

Romans – Gospel of God Exalted

Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver

Zoom Meeting ID:

 **828 7580 6094 ► Thursday January 29, 2026**

Women of Excellence

Bible Study 7pm

Memory Verse

Romans 15:33 (NASB) Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Ministering in the Will of God Completed

Romans 15:30–33 (NLT)

30 Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit. **31** Pray that I will be rescued from those in Judea who refuse to obey God. Pray also that the believers there will be willing to accept the donation I am taking to Jerusalem. **32** Then, by the will of God, I will be able to come to you with a joyful heart, and we will be an encouragement to each other. **33** And now may God, who gives us his peace, be with you all. Amen.

Romans 15:30–33 (NASB95)

30 Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,

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- 31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and *that* my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;
- 32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find *refreshing* rest in your company.
- 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

POINT 6- PRAYER

to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company. (15:30b–32)

Perhaps the characteristic of a person who faithfully does the will of God is prayer. And Paul now urges his fellow believers in Rome **to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.**

To strive together means to struggle or fight and is the term from which we get the English word “agonize.” The word was originally used of athletic events, in which contestants, such as wrestlers or boxers, struggled against each other. Jesus used the word when He told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting (**John 18:36**).

Prayer is often a battle. Sometimes the “opponent” is our old self, which continues to wage “war against the law of our mind, and makes us a prisoner of the law of sin which is in our members” (**Rom. 7:23**). Prayer is always, in one way or another, a struggle against sin and evil, whether in us or around us. Paul’s struggle on behalf of believers at Colossae and Laodicea doubtless included many hours of agonizing prayer on their behalf, that they would be rightly taught “a true

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knowledge of God's mercy, that is, Christ Himself," and would be protected from those who wanted to delude them (**Col. 2:1–4**). Near the end of that letter, Paul sent greetings from Epaphras, who was from their fellowship, and who was "always laboring earnestly for them in his prayers, that they might stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God" (**4:12**).

Although he asks for protection while in Judea, in this present passage Paul is not speaking primarily about struggling in prayer against the forces of evil. His emphasis here is rather on earnestly struggling along **with** his brethren in Rome in their prayers to God for him. He makes many similar requests in his letters. "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit," he counsels the Ephesians, "and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf" (**Eph. 6:18–19**). During his first imprisonment in Rome, he implored the Colossians, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well" (**Col. 4:2–3**). In his second letter to Thessalonica, he said, "Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified" (**2 Thess. 3:1**).

At the beginning of the letter to Rome, Paul assures believers there that "God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers" (**1:9–10**). Now he asks those brothers and sisters in Christ to pray for him: for his safety in Judea when he visits Jerusalem (15:31a), for success in his ministry to the saints there (v. 31b), and for personal satisfaction, as he anticipates fellowship with his readers when he eventually reaches Rome (v. 32a, c).

SAFETY

that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea, (15:31a)

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Disobedient carries the basic idea of being obstinate and unpersuadable. In this context it refers to Jews who obstinately refused to believe the gospel and therefore were **disobedient** to God, whose Son, the Messiah, they rejected. It is therefore rendered “do not believe” in the **King James Version**. The same verb is translated “disbelieved” in **Acts 14:2 (NASB)**, referring to Jews who “stirred up the minds of the Gentiles, and embittered them against the brethren,” specifically, Paul and Barnabas (see 13:50).

From the time that he first “began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God’ ” (**Acts 9:20**), Paul was marked for death by Jewish leaders in Damascus (v. 23) and shortly afterwards by Jews in Jerusalem when he began preaching the gospel there (v. 30). By the time he wrote the letter to Rome, he already had endured ridicule, imprisonments, lashings, beatings, and even stoning by Jews who fiercely opposed him and the gospel he preached (see, e.g., 2 Cor. 11:23–25; Acts 14:19; 18:12; 20:3, 19).

Paul’s request **to be delivered** was not for the purpose of his being spared further persecution or even death. He unselfishly wanted **to be delivered** only to the extent necessary for him to complete the ministry the Lord had given him. Long before he arrived **in Judea**, he knew that trouble awaited him. While his ship laid over at Miletus, he told the elders from Ephesus who came out to meet him, “Now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself,” he continued, “in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:22–24).

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When Paul and his companions reached Caesarea, they stayed a few days at the house of Philip the evangelist. While there, “a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us,” Luke reports, “he took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says: “In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles’ ” (**Acts 21:10–11**).

Paul’s prayer request **to be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea** was therefore answered positively, to the extent that the unbelieving Jews in **Judea** were not allowed to take his life. He was beaten and imprisoned, but his life was divinely spared. While being held under guard by the Romans in Jerusalem, “the Lord stood at his [Paul’s] side and said, ‘Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also’ ” (**Acts 23:11**).

SUCCESS

and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;
(15:31b)

Paul’s second prayer request was that, regardless of what dangers might befall him, his service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints. In other words, he wanted his ministry to benefit the Lord’s people there, at the birthplace of the church. He was not concerned for what might be called professional success. He once warned the Galatian believers that, “Even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.... For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ” (**Gal. 1:8, 10**).

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Because he and his Gentile companions from Macedonia and Achaia were bringing a financial contribution to the church at Jerusalem, which was still largely Jewish, the service which Paul mentions doubtless referred, at least in part, to that offering. He wanted the saints in Rome to pray with him that the gift would not offend Jewish believers in Jerusalem but rather would **prove acceptable to the saints** there. He wanted it to be received with loving gratitude for what it was, a gesture of brotherly love and conciliation.

Paul's prayer for success in Jerusalem also was answered. "When we had come to Jerusalem," **Luke** says, "the brethren received us gladly.... And after [Paul] had greeted them, he began to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they began glorifying God" (**Acts 21:17, 19–20**).

SATISFACTION

so that I may come to you in joy ... and find refreshing rest in your company.
(15:32a, c)

This is Paul's most personal prayer request of the three. Looking forward to the time when he finally would be able to come to the church in Rome, he hoped that he might do so in joy. He already had told them, "I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while" (**15:24**).

Again, we note that above all else, Paul was committed to **the will of God**. Soon after he and Barnabas were sent out by the Holy Spirit from the church in Antioch of Syria (Acts 13:2–3), Paul preached in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (v. 14), in Asia Minor. Twice he referred to David's obedience to God's will. Quoting **1 Samuel 13:14**, he reminded his Jewish audience of the Lord's word concerning

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this greatest king of Israel: “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will” (**v. 22**). Later in that sermon he noted again that “David … had served the purpose of God in his own generation” (**v. 36**). From the moment of his conversion—whether as priest, prophet, or pioneer (see Rom. 15:14–21)—Paul sought to do nothing but **the will of God**, in order that, like David, he also might be a man after the Lord’s heart.

Throughout his letter to the church at Rome, the apostle attests to that desire. As in the present text, he makes clear that his hope to visit Rome in person was qualified by its being in “the will of God” (**Rom. 1:10**). He previously has declared that one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to intercede “for the saints according to the will of God” (**8:27**), and urges believers, “by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God,” and to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is” (**12:1–2**). He praised believers in Macedonia because they “gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God” (**2 Cor. 8:5**). He cautioned believers in Ephesus not to “be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (**Eph. 5:17**), and admonished slaves to be “obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (**6:5–6**).

When he testified about his conversion and calling before a large crowd of Jews in Jerusalem, he recounted the words of Ananias, who had said to him, “The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear an utterance from His mouth” (**Acts 22:14**).

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As Paul has already testified in Romans 15, because of his ministering in the will of God, he knew spiritual triumph and could say with perfect humility, “In Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed” (**vv. 17–18**). By ministering solely in the will of God he experienced the supernatural power “of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit” and could claim “that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (**v. 19**).

Discussion Questions

- 1. What stood out to you most in POINT 6 - PRAYER?**
- 2. How can you apply it to your life?**
- 3. What was most meaningful to you in this section of the lesson?**

BENEDICTION

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen. (15:33)

Before extending personal greetings to various friends in Rome and giving a final warning to be on guard against those who caused dissensions for their own selfish purposes, Paul gives this short but touching blessing, a benediction.

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In this chapter, he has spoken of “the God who gives perseverance and encouragement” (v. 5) and “the God of hope” (v. 13). Now he asks that **the God of peace be with you all**, that is, all believers in Rome.

God is the source of all true **peace**, the peace “which surpasses all comprehension” (Phil. 4:7). In fact, “He himself is our peace, who made both groups,” Jews and Gentiles, “into one” (Eph. 2:14; cf. vv. 11–13).

On the human level, Paul’s life as an apostle was far from peaceful. As far as outward particulars were concerned, he lived in uncertainty and often turmoil. He was under almost continual threat against his physical safety and life. But he knew intimately **the God of peace**, and he lived himself *in* the peace and settled tranquility that God gives to those who faithfully abide in His will. **Amen.**

Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you most in - BENEDICTION

2. What was most meaningful to you in this lesson?

3. How can you apply it to your life?

CLOSING PRAYER

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