



# May the God of Hope Fill You With All Joy & Peace

Lesson 12  
December 29  
Romans 15-16

Building on the deep doctrinal foundation of [Romans 1-11](#), the apostle Paul has helped us understand what it means to live as “sacrifices” to God in [Romans 12-16](#). God is the potter and we are the clay. What does he desire to fill us with? At the beginning of [Romans 15](#), he points us to the example of Jesus:

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 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. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

([15:1-7](#))

Living like that is going to take the heart of a servant, but Paul reminds us that we aren’t the first.

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, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. ([15:8-9a](#))

After quoting four Old Testament passages to remind us that the gospel of Jesus is for all, Paul prays:

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. ([15:13](#))

After reflecting on his ministry to the Gentiles ([15:14-21](#)) and his plans to visit Rome ([15:22-33](#)), Paul mentions several saints by name ([16:1-16](#)), sending his greetings.

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. ([16:17-20](#))

And with these words, Paul’s letter to the Romans reaches its conclusion...

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen. ([16:25-27](#))

## For Class & Family Discussion:

- Can you think of an example where “the strong” would have an “obligation to bear with the failings of the weak” (15:1)?
- Why is it so important, even today, for us to learn and remember and live as if life is about so much more than just pleasing ourselves (15:1-2)?
- **Romans 15:8** is one of those passages that summarizes a great deal for us. In your own words, why did Jesus become a servant?
- **Romans 15:13** is a beautiful prayer. What stands out to you from it?
- **Romans 16:1-16** is full of names that are hard for us to pronounce, but notice some of the descriptions attached to those names. What can we learn from the way Paul describes some of these people? What effect had the gospel had on the lives of these people? Can it still have the same impact today?
- Why do you think Paul gave the warnings he did in **16:17-18**?
- What does it look like to “be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil” (16:19)?
- **Romans 16:20** is an incredible promise. What do you think it means?
- One more time, we hear about “the obedience of faith” in **16:25-27**. What have we learned this quarter about “the obedience of faith”?