

“THROUGH THE BIBLE”

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ROMANS 15-16

One of the NT's favorite expressions is a two-word phrase, “one another.” Excluding the Gospels, the NT mentions 58 “one another commands.” For example... “Accept one another” - “Bear one another’s burdens” – “Build up one another” – “Care for one another” – “Comfort one another” – “Forgive one another” – “Honor one another” – “Be kind to one another” – “Be hospitable to one another” – “Love one another” – “Pray for one another” – “Serve one another” – “Submit to one another” – the list goes on and on... These commands highlight the character of the relationships that should exist in the body of Christ. All believers have a responsibility to *one another*.

The last two chapters of Romans revolve around four more “one another commands” – 15:5 “be like-minded toward one another,” 15:7 “receive one another,” 15:14 “admonish one another,” and 16:16 “greet one another.” Romans 15-16 focus on a Christian’s duty toward “one another.” Verse 1 picks up where chapter 14 leaves off... “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Two men were in the woods when a giant, angry grizzly jumped out of the bushes. Immediately one of the men reached in his backpack, and pulled out his running shoes. His companion said, “You’re not going to try, and outrun that grizzly, are you? Full grown grizzly bears can run 30-35 mph?” While tying his shoes, his buddy answered, “Don’t worry, I know I can’t outrun a grizzly bear, but I don’t have to! All I have to do is outrun you!” Sadly, this is the attitude of many Christians. Rather than “bear with” a weaker Christian we run out ahead, and leave them behind to get eaten by the spiritual grizzlies. Our goal is to love others, not just save our own skin!

The previous chapter warns us about using our *freedom in Christ* in a way that causes a brother to stumble. Maybe you can enjoy a single glass of wine with your meal. But a fellow Christian, who struggles with alcohol, assumes *that if it’s okay for you, it’s okay for him*. Your example causes him to sin. This shouldn’t be. We need to *bear with* the weaker brother – or a new Christian. Like taking a walk in the park with a toddler - you don’t expect the child to walk at your pace. The adult slows down to stay in step with the child. And the same is true for mature Christians. Our goal isn’t to *flaunt our freedom*, or *prove a point*. We should love and help other Christians grow.

Verse 2, “Let each of us please *his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”* Paul quotes Psalm 69:9. It was prophetic of Jesus. He came to earth to bear our burden! Do we need to go any further than Jesus, for an example of someone who forfeited His own freedoms and rights and privileges for the good of others? We follow Jesus when we realize the impact we have on one another.

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” And when it comes to examples, Jesus is just the tip of the iceberg. A survey of the OT provides numerous instances where people were willing to forego their own freedom and comfort for the sake of others. *Noah... Joseph... Moses... Daniel...* all bypassed the easy

road and chose to live their lives as an influence for God, and for the good of other people. And their impact was worth their sacrifice. They stand out as models for us.

Here's an encouragement to open up the OT. Too many churches camp out in the NT and the 39 OT books become the lost continent of Scripture. Realize 77% of your Bible – 77% of all inspired Scripture is the OT. The stories, and pictures, and types, and principles are all there for our benefit. There's much a NT believer can learn and glean from OT Scripture.

Verse 5, **“Now may the God of patience and comfort...”** Remember this name for God the next time you fail Him, and worry that He might've given up on you. Apparently, He wants to be known by us as **“the God of patience...”** If you're a knucklehead like me who's a slow learner and needs lots of patience this brings great comfort. How cool. My God is **“the God of patience.”**

And may God... **“grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus...”** Here we have one of the NT's **“one another commands”** – **“be like-minded toward one another.”** The idea is to be of the same mind. In light of chapter 14 I'm certain Paul isn't advocating perfect agreement on all the minutia of church life, or every detail of doctrine. But is it possible for us to be of **“the same mind”** when it comes to the big stuff? I think so! *The Bible is God's Word. Jesus is God's Son. Grace through faith is God's only salvation. And the Church is God's arms and legs to spread that salvation.* We all should be able to agree on the big stuff! Remember the old adage... **“In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity.”** But notice how it begins... **“in essentials unity.”** There are some non-negotiable ideas we need to hammer out and form an unanimity.

And here's why we should be **“like-minded...”** **“That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** Realize our praise packs a bigger punch when we offer it corporately! It pleases God when we glorify Him with **“one mind and one mouth...”**

When my kids were little, on rare occasion they'd come with a unified front. Zach was usually the spokesman, **“Dad, we all want to go to Brusters for ice cream...”** Then I'd hear the others chime in... **“Yea Dad, we do.”** **“Me too, Dad.”** **“Me wants ice cream.”** They didn't know it, but I was so weary of their squabbling, and so excited they could actually agree together on anything I was willing to give them whatever they asked. I think this is behind the offer Jesus makes in Matthew 18:19, **“If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.”** In praise and in prayer it delights God when we come in unanimity.

“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.” Here is another **“one another command”** – **“receive one another...”** When you gave your life to Jesus, God received you with open arms. When the prodigal son returned home the Father ran down the road to meet him, and threw his arms around him, and kissed him, and welcomed him home. The Father didn't hold him at arms length until he had proven himself. The prodigal wasn't placed on probation, or bonded until his court date. He was given full membership immediately. He didn't have to wait 90 days for his benefits to kick in. And this is the way we should treat newcomers to the Body of Christ – either new believers... or renewed... or just plain newcomers...

Its been said, **“The Christian church is the only society in the world in which membership is based on the qualification that the candidate is unworthy of membership.”** We're **a grace place** - and grace that's earned isn't grace. The church is not an exclusive club. We're not a sorority

you pledge, or a country club to which you apply, or even a hospital that checks your insurance. We're like Grady. We take in everybody that Jesus brings us.

"Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written (Psalm 18:49): *"For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and sing to Your name."* In chapter 11 Paul talked about God's plan for the Jews and the Gentiles. It's His will for both to be saved. **Jesus is an equal opportunity Savior!** And he reels off three more OT Scriptures to prove his point... **"And again he says** (Deuteronomy 32:49): **"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"** Gentiles will join with the Jews in rejoicing over God's goodness. **And again** (Psalm 117:1): **"Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!"** Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible. It's ironic that the shortest chapter covers the most ground. It wraps around the whole world. It predicts the spread of the Gospel to the Gentile nations all over the globe. This was also my Dad's favorite psalm. Every night before we went to bed my mom would read us a chapter of the Bible, except on Wednesday night. Mom stayed at church for choir practice, so the chapter reading was Dad's job... and he'd always read Psalm 117, **"O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD... Good night boys."** For years I actually thought **"Good night boys"** was in the text.

And Paul's third quote... **"And again, Isaiah says** (11:1,10): **"There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall hope."** The root of Jesse was a prophetic name for Jesus. Our Lord Jesus came from Jesse's family tree – through his son, King David. And Isaiah says a **"root of Jesse"** will reign over both Jews and Gentiles.

Verse 13, **"Now may the God of hope..."** Here's another great name for God... *You serve "the God of hope!"* You might've been out of hope – or your situation might've been hopeless – if you didn't serve **"the God of hope..."** Remember the old song, **"I've got the joy, joy, joy down in my heart..."** Then we'd sing the second stanza, **"I've got the peace that passes understanding down in my heart..."** But there were other verses, like... **"I've got the happy hope that heckles heathens down in my heart..."** I love **"the happy hope that heckles heathens..."** This is what the world today lacks most. Our problems seem insurmountable. Folks have no hope. In contrast, we serve **"the God of hope,"** thus our situation is never hopeless!

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit wants to fill your heart with hope. He blows fresh wind into sagging sails. **"Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."** Here's a third **"one another command."** We've read, **"be like-minded toward one another" – "receive one another" – and now, "admonish one another."** The word **"admonish"** means **"to remind or caution."** When you see a brother stray it's our business to say something - to send out a warning!

Verse 15, **"Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you..."** Paul knew the Romans were capable of admonishing one another, but there had been a few points he chose to clarify. Aren't you thankful Paul took seriously his own command **"to admonish one another..."** If he hadn't most of the NT would've never been written. Paul cared for the churches and was not afraid of confrontation. When he saw an individual or group going sideways he wasn't afraid to point it out! Real love is willing to admonish a brother.

Paul finishes his thought in verse 16, “Because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Paul was known as “the apostle to the Gentiles.” The Gentiles were Paul’s mission field. He felt a responsibility to God to see to it that they were not only saved, but that they walked in godliness.

“Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things *which pertain* to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient...” This was a wise policy. Paul doesn't speak about subjects he had not experienced personally. *His preaching* didn't go far beyond *his practice*. And the same should be true of us. Certainly, truth is truth. But it's hard to speak convincingly of a truth that we've never tasted and known firsthand.

Yet with Paul this wasn't a problem. His spiritual resume was full of the supernatural. He writes, “In mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.” Paul preached the Gospel of grace, but His ministry was also accompanied by supernatural displays of the Holy Spirit. Paul had been called by God to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. And here he files his final report... From “*Jerusalem... to Illyricum*” – 1400 miles... From Mount Calvary, where the earth quaked and the veil in the Temple was torn in two - to the north of Macedonia, where an earthquake rocked a Philippian jail - all the way across the breadth of the empire - countless lives now lie in Paul's wake, radically transformed and redeemed by the Gospel!

In his hey-day, Roger Clemens was one of the most feared fastball pitchers in baseball. But because Clemens played for most of his career in the American League he never came to bat - except in the All Star game. In Clemens' first pro at-bat he had to face fast baller, Dwight Gooden. The first pitch was a sizzler. Roger stepped back - his eyes as big as saucers. He turned to the catcher and asked, “*Is that what my pitches look like?*” “*Yep!*” From that day forward Roger Clemens pitched with more boldness and authority. He'd forgotten how overpowering a good heater can be. Often we take the Gospel for granted for this same reason - we forget how overpowering it is! Paul reflected on his ministry - all He'd done was proclaim the Gospel in power and truth - but thousands of lives had been changed! The Gospel has proved to be an overwhelming force... just as it is today!

Verse 20, “And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, but as it is written (here he quotes Isaiah 52:15): “*To whom He was not announced, they shall see; and those who have not heard shall understand.*” Paul's goal was to reach the unreached - till up unplowed fields - target new areas for ministry. Even after a successful life of ministry Paul was still a pioneer at heart. And it's my pray that our church never lose its pioneering mentality. Let's remain a rescue mission - an emergency room – not a community center for fun and games... According to one poll, only 34% of Americans claim to have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Rather than settling in, and focusing on ourselves - let's keep reaching out to those who are lost.

Verse 22, “For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you. But now no longer having a place in these parts...” Paul wrote his letter to the Church at Rome from the port city of Corinth. But he was on the move... “And having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your *company* for a while.” Apparently, Paul's eyes were set on Spain. He hoped his voyage would layover in Rome and he could visit the church. Whether or not he ever visited Rome we don't know.

“But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.” This was his immediate destination. “For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.” Paul had an offering to deliver to the church at Jerusalem. “It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.” The Gentiles of Europe realized they were standing on the shoulders of the Hebrews. The Jews were chosen by God. They were the custodians of the Scripture. The Jews were the earthly family of Jesus. These believers understood the principle that you can pay a spiritual debt with an offering. We should support financially those who minister to us spiritually. Whether that’s a church in need, or a pastor – if someone invests in you spiritually, then you should bless them by investing in them financially. The Church in Jerusalem funded the missionaries who had taken the Gospel to the Gentiles. Now it was time for the Gentiles to return the favor.

“Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me...” He’s saying when you pray... pray for me! He pleads for their prayers. And pray “that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.” Paul makes three prayer requests... **protection** from his enemies – and the **completion** of his mission – and **rejuvenation** with his friends! Verse 33, “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

Romans 16 contains Paul’s personal correspondence. He extends his greetings. And it proves Paul was not only a soul winner, but a friend maker. In chapter 16 he mentions 35 different names. Remember Paul had never been to Rome, yet he knew many of the church’s members. It’s amazing, while Paul wasn’t busy winning the world for Jesus, and writing most of the NT, he also spent time keeping up with his friends. Obviously, Paul was a people person – as every Christian should be. He loved the people Jesus died to save. When you get too hurried - or feel too important - for personal relationships your priorities are out of kilter!

And the first person Paul mentions is a gal named Phoebe. “I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea...” The Greek word translated “*servant*” can be translated “*deacon*.” This is one reason why I believe women served as deacons in the early church. Remember deacon was not a position of authority, but service. Deacons were *designated doers* – there were women who served in this capacity. The RSV renders verse 1, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea”. Needs will pop up in church life that necessitate a feminine touch - that’s why God appointed deaconesses.

Paul says of Phoebe, “that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.” Phoebe was the messenger who delivered Paul’s letter to the Romans. She sailed from Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, and arrive in Rome in the spring of 58 AD. Paul tells the Romans to receive her, respect her, assist her!

Verse 3, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus...” Aquila and Priscilla appear 7 times in Scripture and always as a team. Paul met them in Corinth in Acts 18. Like Paul, they were tent-makers by trade. Everywhere they lived they ended up with a church meeting in their home, including Rome. They opened their *hearts* to the Lord, then opened their *home*. This was a couple able to beautifully merge *marriage and ministry*.

They offered their *hearts* and *home* to Jesus – but they also put their *head* on the chopping block. Paul says of them, “Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.” Aquila and Priscilla were not fair weather friends. Somewhere along the line they’d endangered themselves to protect Paul. They were faithful friends. “Likewise greet the church that is in their house.” Remember the Church met in halls and homes for the first 300 years - it’s most expansive period. There were no designated church buildings, yet the Church exploded! Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.” Evidently, Epaenetus was Paul’s first convert in the region of Achaia or southern Greece. Others would follow, but Paul always remembered the first.

“Greet Mary, who labored much for us. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.” Here’s an older couple. They were Jews and had been arrested for Jesus’ sake. They’d been Christians even longer than Paul. Although we know little about them, they were known and appreciated by the apostles at the time.

Verse 8 continues to list Paul’s friends in Rome, and notice how he addresses them with terms of endearment... “Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved. Greet Apelles, approved in Christ.” The word “*approved*” means “*tried and tested.*” Apelles had been through the fire and found faithful! “Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.” Herod the Great – the Herod who murdered the infants in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth - had a grandson named, *Aristobulus*,” who actually lived in Rome. What an irony if this was the same Aristobulus! Imagine, the brutal Herod's own grandson now following the Babe from Bethlehem - amazing! The fact Paul addresses Aristobulus’ household, and not him per se, seems to depict an unbelieving husband with a believing wife and kids. This could’ve been the situation. A whole family had been saved, but the husband was dragging his feet. If you know such a family, *pray for Aristobulus!*

Verse 11, “Greet Herodion, my countryman.” - probably a fellow Jew. “Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.” “Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord.” These are both female names. “*Tryphena*” means “*dainty*” and “*Tryphosa*” means “*delicate.*” The word “*labored*” means “*to toil to the point of exhaustion.*” So put it all together... “*Dainty and Delicate rolled up their shirtsleeves and worked hard for the Lord.*” The prissy names were the rugged workers. “Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.” This is also a feminine name. The church in Rome sounds like Calvary Chapel – it was full of ladies who were diligent servants. They weren’t allergic to hard work!

Verse 13, “Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.” Mark 15:21 tells us the man who helped Jesus carry His cross, Simon the Cyrene, had a son named “*Rufus.*” Many folks believe this is the same guy. Apparently, Simon's *seemingly random selection from the crowd* and *his experience with Jesus* led to both his and his family's conversion. He returned to Cyrene, led his wife and sons to Christ – who then later moved to Rome.

“Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.” Here’s a group of men. All that’s listed is their name. Yet imagine seeing your name in Paul’s letter... “*Wow, he remembered me!*” This is how Jesus treats us, John 10:3, “*He calls His own sheep by name...*” Visit the Old Natural Bridge in Virginia and you’ll see hundreds of names carved into the boulders around the bridge. Near the top you’ll see the name “*George Washington.*” Even the father of our country couldn’t resist a little personal graffiti. We all love to speak and hear and write our name.

I have a friend who works with old folks. He tells me the secret to relating is to call them by their *first name*. Few people do that anymore. Everyone is younger and refers to them as “Mr.” or “Mrs.” They love to hear their name. Remember, Paul is writing the Bible. He's got limited scroll space and strategic subjects to cover - yet he leaves room at the end to mention these saints by name. It adds credibility to the old saying, "God loves each one of us as if there were only one of us to love." That statement is really true!

Verse 15, “Greet Philologus...” This name means "Lover of the Word." You expectant moms - here's a super name for your new baby... "*Philologus*" It reminds me of the little boy who wanted a Bible just like his Mom's. He was asked, "*Why don't you want a Bible like Dad's?*" "*Mom's Bible is more interesting - she's always reading hers, Dad never picks his up.*" *Ouch!* Let's all be deserving of the name "*Philologus*" - "*Lovers of the Word.*"

“Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss.” Here's one more *one another* command - “*Greet one another with a holy kiss.*” Notice the key word... a “*holy kiss*” versus a “*lustful or sneaky or unholy kiss.*” Actually in that culture, a kiss was a common form of greeting – like our handshake. Paul is telling them to greet each other with *a holy handshake*.

“The churches of Christ greet you.” Obviously, it delighted all believers, all around the world, to know there was a church in the very heart of the empire. All the churches sent their greetings through Paul to the Church at Rome. Verse 17, “*Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*” A Sunday School teacher asked her kids to define “*false doctrine.*” A little girl answered, “*It's when the doctor gives the wrong stuff to people who are sick.*” That's *false doctoring* and *false doctrine*. We should guard against both.

Understand, Paul instructs us to “*note*” those who stir up strife and conflict. And that involves identification. We can't avoid divisive and offensive people unless we mark them, and point them out to others. This becomes one of the more unpleasant and sensitive responsibilities of church leadership.

Verse 18, “*For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.*” Unfortunately, a deceiver and divider doesn't wear a sandwich board around his neck identifying himself as a bad guy. He's a smooth talker. A man of God - sincerely following the Lord - speaks what God wants said. A religious leader – out for himself - tells folks what they want to hear. And it's because of his *flattery* the troublemaker can develop a *following*. That's why he can't be tolerated. Don't even give him a toehold. He'll deceive simple minds and manipulate gullible hearts. ID him and then avoided him.

Verse 19, “*For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.*” Let's be experts in what's good, and naïve to what's evil. “*And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.*” In other words, *rest assured, you're on the winning team!* Paul mentions the ancient promise of Genesis 3:15. On the cross the serpent bruised Messiah's heel, but Jesus crushed his head and stripped him of his authority. At the end of the age, we'll return to earth with Jesus and crush the Antichrist and his armies. We'll share in Christ's ultimate triumph over Satan.

Verse 20 ends, “*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my*

countrymen, greet you.” These were Paul's colleagues with him in Corinth. Verse 22, “I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.” Don't get confused. Tertius wasn't some mystery writer. He was the stenographer. It was Paul's custom to dictate his letters, then at the end he would pick up the pen himself, and add his signature. Here, Tertius adds his own greeting. “Gaius, my host and *the host of the whole church, greets you.*” Apparently, Paul stayed and the Church in Corinth met in the house of this man, Gaius. “Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you...” Obviously, a dignitary in Corinth, a high-ranking public official, had embraced the Gospel of Jesus.

“And Quartus, a brother.” The names “*Tertius*” and “*Quartus*” are the Greek numbers “3” and “4.” In the Roman world oftentimes slaves were never given proper names, just a numeral. It's possible these two believers, “*Tertius*” and “*Quartus*,” were former slaves - now considered “*brothers*.” Never underestimate the revolutionary impact Christianity had on slavery in the ancient world. Overnight, slaves and nobles became equals in Christ.

Paul closes his greetings, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be with you all. Amen.*” And he adds a benediction... “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ...” Notice, Jesus is able to establish us. His Gospel is overpowering. It bulldozes sins, and buries doubts, and packs a firm footing on which we can stand. Once, a wino approached DL Moody after a meeting. He was drunk as a skunk. He shouted, “Mr. Moody, I'm one of your first converts.” Moody replied, “You must be one of my converts because you sure don't look like you were converted by the Lord.” Jesus causes us to *stand strong - not flounder.*

The Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ is “according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began, but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith - to God, alone wise, *be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.*” And with that final flurry Paul concludes his letter to the Romans.