

Sunday, June 13, 2009—Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul—Romans 15:5-6--A Prayer to be Likeminded

### **Introduction**

- We are going to continue this morning with our current series of studies Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul.
- I have altered the order in which I originally intended to cover these prayers because I felt like today's message was one that we all needed to hear.
- Romans 15:5-6—contains a much smaller than the prayers in Ephesians yet equally profound prayer.

### **Overview of the Prayer**

- Notice that once again the petition is made to God the father. Once again there are some things that Paul wants God the Father to grant or give unto the Romans.
  - likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus
  - with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Notice that Paul begins this prayer by identifying two of God's attributes specifically his patience and consolation.
- I don't think we need to spend a lot of time talking about patience. Patience is the one thing that none of us have. Aren't you glad that God is patience with us?
- Consolation—means to comfort, alleviation of misery or distress of mind, refreshment of mind or spirits, a comparative degree of happiness in distress of misfortune.
  - Romans 15:4—comfort
  - II Corinthians 1:3-5—the God of all comfort
- When you look at the main topic of this prayer it becomes apparent why Paul would mention these two attributes of God in this context.

- The main focus of this prayer is for the Romans and therefore us to be likeminded. The one mind and one mouth in verse six clearly stems from the likemindedness in verse five.

### **Historical Background on the Church at Rome**

- Rome was the New York City of its day, a hodgepodge of culture, commerce, government, and art. People came from all over the known world to settle there. At the same time people from various backgrounds, races, and cultures were coming to Christ. How were they to all get along with one another enough to come together as one church to worship God, evangelize, teach the Bible, and expand the Body of Christ?
- With all of those various background and upbringings, how would those Roman Christians ever see eye to eye enough to pray, praise, work, and plan together to expand the Body of Christ?
- Romans 14—contains a couple of examples of the divisions over issues that existed within the Roman church.
  - Romans 14:1-4—meats
  - Romans 14:5-6—esteeming one day as better than another
- Romans 14:14-15, 17, 19—the ultimate question ought to be does it edify. If it does not edify it should not be practiced.
- Romans 15:1-2—the first thing that we need to understand about being likeminded in Christ is that we are going to have to put aside some of our own desires and wishes for the sake of our fellow saints.
- In this passage, Paul makes his strongest argument for de-emphasizing minor issues and customs of worship in favor of loving one another always with the goal of mutual edification.
- We, at Grace Life Bible Church should be willing to put aside the little things that are not of great importance for the sake of seeing others get saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The true issues of faith and honoring God, not particularly the manner in which these are practiced. We are to encourage one another to exercise the freedom available in Christ rather than adhere to religious bonds and meaningless traditions.

- Galatians 3:28—in the Body of Christ all of the things that divide mankind are done away in Jesus Christ. All racial, gender, and socio-economic distinctions no exist or matter in the Body of Christ.
- So what about Grace Life? What are some fleshly differences that potentially threaten our unity and ability to be likeminded?
  - Multicultural Church—we are a living example of the Body of Christ.
  - Age Diverse Church
  - Political Diversity—this is the fastest way to divide a church. Rather than focusing on earthly affiliations we need to remember that our conversation is in heaven and that any system of government voted upon and run by sinners is going to be corrupt, unfair, and unjust.
- The bottom line is that we like the Romans need to be likeminded.
- The key to unity is not disagreeing less, or even agreeing more, rather the key to unity is each of us knowing who we are in Christ and acting in accordance with that.

### **Romans 15:5-6**

- Likeminded—means to be of the same mind i.e. agreed together, cherish the same views, be harmonious.
  - Romans 12:16
- Notice that the likemindedness is going to be “according to” or in line with Jesus Christ.
- I Corinthians 1:10—this is not accomplished by each person asserting their own will but rather by doing what Paul said in Romans doing those things which make for peace so that the saints might be edified.
- I Corinthians 2:16—here is the key to likenindedness and unity in an assembly. When all of the saints function with the mind of Christ.
- When we all value and esteem the same things that Christ values and esteems there is no place for disunity.

- Romans 15:6—this one mind can only be the mind of Christ at work within the saints.
- Notice how the one mind leads to one mouth where we all speak the same thing. Once again we cannot accomplish this unity of mind and speech on our own it must come from the mind of Christ at work within in us.
- The mind of Christ at work within the saints is not selfish rather it seeks to edify other believers.
- Philippians 1:27—the Body of Christ has a purpose here on earth to be ambassadors of the truth of God and fulfill the ministry of reconciliation and see all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.
- We cannot do this on our own we needed to strive together for the faith of the gospel which means if we are going to accomplish anything we need to be likeminded.
- Philippians 2:1-4—what was Paul’s joy? For the saints to be likeminded having the same love.
  - One accord—agreement, harmony of minds, consent or concurrence of opinions or wills.
- Philippians 2:3-4—the mind of Christ places the needs and concerns of others above your own and esteems others a better than yourself. This is exactly the example Paul uses in the next four verses when he talks about the mind of Christ.
- Philippians 2:5-8—Jesus Christ esteemed others as better than himself when he left the fathers presence so that he could die for our sins.
- Most of the divisions that come into a church steam from a lack of humility.
- Avoiding church is not the answer. It is in the local church that we have the opportunity to function with the mind of Christ as we strive together for the faith of the gospel.
- I Timothy 2:4
- II Timothy 2:2-4—how do we accomplish our greater purpose? By preaching the word even when it is out of season.

- Romans 16:25—how do we preach the word? According to the revelation of the mystery. So that all men might see the fellowship of the mystery Ephesians 3:9.
- Our primary function is not to be an entertainment society. You could go to any other church in this city to be entertained. However, if you want to hear God's clearly preached from a Pauline perspective there are not very many options.
- That being said we need to package our message in the most attractive way possible not to increase our offerings but to save and establish as many people as possible.
- Personal story about my band.
- All of us need to be willing give some things up and let some things go so that we can accomplish great things together.
- Philippians 2:19-21—what does it mean to be likeminded? To seek the things which are Jesus Christ's and not our own.
- Philippians 3:13-16
- Philippians 3:19—so much of the stuff we let divide us comes from minding earthly things. They very things Paul tells us the enemies of the cross of Christ mind.
- Philippians 3:20-21—our conversation is in heaven these are the things we should be minding.
- Colossians 3:2—when the mind of Christ is working in us our affections will be set upon heavenly things rather than earthly things. These are the things that really matter.

### **Conclusion**

- The key to being likeminded is not agreeing more or arguing less, rather it rests in letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly thereby allowing us to think and operate with the mind of Christ.