

One Another

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Romans 15:14 | October 29, 2017

Prepared by Joshua Higgins
josh@gspc.org | 562/493.2553 x102

I. Introduction to this Study

This week as we continue our series engaging the “one anothers” found throughout the Christian Scriptures, take a moment to read a reflect on the following passages of Scripture.

Romans 15:14 (NIV)

I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Colossians 1:28 (NIV)

He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

Colossians 3:16 (NIV)

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 (NIV)

Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you.

Read this English translation from Martin Luther’s Commentary on Romans.

This letter is truly the most important piece in the New Testament. It is purest Gospel. It is well worth a Christian's while not only to memorize it word for word but also to occupy himself with it daily, as though it were the daily bread of the soul. It is impossible to read or to meditate on this letter too much or too well. The more one deals with it, the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes.

It is in itself a bright light, almost bright enough to illumine the entire Scripture.

In chapter 15, St. Paul cites Christ as an example to show that we must also have patience with the weak, even those who fail by sinning publicly or by their disgusting morals. We must not cast them aside but must bear with them until they become better. That is the way Christ treated us and still treats us every day; he puts up with our vices, our wicked morals and all our imperfection, and he helps us ceaselessly.

This study will focus on the first passage (Romans 15:14).

1. What do you think Paul means when he says the church in Rome was “full of goodness”?
2. What does he mean by them being “filled with knowledge”?
3. Given the many shortcomings of the church in Rome, do you think Paul was genuine in being “convinced” of their “competence to instruct one another”? If so, why do you think he genuinely believes that? If not, why do you think he would use such language?

II. Connecting with One Another

1. If this were Paul’s Epistle to Good Shepherd, why would Paul say we are full of goodness? What are the specific fruits that show this?

2. What knowledge are we filled with here at Good Shepherd? (no easy answers allowed! Yes we have Bible Studies, Life Groups, a library and good preaching [the jury is still out for this Sunday] but try to think outside the box a bit!)

3. What do you think Paul means when he writes "instruct one another"?

4. Educational curriculum is organized by its scope (topics covered) and sequence (the order in which the topics are taught).

What is the scope in which we (as a congregation) should be instructing one another? What is the top 5 for you? What do you think should be off limits?

5. How effective are we (as a congregation) at instructing each other? Why?

How effective are we (as a congregation) at instructing younger generations? Why?

What could you do to raise our effectiveness?

6. On a scale of 1-10, how willing are the older generations willing to be taught by the younger generations? Why do you give that score? What would need to change for that score to go up?

III. Study the Text

The following is a brief word study on a few of the key words from Romans 15:14

I myself am **convinced**¹, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of **goodness**², **filled**³ with **knowledge**⁴ and **competent**⁵ to **instruct**⁶ one another.

1) Convinced – In Greek: *peíthō* [pi'-tho] - (root of *pístis* "faith") -- to be persuaded of what is trustworthy.

2) Goodness – In Greek: *agathōsýnē* [ag-ath-o-soo'-nay] – intrinsic goodness, especially as a personal quality, with stress on the kindly (rather than the righteous) side of goodness.

3) Filled – In Greek: *plēroó* [play-ro'-o] – fill to individual capacity, i.e. to the extent it is appropriate.

4) Knowledge – In Greek: *gnōsis* [gno'-sis] – (derived from *ginōskō* "experientially know") functional "working" knowledge gleaned from first-hand personal experience, connecting theory to application; "application-knowledge," gained in (by) a direct relationship.

5) Competent – In Greek: *dunamai* [doo'-nam-ahēe] – to show ability (power); able (enabled by God), empowered.

6) Instruct – In Greek: *noutheteó* [noo-thet-eh'-o] – admonish through instruction, especially appeals to the mind, supplying doctrinal and spiritual substance (content). This "exerts positive pressure" on someone's logic (reasoning), i.e. urging them to choose (turn to) God's best. The root (*nouthē*) does not strictly mean, "chastise," though this can be involved, i.e. correcting, exhortation, etc.

Take some time to reflect on your answers to the questions in part 1 and 2 of this study. With a clearer understanding of the original Greek words used, would you change any of your answers? If so, how?

IV. Pray

- Ask God to remind you that you have something to offer to others, and to show you what that may be.
- Ask God for wisdom in knowing when someone may need instruction or correction and give you the ability to do both with grace.
- Pray for Good Shepherd, that we will have warm intergenerational relationships, that both the younger and older generations will prioritize and empathize with each other, that we can instruct one another to be the best neighbors we can be and that we will continue to take Jesus' message seriously.