

Title: Christ the Servant, Our Living Hope

Scripture: Romans 15:8-13

Series: God's Saving Grace

1. Introduction:

- a. Brothers and sisters, Paul began Romans 15 by calling us to bear with one another in love so that we may glorify God together.
- b. In our passage today, we see the beauty of God's plan:
 - i. Christ came not to be served, but to serve.
 1. He humbled Himself for Israel, fulfilling God's promises, yet His mercy also reaches the Gentiles.
 2. This hope in Christ unites Jews and Gentiles, binding the church together in praise to the God of mercy.

2. Verses 8-9A: Christ Came to Serve: 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, (9) and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy...

- a. Brothers and sisters, these verses remind us of something we must never forget: **Christ came as a servant**.
 - i. We read about this in **Mark 10:45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- b. And how did our Lord serve us?
 - i. In two ways:
 1. First, Paul tells us that Christ's earthly ministry

was primarily to the Jews, the covenant people of Israel.

- a. This is why we read in **Matthew 10:5-6** These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, (6) but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- b. We also read in **John 1:11** He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.
- c. So we see the humility of our Lord. The eternal Son of God took on flesh and walked among His own people, the Jews. He did not come to be served by them but to serve them. He opened the Scriptures and taught them the truth of God’s kingdom. He healed their diseases, showed mercy to the broken and outcast, and tenderly called Israel to Himself. And in the greatest display of love, He laid down His life upon the cross for them.
- d. But why would He do this for them? Because God is faithful. Jesus came to confirm the covenant promises God had made long ago to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Israel as a nation. Throughout the Old Testament, we hear those promises, promises of blessing, of salvation, of forgiveness, of a people belonging to God. And in His coming, Jesus showed that every one of those promises had been faithful and

trustworthy.

2. Secondly, Brothers and Sisters, our passage contains good news for the Gentiles. God's plan was never limited to Israel alone.
 - a. From the very beginning, the Lord promised Abraham, in **Genesis 12:3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
 - b. In other words, Christ's saving work was always meant to extend far beyond Israel's borders.
 - i. We see the broadness of the Father's mercy when He speaks to the Son in **Isaiah 49:6** he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
 - c. And that is why you and I are here today. We, who have no claim to the promises, have been reconciled by His grace.
 - i. **Ephesians 2:13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
 - ii. We are living proof that God keeps His promises and that His mercy is far greater and wider than we could ever

imagine.

ii. So our Lord came to serve both Jew and Gentile, make one out of the two, and unite in love those who had once been opposed to each other. This is the heart of Christ's service to us: the salvation of the elect from every corner of the world.

1. As Paul reminds us in **Galatians 3:28-29** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.”

a. In Christ, all barriers are removed. Those who belong to Him are brought together as one people, heirs of the promises God made to Abraham. Jew and Gentile alike share the same salvation, the same hope, and the same inheritance in Christ.

b. Beloved, what God has done among us, the Gentiles, gives us great reason **to glorify God for His mercy.**

3. Verses 9B-12: The Gospel to the Nations: ...As it is written, “Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.” (10) And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.” (11) And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.” (12) And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

a. Paul does not rely on his own authority to make his

claims about God's elect from among the Gentiles. He points us back to the Holy Scriptures.

i. Paul quotes four passages from the Old Testament: one from the Law, two from the Psalms, and one from the Prophets. This is meant to show us that the entire Word of God speaks with one voice about God's plan to save not only the Jews but also the Gentiles.

1. The first passage Paul quotes is Psalm 18:49, in which the psalmist **praises God and sings to His name among the Gentiles.**

a. Here is a Jew praising God among the Gentiles, elevating his voice among those who were once outsiders and thanking God for their inclusion.

2. The second, Deuteronomy 32:43, calls for the **Gentiles to Rejoice...with his people.**

a. Here, the Gentiles join in the song of gratitude with those who are elect Israel to worship God as one people!

3. The third citation, Psalm 117:1, presses the point even further, calling the Gentiles themselves to praise the LORD: **"Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!"**

a. Here, the universal command goes forth. Every nation and all peoples are called to worship the living God, for His mercy and grace are not confined to Israel but extend richly to them as well.

4. And the fourth citation, Isaiah 11:10, lifts our eyes directly to Jesus Christ: **"The root of Jesse**

will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

- a. Therefore, the promise is clear: Jesus the Messiah will reign over Israel and gather the nations under His gracious rule. Far from being excluded, the Gentiles themselves are given hope in Him, for Christ is not just Israel’s King but the world’s redeemer.

5. Beloved, notice the order here.

- a. First, the nations hear God’s praise from the lips of His people.
- b. Then they are invited to join in.
- c. Then they are called to lift their own voices in worship.
- d. Finally, their faith and hope are fixed on Christ Himself, the King.

6. Beloved, these citations were not randomly picked by Paul. They are Spirit-inspired truths that lead us to Jesus, who fulfills the promises made to Abraham and the fathers and brings salvation to the Gentiles.

4. Verse 13: The God of Hope: 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.

- a. After drawing our attention to Scripture’s witness about Jews and Gentiles together in Christ, Paul closes this section with a prayer, **“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.”**
- b. Notice how Paul describes God here: He is **“the God of**

hope.” God does not give us a faint or wishful hope—no! Christian hope is never uncertain.

- i. As we are reminded in **Hebrews 6:19-20** We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, (20) where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.
- c. And what is the object of our hope? It is His Son. Our hope is not in ourselves, nor in changing circumstances, nor in human strength. True hope rests entirely in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who has fulfilled the promises made to Israel and has opened the door of salvation for the nations.
 - i. Therefore, Beloved, biblical **hope in Jesus** is not wishful thinking or optimism about salvation. It is a sure confidence in God's promises. Without Jesus, the promises made to Israel would remain unfulfilled, and the Gentiles would have no share in salvation. But in Christ, both Jew and Gentile have a living **hope**.
 1. **1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
 - a. This is the power of the **Gospel** to the Jews and Gentiles; the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 2. So Paul prays that the believers, who have been born again to this living hope, would be “**filled**

with all joy and peace in believing” (verse 13). Beloved, **joy and peace** flow from faith in Christ.

- a. When **joy and peace** take root in the Christian’s heart, divisions lose their power. If believers are truly filled with **God’s joy and peace**, there will be no room for quarrels between the “**weak**” and the “**strong.**”
 - b. **Joy** lifts our eyes to Christ, and **peace** steadies our hearts in Him, keeping us united as His people.
- ii. But notice how this **joy and peace** come: “**in believing.**” Only Faith in Christ can receive God’s promises. And this can only happen “**by the power of the Holy Spirit.**” Through the Third Person of the Trinity, believers are enabled to exercise faith, taste God’s **joy and peace**, and overflow with hope as they are enabled to believe in Jesus.
1. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead now dwells in us. By His power, weak faith is strengthened, trembling hearts are calmed, and hope in Jesus Christ grows.
- d. Beloved, notice that Paul does not pray for a small measure of **hope**. He prays that we would “**abound in hope.**” This language of abundance runs throughout Paul’s letters whenever he speaks of Christ’s redemption.
- i. God’s grace has “abounded for many” (Romans 5:15), and where sin increased, “grace abounded all the more” (Romans 5:20). His comfort overflows (2 Corinthians 7:4), His peace surpasses all

understanding (Philippians 4:7), and His love is poured into our hearts (Romans 5:5). The gospel is not about barely getting by, it is about overflowing, abundant fullness in Christ.

- ii. So Paul prays that we would be “**filled to overflowing,**” filled with joy and peace, and **overflowing with hope.** What a marvelous prayer this is! Paul turns our eyes away from ourselves and toward God.
 1. Beloved, this teaching was exactly what the church in Rome needed in their struggles with division, and it is exactly what we need today in the midst of our trials.
 2. The God of hope is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Let us look to Him and, therefore, love each other!

5. Benediction:

- a. **Ephesians 3:14-16** For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, (15) from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, (16) that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Pastoral Blessing: **Numbers 6:24-26** The LORD bless you and keep you; (25) the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; (26) the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Public Reading of Scripture

Isaiah 49:1-7

Questions for your Consideration:

- How does Christ's example of serving others challenge the way I live today?
- In what areas do I need God's help to live in unity with other believers?
- Do I truly rely on the God of hope to fill me with joy, peace, and steadfast hope, or do I often look to my circumstances or my own strength instead?