

Subject: *Rich Blessings for Believers*

Scripture: *Romans 15:8-13*

God's people are richly blessed. This section of Romans is a reminder of the blessings we have as believers in Christ. Look again at Romans 15:4. We have the Scriptures that were written for our learning that we might have patience (endurance, staying power), comfort (encouragement), and hope (assurance of our eternal home in heaven with Christ).

In verse 13, Paul offers a benediction or a blessing expressed in the form of a prayer and in that benediction he prays that God will fill believers with joy and peace and that believers will abound in hope.

1. BLESSINGS ARE PROVIDED FOR JEWS AND GENTILES (vs. 8-9)

Paul has been addressing the need for unity between strong and weak believers. Some believers came out of a Jewish background and others out of a Gentile background, but now they were part of the church at Rome. There wasn't a Jewish church and a Gentile church, but there was one church. Paul reminds them that Jews and Gentiles were included in God's plan of redemption all along, even from Old Testament times.

A. *The Jewish aspect of Christ's ministry (vs. 8)* – Promises were made to the forefathers and confirmed (fulfilled) by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

B. *The Gentile aspect of Christ's ministry (vs. 9)* – Mercy was given to the Gentiles. Mercy is undeserved favor and blessing. "Mercy there was great and grace was free."

2. BLESSINGS ARE PREDICTED IN O.T. SCRIPTURE (vs. 9-12)

Paul refers to four scriptures in the Old Testament that prophesy that Gentiles will be included in God's plan of redemption. These four scriptures are taken from three different parts of the Old Testament (the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings) to show that all the Old Testament revealed God's plan for the Gentiles.

A. *The Gentiles will rejoice in Christ (vs. 9-11)*

B. *The Gentiles will be ruled by Christ (vs. 12)*

3. BLESSINGS ARE PLENTIFUL FOR ALL BELIEVERS (vs. 13)

The emphasis is on fullness of blessing for believers.

A. *Who does the filling? God (the God of hope)*

B. *What are they filled with? Joy and peace and hope*

These are special blessings for Christians. Lost people have a measure of happiness, but not God's joy. Lost people may have some relaxation and rest, but they don't have God's peace. Lost people may have some things to look forward to in life, but they don't have God's hope.

Only Christians have joy and peace and hope and they have them in abundance.

John 15:11 *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

Romans 15:4 *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

C. How are they filled? By believing and through the power of the Holy Spirit

These blessings are only for those who believe and the only way we believe is by the power of God's Spirit working in us to make us willing to believe.

Faith is receiving from God.

Faith is trusting God.

Faith is taking God at His word.

Faith is clinging to Christ, resting in Him.

Faith is entrusting our soul to Christ.

2 Timothy 1:12 *...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*