**The God of Peace be with You**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 15:28-33**

**Wednesday Evening**

**May 7, 2025**

**Romans 15:28-33**

28 Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. 29 But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. 30 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,

31 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, 32 that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

**28 Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.**

Saints, after making sure the church in Jerusalem received the offerings from the other churches, Paul would take his anticipated trip.

He was looking forward to taking the gospel to new lands west of Rome. But even the best-laid plans may not happen as we anticipate.

Eventually Paul got to Rome, but it was after having his life threatened, becoming a prisoner of Rome, enduring a shipwreck, getting bitten by a poisonous snake on the island of Malta, and landing finally in Rome under arrest!

**Acts 28:1-10**

1 Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. 2 And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold.

3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4 So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live."

5 But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. 6 However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

7 In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. 8 And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him.

9 So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. 10 They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary.

Tradition says that Paul was released for a time, and that he used this opportunity to go to Spain to preach the Good News.

This journey is not mentioned in the book of Acts.

**29 But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.**

Saints, Paul knows that when he arrives in Rome, he will come with a great blessing to share.

The sense of this verse can be read in two ways: Paul will be bringing a fresh awareness of all the benefits of being united with Christ; or Paul is expecting to experience with the Romans a rich time of fellowship in Christ.

The benefits of spending time with other believers, even those we do not know, are very real.

**2 Corinthians 9:5-9**

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

From time to time, Christians should worship in unfamiliar places, just to be reminded how oneness in Christ overcomes the barrier of meeting strangers.

**30 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,**

Saints, Paul asked his readers to pray for him, a request he made in many of his letters.

 **Ephesians 6:19-20**

19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

**Colossians 4:3-4**

3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

**1 Thessalonians 5:25-28**

25 Brethren, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. 27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

**2 Thessalonians 3:1-3**

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, 2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

**Philemon 22**

But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

Saints, Paul needed their intercessory prayer; he needed them to join him in promoting the cause of Christ.

The Greek term for join me in my struggle was often used in connection with athletic events where a team had to put forth a great, concerted action.

Though the Roman believers could not be physically with Paul, they could join his efforts by praying for him.

This is a subtle but effective emphasis that Paul was not an independent agent.

He was part of the body, and he needed the body’s help.

**31 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,**

Saints, Paul’s specific prayer requests pertain to his return to Jerusalem.

Paul knew of the potential danger awaiting him there, so he asked them to pray for his safety.

**Acts 20:22-24**

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

**Acts 21:27-28**

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, 28 crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

Saints, Paul was still regarded as a traitor to his faith, and some of his fellow Jews might have considered it their religious duty to get rid of him for good.

He also asked the Roman Christians to pray that the Christians in the Jerusalem church would be willing to accept the donation he was bringing.

He may have been fearing that the church would not want to accept the money.

**32 that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.**

Saints, if all went well in Jerusalem, Paul hoped to then visit the church in Rome, finally to be able to relax with them and be refreshed.

**Acts 19:21-22**

21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." 22 So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.

Paul’s anticipation of being with other believers puts to shame our halfhearted efforts at preparing for worship and looking forward to the time we spend with other believers.

Could it be that most of the lack of vitality in church life is created by the very ones who notice its absence?

If we don’t mentally prepare ourselves to be with Christ and his people, how can we expect to be refreshed by those encounters?

**33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.**

Saints, Paul closes this section of the letter with another personal benediction for the believers.

The God who gives us his peace was a Jewish benediction, and Paul offers it here to his Jewish and Gentile Christian readers.

**Philippians 4:9**

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

**2 Corinthians 13:11**

Finally, brothers, rejoice! Aim for perfect harmony, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23**

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your entire spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Thessalonians 3:16**

Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

**Hebrews 13:20**

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,

Saints, this phrase sounds as if it should signal the end of the book, but the epistle continues on for another chapter.

However, this benediction pronounces the end of Paul’s teaching—the last chapter is an extended salutation.

His greeting at the opening of the letter was “Grace and peace to you”

Most of the letter had explained the nature and results of God’s grace.

It was natural, then that he close by referring also to the God of peace.

**Numbers 6:24-26**

24 "The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 the LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." '

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**