures? How can this foster unity in your own faith community?
3. **Seeking Prayer Support:** Paul wasn't afraid to ask for prayer. How comfortable are you with asking others to pray for you? Are there specific challenges or needs you could share with your small group or a Christian friend for support in prayer?
4. **Persevering in Prayer for Others:** Paul asks the Roman believers to "strive together" with him in prayer. How can you commit to fervently praying for those in ministry or those going through difficult times?

5. **Encouraging Refreshment and Fellowship:** How can you intentionally provide encouragement and spiritual refreshment to others in your church or small group? What are some practical ways to foster fellowship?
6. **Planning with Flexibility:** Paul had detailed plans, yet he always submitted them to God's leading. How can you incorporate flexibility and openness to God's guidance in your own plans and aspirations?
7. **Trusting God with Unknown Outcomes:** Paul faced risks and opposition but still pressed forward in faith. Is there a situation in your life where you need to trust God despite uncertain or challenging circumstances?
8. **Living with a Heart for Unity:** Paul's ministry promoted unity across different groups of believers. What steps can you take to promote unity in the church, especially among people with different backgrounds or perspectives?

God Has More to Say

Here are related passages to Romans 15:22-33, where Paul shares his travel plans, his desire to visit the Roman believers, and his intention to bring aid to Jerusalem, emphasizing the unity of the church and his dedication to ministry:

- **Acts 19:21**
- "After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. 'After I have been there,' he said, 'I must visit Rome also.'"
- **Acts 20:22-24**
- "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there... However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me."
- **1 Corinthians 16:1-4**
- Paul discusses the collection for the saints in Jerusalem and provides instructions for how this support should be gathered, mirroring his intentions in Romans 15.
- **2 Corinthians 8:1-4**
- "And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches... They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people."
- **Galatians 2:9-10**
- Paul recalls that the apostles in Jerusalem asked him to remember the poor, which he was eager to do, aligning with his desire to bring aid to the Jerusalem church in Romans 15.
- **Philippians 4:15-16**
- Paul acknowledges the generosity of the Philippians in supporting his ministry, highlighting the theme of financial support and unity in the body of Christ.
- **Acts 23:11**
- The Lord encourages Paul, saying, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome," reflecting Paul's goal to eventually reach Rome.
- **2 Corinthians 1:10-11**
- Paul asks for prayer from the Corinthian church for deliverance and support, similar to his request for prayer in Romans 15:30-32.
- **Colossians 4:3-4**
- Paul requests prayer that God may open a door for the word and that he may proclaim it clearly, similar to his prayer request in Romans 15 for his upcoming journey.
- **Ephesians 6:18-20**
- Paul asks for prayer so that he may fearlessly make known the gospel, underscoring his reliance on the prayers of the church for boldness in ministry.