



Growth Group Questions
January 14, 2024
“Hope Based Hospitality”

Context

In Romans 14 the apostle Paul had begun a discussion about some differences that had arisen in the church in Rome regarding food that believers could eat, as well as certain holy days. Many of these differences were based on the old interpretation of the law. They were ceremonial or secondary obligations but they threatened to disrupt the unity of the church. As we move into the text for this week, we see Paul seeking to bring a word of unity and hope to the believers in Rome.

In verses 5-6 we see what we might call a blessing or benediction. Paul prays for endurance and encouragement for the believers. He is not expecting them to agree on everything, but he does want them to all be able to lift their voices in unity to the God who has saved them. In order to do that, though, they must learn how to accept each other which is where he turns his attention to in verse 7.

Since Jesus Christ has welcomed and accepted us, then we must do the same with others. We need to see the redemptive work of Jesus in the person who we may disagree with. We need to remember that Jesus died for that person just as he died for us. The believers in Rome must remind themselves that God is at work in their community and they need to extend hospitality to one another.

Paul then recounts the graciousness of God to the Gentiles that had been foretold of in the Old Testament. Again, Paul is building his case for a hope-based hospitality. God has welcomed the nations and the church must welcome others in the same way.

Paul concludes by talking about hope. When people lose hope, it is easy to despair and so Paul reminds them of the overflowing hope that is possible when they trust their lives to Jesus. This hope is not based on anything of this world, but instead looks to the God who created the world. This hope is imperishable and gives us the peace and joy we need to live.



Scripture and Quotes:

Romans 15:5-14

⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews^[a] on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹ and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;

I will sing the praises of your name.”^[b]

¹⁰ Again, it says, “Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”^[c]

¹¹ And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;

let all the peoples extol him.”^[d]

¹² And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,

one who will arise to rule over the nations;

in him the Gentiles will hope.”^[e]

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁴ I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Colossians 1:24-28

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

Matthew 20:29-34

²⁹ As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. ³⁰ Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” ³¹ The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” ³² Jesus stopped and called them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

³³ “Lord,” they answered, “we want our sight.” ³⁴ Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

Luke 6:43-45

⁴³ “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵ A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Quote

“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”



Questions:

1. In Romans 15:7, we read: “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” As you read through the New Testament, what do you notice about how Christ accepted or welcomed people?
2. What does it look like for us to welcome or accept others as Christ accepts or welcomes us?
3. Think about a time when you felt particularly accepted or welcomed. What made you feel that way?
4. How do you define hope?
5. What do you see as the relationship between faith, trust and hope?
6. Romans 15:13 speaks of “overflowing with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” What do you think it means to “overflow with hope”?
7. Pastor Paul said our hope must be louder than the crowd. What does that mean to you? What can we do to maintain our hope so that it is louder than the crowd?
8. Before we began this sermon series, how would you have defined “hospitality”? As we are moving through the series, is your definition of “hospitality” evolving or changing? If so, how?
9. What do you see as the relationship between “hope” and “hospitality” or welcoming others?

