

“Our Hope”
Romans 15:8-13

Introduction:

1. Let's Turn Back In Our Bibles:
 - To Romans 15:
 - Where This Morning:
 - We Will Come To The Conclusion:
 - Of A Rather Lengthy Address:
 - Written By The Apostle Paul:
 - On Christian Unity Within The Church!
 - Back In 14:1:
 - He Started On This Theme:
 - When He Called On Christians:
 - Who Were Stronger In Faith:
 - To - “Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations!”
 - And Then - In 15:7:
 - He Exhorts All Of Us:
 - “Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God!”
 - And Sprinkled Between These Two Verses:
 - We Are Given Various Reasons & Ways To Promote:
 - “The Unity Of The Spirit In The Bond Of Peace!” (Ephesians 4:3)
2. And - I Believe:
 - It All Leads Up To What We Will Find:
 - In The Verses We Come To This Morning:
 - 15:9-13 - Which Is The Great Unifying Theme:
 - Of Every Christian & Every Church:
 - Our Hope!
 - Because - When We All Focus On:
 - Our Hope:
 - It Will Help Us To:
 - Settle Our Differences - And:
 - Cause Us To:
 - 15:7 - “Receive One Another Even As Christ Also Received Us!”
3. So - Let's Read These Verses Together:
 - 15:8-13 - “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises [made] unto the fathers: / 9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for [his] mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. / 10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. / 11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. / 12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. / 13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost!”
 - **IE:** If You've Ever Been To The Eye Doctor & Had An Eye Exam - You've Probably Had To Read The “Eye Chart” - The One At The Other End Of The Room - With A Lot Of Letters On It - Starting With One Big, Black “E”! (I Like That One!) But After Reading The Smallest Line You Can, The Doctor Uses Lenses To Help Our Focus Get Better & Stronger!
 - Well - In A Sense - This Is What The Apostle Paul Has Been Doing:
 - When It Comes To Unity Within The Church!
 - He's Been Fine-Tuning Our Focus On Unity:
 - Not From Largest To Smallest / But From Smallest To Largest!
 - And So - These Verses That We Just Read:
 - Make Up The Big “E” On The Vision Chart!
 - Because - If We Keep:
 - Our Hope In Focus:
 - It Will Keep Our Unity:
 - In Tact!
4. And So - There Are Three Main Dimensions:
 - To Our Hope:

- That We Will Find In These Verses:
 - The Person Of Hope:
 - In 15:8-9!
 - The Plan Of Hope:
 - In 15:9-12! And:
 - The Prayer Of Hope:
 - In 15:13!
- And - When We All:
 - Learn To Keep Our Focus:
 - On Our Hope:
 - We Will Learn To:
 - 15:7 - "Receive One Another Even As Christ Also Received Us!"

* So - First - Keep Your Focus On:

1. The Person Of Hope:

- Which - Of Course - Is Our Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Who Came To Offer:
 - Hope For All!
 - 15:8 Is Tied In Very Closely:
 - With 15:7 - Because It Is Jesus Christ Himself:
 - Who "Received *Us!*"
 - And This Means *All* Of Us Who Believe!
 - Whether You Are Weaker In Faith:
 - Or Stronger In Faith!
 - Whether You Are A Gentile Christian:
 - Or A Jewish Christian!
 - Whether You Are:
 - Bond Or Free / Male Or Female:
 - "Ye Are All One In Christ Jesus!" (Galatians 3:28)
 - **IE:** Isn't It Interesting That - In Just About Every Sport - Different People With All Kinds Of Different Backgrounds - Can Come Together - To Cheer On Their Team To Victory? At Least - That's The Goal Of Team Sports - From The Lowest To The Highest Levels! Team Spirit Can Unite A Neighborhood / A School / A City / Even An Entire Nation!
 - Well - This Is What The Apostle Paul Is Getting At In 15:8 - When He Focuses Our:
 - United & Undivided Attention On:
 - The One Who Unifies All Christians Together:
 - Christ Himself!
 - Again - 15:8-9a - "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: / And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy!"
 - This Is Who Jesus Is - And:
 - This Is Why Jesus Came!
 - He First Came:
 - To Faithfully Carry Out His Father's Commission:
 - As A Minister / A Servant!
 - Remember Jesus' Own Words:
 - Mark 10:45 - "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many!"
 - But All Throughout His Ministry:
 - We See The Direction Of His SERVICE!
 - First And Foremost:
 - He Came To Serve:
 - His Heavenly Father!
 - Then - He Came:
 - To Serve "The Lost Sheep Of The House Of Israel!" (Matthew 15:24)
 - Who Are The "Circumcision" Of This Verse!
 - And Then - We All Benefit:
 - From His Service:
 - Which He Accomplished Completely & Faithfully!

- And - Because Of His Service:
 - Jesus Christ Is The Person Of Our Hope!
 - We Then See That He Came:
- To Faithfully Confirm His Father's Character:
 - Of Truth & Fidelity!
 - "For The Truth Of God" - Paul Adds!
 - This Means That When Jesus Came:
 - He Did So To Prove:
 - That All God Said He Would Do:
 - He Would Do!
 - That - Numbers 23:19:
 - "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"
 - Jesus Is The Very Embodiment:
 - Of God's Word!
 - So That Now - We Can Trust In His Word:
 - Because Jesus Himself Is:
 - Faithful And True!
- And - Because Of His Truthfulness:
 - Jesus Christ Is The Person Of Our Hope!
 - He Also Came:
- To Faithfully Complete His Father's Commitments:
 - 15:8 - "To Confirm The Promises Made Unto The Fathers!"
 - To "Confirm" Here Means:
 - To "Prove Promises Reliable By Fulfilling Them!" (Cranfield)
 - **IE:** A Few Months Ago - Ordered Windows - Initially Told They Would Likely Be Installed Some Time In November - Heard Nothing Until Last Week - Email - "Confirming" The Shipment Of The Windows - Still In November! Just Like Anything - Always A "Waiting Time" Between A Promise & Its Fulfilment! And Won't Be Giving Any Reviews Until The Windows Are In!
 - When Jesus Came - The Main Promises Made To The Jewish Fathers - Abraham / Isaac / Jacob:
 - Were Fulfilled! The King Had Come & His Kingdom Is Now In The Process Of Being Built!
 - And - Because Of His Appearance:
 - Jesus Christ Is The Person Of Our Hope!
 - But Not Just The Hope:
 - Of The Jews:
 - But For All Of Us!
 - He Came:
- To Faithfully Convey His Father's Compassions!
 - 15:9a - "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy!"
 - The Biggest Difference:
 - That Jews Saw In Paul's Day Was:
 - A Racial & A Religious One:
 - The Difference Between Jew & Gentile!
 - And - Paul's Point Here Is:
 - If God Can Unify:
 - Both Jews & Gentiles:
 - In One Body & In One Church:
 - Then No Other Differences, Real Or Artificial, Need To Get In Our Way!
 - So - Even Though Jesus Was Sent:
 - "Unto The Lost Sheep Of The House Of Israel!"
 - The Gentiles Were Never Excluded:
 - From God's Mercy!
 - In Fact - This Was Part Of God's Covenant:
 - With Father Abraham Himself!
 - Genesis 22:18 - "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed!"
- And When Jesus Came:

- He Accomplished All That His Father:
 - Sent Him To Do - And:
 - He Did So Completely & Faithfully!
- And This Is Why:
 - Jesus Christ:
 - Is The Person Of Hope:
 - For **All** Who Turn To & Trust In Him!
- And Now:
 - We **All** Need To:
 - Keep Our Focus On Him - And:
 - The Good News He Came:
 - To Bring!
 - He Is To Be The Big E:
 - Of Our Spiritual Vision:
 - As A Church!
 - And When He Is:
 - All Of Those Non-Essential & Disunifying Issues:
 - Will Fall By The Wayside!
- So - Keep Your Focus On:
 - The Person Of Our Hope!
 - Are You Today?
 - Have You Turned To Him:
 - Because Of His Service?
 - Are You Trusting In Him:
 - Because Of His Faithfulness & Truth?
 - Are You Glorifying Him:
 - Because Of His Mercy?

* Then - Second - Keep Your Focus On:

2. The Plan Of Hope:

- Which We Find Next In:
 - 15:9b-12 - Where Paul Strings Together:
 - Four Quotations From The Old Testament:
 - To Show - Once & For All:
 - That Jesus Came To Bring Hope:
 - To **All!** Including The Nations / Gentiles!
 - “As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. / And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. / And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. / And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust!”
 - **IE:** Did You Watch Any Of The Olympics? Or At Least - Watch The Medal Count Each Day? Its Exciting To See Those Who Represent Your Country Win! And The More Wins - The More National Pride! I Think - When It Was All Over - The US Had The Most Medals Overall As Well As The Most Gold Medals! Its Great To Be On A Winning Side!
 - Well - That’s What We Find Going On In These Verses!
 - Paul Shows That God Himself Was In The Process Of Bringing Others:
 - To Be On His Winning Side! Even Gentiles! Us!
 - Who According To Ephesians 2:12:
 - “Were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world!”
 - But - God Had A Plan In Place:
 - From The Very Beginning:
 - To Bring Hope To:
 - Any & All Who Would Believe In The Lord Jesus Christ:
 - As Their Savior From Sin!
 - And So - Paul Brings Proof:
 - From All Of The Old Testament Scripture!

- From All 3 Of The Major Divisions:
 - The Psalms / The Law / The Prophets! And These Quotes Prove - First:
- God's Special Intention For The Nations!
 - God's Special Intention:
 - For People - All Around The World:
 - To Hear & Learn About God:
 - Through The Praises Of His People!
 - In 15:9b - Paul First Quotes From:
 - Psalm 18:49 - Which Says:
 - "For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name!"
 - In The Psalm:
 - King David Is Speaking:
 - About The Greatness & Goodness:
 - Of God - In Bringing Him Victory:
 - Over His Enemies!
 - Yet - Here In Romans:
 - Paul Put's David's Words:
 - In The Mouth Of Jesus:
 - Which Makes Psalm 18 A Messianic Psalm!
 - And This Shows That:
 - Even In The Heyday Of The Jewish People & Kingdom:
 - God Wanted His Greatness & His Goodness To Be Seen & Heard About:
 - In All Of The World!
 - All Part Of His Plan!
 - Also:
- God's Special Inclusion Of The Nations!
 - God's Special Inclusion:
 - To Make A People:
 - Who Were Not A People:
 - To Join With & Become Themselves The People:
 - Of God! (1 Peter 2:10)
 - So - In 15:10 - Paul Quotes From:
 - Deuteronomy 32:43 - Which Says:
 - "And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people!"
 - This Is The Very Last Verse:
 - Of The Song Of Moses:
 - In Which - After The Prediction Of Israel's Unfaithfulness:
 - He Predicts The Extension Of God's Kingdom:
 - To The World!
 - And It Is Because Of This Inclusion:
 - That You & I Can Now Have Hope!
 - And Rejoice!
 - His Word To Us Brings:
 - Life To The Dead!
 - Light To The Darkness!
 - Joy To The Downcast!
 - But Then - In 15:11 - We Find:
 - God's Special Invitation To The Nations!
 - God's Special Invitation:
 - Not Just To Participate:
 - In Praise:
 - **With** The People Of God:
 - But **As** The People Of God!
 - In 15:11 - Paul Quotes Again From The Psalms:
 - Psalm 117:1 - "And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people!"
 - To This We Can Add Psalm 117:2 - "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD!"
 - Here - The Object Of Our Praise:

- Is The Very Reason For Our Praise!
 - God Invites Us All:
 - To Unite With His People:
 - In Praise!
 - Incessant & Intense Praise!
- And Then - In 15:12 - We Find:
 - God's Special Impact On The Nations!
 - God's Special Impact:
 - Which Is Trust & Hope!
 - Hope That Extends & Expands:
 - Beyond Any Geographical Boundary!
 - In 15:12 - Paul Quotes From:
 - Isaiah 11:10 - "And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust!"
 - **IE:** I Have A Stump In Our Front Yard That Ron Helped Me Chop Down A Few Years Ago - From That Stump - A Few Sprigs Have Sprouted! That Is The Idea Here! The "Root Of Jesse" - Is A Spring That Has Sprouted From The Chopped Down Royal Line Of David!
 - Bringing New Life & New Hope To All Who Trust In Him!
 - And All Of This Was & Still Is:
 - Part Of God's Plan To Bring Hope To This World!
 - To You & To Me!
 - Which Ought To Cause Us To Sing:
 - "O The Love That Drew Salvation's Plan! O The Grace That Brought It Down To Man! O The Mighty Gulf That God Did Span At Calvary!" (William Newell)
 - This Grand Plan:
 - Ought To Strike Each One Of Us:
 - With Awe!
 - Because - If This Was:
 - God's Plan For The Nations!
 - This Was God's Plan:
 - For You & For Me!
 - And - As Much As:
 - God Cared For You:
 - This Is How Much God Cares For Others!
 - Let Us Unify:
 - Around This Hope!
 - The Person Of Our Hope! And:
 - The Plan Of Our Hope!
 - But Then - We Need To Also Focus, As Paul Does, On:

3. ***The Prayer Of Hope:***

- Which We Find Next In:
 - 15:13 - Which Is Such An Amazing Verse & Prayer:
 - Which We Should Make & Have As Our Own:
 - "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost!"
 - **IE:** There Are A Lot Of "Fair-Weather-Fans" When It Comes To Sports These Days! There Are A Lot Of "Die-Hard" Fans Too - But - A Lot Of Fans Are Only Fans When Their Team Is Doing Well & Winning! In That Case - There's Not A Whole Lot The Team Can Do To Win Them Back - Except Win!
 - Well - Christians Have Something That Those Teams Do Not! Prayer!
 - When There Is Disunity & Disagreement & Discouragement In The Ranks Of The Church:
 - We Have The Tool Of Prayer!
 - And What Prayer This Is!
 - The Content Of This Prayer:
 - Is Derived From A Lot Of The Themes:
 - We've Already Seen In This Passage & This Chapter!

- But - This Kind Of Prayer - Like Nothing Else:
 - Will Unify & Edify The Church!
- And This Prayer Is - First & Foremost:
 - A Prayer To – God!
 - Who Is - “The God Of Hope!”
 - He Is The Author & Source & Spring:
 - Of All The Hope That:
 - You Need / I Need / This Church Needs / Even This World Needs!
 - Do You Go To God:
 - First - For Those Things:
 - That You Need?
 - Then - This Prayer Is To Be:
 - A Prayer For – Others!
 - For God To “Fill You!”
 - “You” Is Plural - And Refers To:
 - All Who Are Part Of The Body Of Christ!
 - **IE:** When You Have A Disagreement Or Offense With Another Brother Or Sister In Christ - Who Do You Talk With First? Others? All Too Often! No! First - The Lord! Then - Them! But We Especially See That This Is To Be:
 - A Prayer About:
 - Those Things That Tend To Unite Us:
 - Instead Of Divide Us Further!
 - About Joy!
 - And For The Lord To Fill Us:
 - With God’s Astounding Joy!
 - A “Joy Unspeakable And Full Of Glory!” (1 Peter 1:8)
 - When Paul Says:
 - “All Joy” - He Means:
 - All Possible Joy!
 - He Wants All Of God’s People To Live Their Lives - Encouraged, Not Discouraged! With Joy, Not Sorrow!
 - Is This How You Pray For Others?
 - This Kind Of Prayer:
 - Will Unify & Edify The Church!
 - Also:
 - About Peace!
 - And For The Lord To Fill Us Even More:
 - With His Abiding Peace!
 - “In Believing!” After All - Isn’t He Also The “God Of Peace And Consolation!” (15:5)
 - This Is A “Peace Which Passeth All Understanding!” (Philippians 4:7)
 - And Is A Peace:
 - With God - And:
 - With Each Other!
 - Is This What You Pray For?
 - This Kind Of Prayer:
 - Will Unify & Edify God’s People! Also:
 - About Hope!
 - And For The Lord To Fill His People:
 - With An Abounding Hope!
 - A Growing Confidence In:
 - The Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Who Alone Is Our Hope!
 - What A Prayer!
 - What A Focus!
 - What A Difference:
 - This Would Make:
 - If We Would Bring Each Other Before The Throne Of Grace:

- In This Way!
- Even As We Rely Upon:
 - “The Power Of The Holy Spirit” To:
 - Accomplish All Of This:
 - Within The Body Of Christ!

Conclusion:

1. Our Hope In Christ:
 - Is To Be The Focus:
 - Of Every Christian & Every Church!
 - And When We Unify Around:
 - The Person Of Hope!
 - The Plan Of Hope! And:
 - This Prayer Of Hope!
 - His Hope Will Keep Us Together:
 - Around What Really & Truly Matters!
2. What Is Our Focus This Morning?
 - The “Bottom Lines” Of:
 - The Spiritual Vision Chart?
 - That - Without Clear Glasses:
 - Can Be Hazy & Fuzzy:
 - And Often Lead To Greater Disagreement & Disunity!
 - But - Where Is Your Focus?
 - Keep It On:
 - The Big E!
 - Keep It On:
 - What Is Clear & Bold & True!
 - The Person Of Our Hope!
 - The Plan To Bring Us Hope!
 - And - The Prayer:
 - To Unite Us More & More:
 - Around Jesus Christ:
 - Who Is “Our Hope!” (1 Timotny 1:1)

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