



The hope God gives us enables us to glorify Him together.

I. The hope God gives (15:4, 13)

Hope defined

- biblical hope isn't a positive approach to an uncertain future
- it is certainty of a perfect outcome
- it is the certainty of our salvation, through Jesus. Nothing can stop it.

A. Hope is grounded in the scriptures. (15:4)

B. Hope is a gift from God. (15:13)

II. Enables us to glorify Him (15:6-7; 16: 27)

WORSHIP – This is our purpose.

We do this together, but unity isn't the final goal. God's glory is!

III. Together (15:5-12)

With one voice. This is the means. This is the 'how'.

A. Live in harmony so that you may glorify God with one voice.

B. Only God could plan such variety in unity.

C. Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you. To God's glory.

D. OT verses quoted in 9-12 show that God always extended His welcome to all peoples.

How does this apply to me?

INTRO FOR NEXT WEEK

SO WHAT ABOUT ELDERS?

HISTORICAL TIMELINE:

Paul had spent three months in Greece on his third missionary journey. It was while he was there, that he most likely wrote the letter to the Romans which we have been studying. As we pick up the story in Acts, Paul departs from Greece on his way to Jerusalem. Along the way, he makes several stops. One important stop over was at Miletus, just a short distance from Ephesus. While he was there, he invited the elders from the church in Ephesus to come meet with him so that he could encourage them, instruct them and pray with them.

PASSAGE OVERVIEW:

As Paul speaks to these elders, we hear his heart concerning their ministry and role in the church. Paul begins by sharing his own example. The way we live our lives is the ground from which our message can be heard. Paul's life reflected what he wanted their lives to be like. As you read, consider Paul's example. Note the qualities that stood out.

Paul then speaks to them about their role in the church. He challenges them to pay careful attention to their own lives first. Then they are to care for the flock. He reminds them that the church (the believers) belongs to Jesus, for He purchased it with His own blood. They must protect the believers from false teachers who will come both from outside and from within the body. In addition, they are to teach and encourage. All of this is for the sake of Christ and His people. Being an elder or leader in the church can never be for personal gain.

The office of elder is a biblical office. As we study this passage, we will gain a better understanding of their role and expected character. We will also learn about the opportunities and dangers that have always been present in the church.

READING FOR NEXT WEEK

Acts 20:2-38

