

The Blessing Of Fellowship – Romans 15:30-33

Bible Study ~ 10/26/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

Paul is drawing his letter to a close with various admonitions, exhortations and plans. As he finishes out the letter he makes a request of the Roman church. Paul asks the believers in Rome to pray with him and for him and he anticipates being refreshed by them when he arrives. We have the ability to bless one another through prayer and fellowship that is Christ honoring. In his request we have displayed three areas of fellowship. These same three areas are vital for us today. **The first area of fellowship is...**

1. Fellowship In Prayer v. 30

Paul writes this as an impassioned plea to his Spiritual family. He writes “I Beg” – *urge; implore; exhort. To exhort – to earnestly support or encourage a response or action.* He pleads with them with an appeal based on three facets. The **first** is that they are brethren. When we trust in Christ we become part of the Body and become members of one another. We are family. Paul exhorts these believers on the basis of that relationship. But then he adds **another** facet. “Through the Lord Jesus Christ”. Paul uses the full title here. The Lord Jesus Christ. Our master, High priest, and Savior. On the basis of all that Christ is and all He has done for us, Paul exhorts them. Then he adds the **third** facet. “Through the love of the Holy Spirit”. One of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians is love. Based on these three things, the fact that we are family, have the same Christ, and the love of the Holy Spirit; Paul asks them to pray with him. This is a very strong, passionate exhortation. Paul is pulling out all the stops to express the seriousness of what he is requesting. He wants them to strive with him and he leaves them with virtually no way to say no.

“Strive together” – *contend along with. To strain together (fight together) – to strain with another or others; conceived of as engaging in a fight or contest alongside another.* Notice he is not asking them to fight against him, but with him. Prayer is pictured here as a battle that we engage in alongside one another. He wants them to pray with him and for him. Prayer is a battleground that is to be engaged in seriously and with preparation, purpose, direction, and focus. Prayer is warfare and we can expect to be attacked in it. As believers we have the blessed fellowship of prayer. We can go to battle alongside one another! We are not in the trenches alone! There is fellowship in prayer. **Secondly we can have...**

2. Fellowship In Service v. 31

This verse gives us the first two of Paul’s four requests. He wants them to pray for his deliverance from those who do not believe (Lit. disobedient) in Judea. There are those in Judea who do not believe and are intending harm to him. Paul wants them to pray with him for rescue from these people. This is a request that we should be engaged in constantly. Pray for the persecuted church!

His second request is that they would pray with him that the Jerusalem saints would accept his service. We are not told what form this service takes. It has been suggested that it was some sort of gift to help them in a time of need. Whatever the case there is a chance that they will not find it acceptable. Paul want’s the Roman church to pray with him that the believers in Jerusalem would gladly receive his service. In this way they are part of Paul’s ministry to the believers in Jerusalem. Prayer enables us to partner with others and gives us fellowship in the service they are doing. These are things we need to be praying for. Pray for God’s protection on the persecuted. Pray that those ministering would be well received. As we fellowship in this way it grows our faith and knits our hearts together. There is truly blessed fellowship in service! We can be part of each other’s ministry. As we minister in our context we should ask others to pray for us as Paul does here. **Lastly we can have...**

3. Fellowship In Rest vv. 32-33

Verse 32 contains the final two requests. Paul desires to come to them with joy by the will of God. He wants them to pray that if it is God’s will he might be able to come and visit them. When he does so he anticipates great joy. When believers come together, there should be joy! This request leads right into

the final one. That they may all be refreshed together. The idea is that they will all be able to find rest together. This is the goal and desire of Christian fellowship. We are to bring refreshment and joy to one another! This may not come in its fullest form until we stand completed in Christ in glory. But there is rest coming and we can refresh one another until we arrive at that rest! Have you known and tasted the wonderful refreshment of the body of Christ? It is an awesome thing! As we await the coming rest and refresh one another, Paul gives a final blessing.

Verse 33, the God of peace be with you all. Until Paul is able to come and share with them the rest he anticipates, God's peace will be with them. This is our only comfort. As we go through this life our only comfort is in knowing that the God of peace is with us. There may be conflict all around us, but we can have the calm in the midst of the storm. Part of that peace is found in the fellowship of the saints. When our fellowship is what it should be, we encourage one another to experience God's peace.

CHALLENGE: Fellowship in prayer, service, and rest and find the peace of God is with you.