

How many of you have friends in this church loves you enough to rebuke you when you are done wrong but encourage you when you are doing well? Unless you have a deep honest Christian relationship with person, chances are it will be very slim. We often find it easy to encourage and difficult to rebuke or easy to rebuke and difficult to encourage.

IN Romans 15 Paul does not seem to have that dilemma he encourages the believers but also warns them as a minister called by God. To love and to rebuke

Romans 15:15 Paul says that the believers are good and competent but there are **some reminders** he wants to share with them because of his duty and call as a Christian through the grace of God.

Before we discuss reminders let's think about Paul character

**Firstly we see Paul's honesty, truthfulness and awareness of his call, authority and desire.**

**15:18-20.**

But he is not going to make up tales to make himself look good nor had to make a profit but what God done. The revelation of Jesus Christ and manifested through signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit

- Paul is honest and truthful about his call and the work of Christ in his life. He is not making it up; the authority to warn comes from God.
- Paul wants to avoid divisions and dissensions and also to bring the gospel to those who have not heard it. A man of God seeks to unite not divide the believers.
- **His main priority is to those who have not heard the gospel to preach the gospel to them and then support the believers.**

**18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done- 19 by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. 20 It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation**

## **VULNERABILITY AND HUMILITY**

**Paul also shows vulnerability and humility**

Paul invites us to be his prayer partners, to share in his struggles. Though God has used him to do signs and wonders yet he acknowledges his struggles and the need for support and prayer. He is not superman. He is aware of his limitations

**15:30 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. 31 Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there**

**In the context of this passage, love, honesty humility vulnerability and truthfulness and the lordship of Christ are essential ingredients for Christian relationships. This is how our relationship should be with our fellow believers. We are called to build.**

Then comes the reminders what are they?

**Rom 16:17** I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. **18** For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. **19** Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

1. Firstly is watch out for people who cause divisions and put obstacles contrary to the teaching of gospel. Keep away from them because they don't care for you but want only to serve appetite
2. For people who by smooth talk and flatter they deceive naive people in other words dishonest
3. Be wise about what is good and innocent about evil,

After the final greetings Paul make another final point

4. There is no secret or hidden revelation , the prophetic revelation , the hidden secret is Christ who has now been revealed – let me write to you some writing from the many who call themselves Christians

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In a nutshell Paul is saying look at me and follow my examples as I follow Christ. The warnings are exactly the opposite of what Paul did.

Don't cause divisions,

Don't put obstacles,

Don't Deceive others

Don't serve yourself, rejoice, care and be happy about others

Don't be dishonest in your words and deeds

Don't be evil

All revelations end in Christ

All of us are called to love another, rebuke one another in love if necessary, encourage another, be vulnerable and accept our limitations and grow together as people of God.

Rom 12:9-13

*9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

(from New International Version)

Amen

