

Prayer:

Almighty God, You are the king above all kings. Yours is the name above all names. We ask that you guide the thoughts of our hearts today to better understand Your ways. Help us, Father, to see beyond ritual, to feel beyond thoughts, and to hear more than just words. Lord Jesus, Yours was the perfect sacrifice given so that we might have a relationship with God. You are our very great friend, the lover of our souls, and so much more than we could ever ask for. Intercede for us to partition the Father, bring us into the light so we don't stray, show us how to be better when we fall short. Holy Spirit, our great advocate and guide, You are always at our side and in Your power, You counsel. In Your strength, You help. In Your love, You comfort. One God, now and forever, Amen.

Romans 15:1-13 (NIV-UK) – Unity and Obedience

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.² Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up.³ For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: 'The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.'⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

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 on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed⁹ 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.'

¹⁰ Again, it says, 'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.'

¹¹ And again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him.'

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.'

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.

Three points:

1. Pleasing others, not ourselves.
2. Endurance and encouragement to bring praise to God.
3. Faithful witness as a testament to the truth to the non-believers.

Bible passages to note: Deut. 32:43, 2 Sam. 22:50, Ps. 18:49, 69:9, 117:1, Is. 11:10.

Prayer:

May the Strength of God guide us. May the Power of God preserve us. May the Wisdom of God instruct us. May the Hand of God protect us. May the Way of God direct us. May the Shield of God defend us. May the Angels of God guard us. Against the snares of the evil one. May Christ be with us! May Christ be before us! May Christ be in us, Christ be over all! May Thy Grace, Lord, always be ours, this day, O Lord, and forevermore. Amen.