

In step with Jesus 189

8/3/26

Key Text: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2, KJV)

Introduction

Today we will read the remaining verses of Romans chapter 16. Our reading for today marks the beginning of the concluding part of Paul's message to the Romans. Paul decided to end his message with the same theme he started with in Romans chapter 1. In Romans chapter 1, Paul started by introducing himself as a servant of God, called and set apart for the gospel of Jesus Christ, especially to the Gentiles. Then he moved to acknowledge the work of God in the lives of the Roman believers and expressed his desire to visit them in the future. Romans 1:9-10 reads, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will, I may now at last succeed in coming to you." In today's reading, we will see a repeat of Paul's introduction of himself and his ministry, his affirmation of the faith of the brethren in Rome, and his expression of his desire to visit and fellowship with them. Most importantly, we will see the servant of God who had been praying for the believers in Rome, requesting for their prayers on his behalf. Let us read Romans 16:14-32 and see what we can learn for our own growth as we walk with Jesus.

Romans 16:14-32

¹⁴ I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. ¹⁵ But on some points, I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. ¹⁸ For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; ²⁰ and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, ²¹ but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand." ²² This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. ²³ But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, ²⁴ I

hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. ²⁷ For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. ²⁸ When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing^[c] of Christ.

³⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, ³¹ that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, ³² so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. ³³ May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Reflections

One insight we can derive in today's reading is that Paul did not write to the believers in Rome as babies in Christ. He wrote to them as matured believers who are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. He had had about their faith, he had been praying for them, he longed to be with them, but he felt it was necessary for him to share his understanding of the gospel with them. In the past, Paul had focused on preaching the gospel to Gentiles who had not received the gospel but at this stage of his ministry he needed the fellowship and support of matured believers but before that could happen, there was need for shared understanding of the concept of righteousness by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. God had given Paul a special revelation about the mystery and plan of salvation and he wanted the Roman believers to receive that revelation before his arrival in Rome. Paul knew by experience that without a shared understanding of the gospel, he was bound to experience the same rejection and opposition he had received from the Jews everywhere else he had been.

Our reading also shows us that while Paul prayed for the believers in Rome, he also wanted them to pray for him. While he ministered to them, he hoped that they too would minister to him. Paul was a great apostle of Jesus Christ, yet he desired the prayers of the believers in Rome. He was a man of faith and revelation, yet he acknowledged the faith of others. We too should minister to others and allow them to minister to us. We should pray for fellow believers and allow them to pray for us too. Even Jesus needed the prayer support of His disciples in the garden of Gethsemane. Friends, we need one another, and it is our privilege to bear one another's burdens.