SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

Romans

Chapter 15

The God of Hope and the Road to Spain

MEMORY VERSE · ROMANS 15:13

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in Romans 15

This week Paul asks me to put a weaker brother on my shoulders, the way Christ carried me. Then he widens the circle — Jew and Gentile praising God with one voice, the gospel going where Christ has never been named — and he asks for prayer like a man who knows he cannot go it alone. Through it all, the God of hope wants to fill me until I overflow.

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The full Deep Dive, the O·I·A study, the slides and the film for this chapter are on the Romans study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

The Strong Bear the Weak

READ · ROMANS 15:1–6

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What does verse 1 say the strong ought to do, and what does verse 3 say Christ did not do?

REFLECT

The word "bear" (v. 1) is a carrying word — the same verb used of Jesus carrying His cross (John 19:17). Who is the brother whose struggle wears you out, and what would it look like to carry part of his load instead of waiting for him to get stronger?

REFLECT

Verse 4 says the Scriptures were written "so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Which Old Testament passage has kept you going in a hard season, and what did it give you?

RESPOND — TODAY

Call or sit with the brother God put on your mind, and ask him one honest question: "What are you carrying right now that I can help with?"

❐ READ IT ❐ PRAYED IT ❐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 15:13)

DAY 2 OF 5

Accept One Another — the Gentiles Sing

READ · ROMANS 15:7–13

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

According to verse 7, what is the standard for accepting one another? Then count the Old Testament quotations in verses 9–12 — what word does the last one end on?

REFLECT

Christ did not accept you because you were already cleaned up. How did He receive you — and what does that say about the brother you have been slow to welcome (v. 7)?

REFLECT

Verse 13 says God fills us with joy and peace "in believing" — not in working, not in feeling. Where have you been trying to earn or manufacture joy and peace instead of receiving them by trusting Him?

RESPOND — TODAY

Read your memory verse (v. 13) aloud three times today — morning, noon and night — and each time name one thing you are trusting God for.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 15:13)

DAY 3 OF 5

A Priest of the Gospel

READ · ROMANS 15:14–21

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

In verse 16, what "offering" does Paul say he brings to God, and in verse 18, what is the only thing he will speak of?

REFLECT

Paul boasts only in "what Christ has accomplished through me" (v. 18). When you tell your story, how much of it is about what you did, and how much about what Christ has done?

REFLECT

Paul's ambition was to preach "not where Christ was already named" (v. 20). Who around you — at work, on your street, on the yard, in your family — has never really heard the gospel?

RESPOND — TODAY

Write down the name of one person who has not really heard. Pray for him by name today, and ask God for one natural opening to tell him what Christ has done for you.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 15:13)

DAY 4 OF 5

Jerusalem, Then Rome, Then Spain

READ · ROMANS 15:22–29

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What was Paul carrying to Jerusalem, who gave it, and according to verse 27, why did they feel "indebted"?

REFLECT

The Gentile churches gave material help because they had shared in Jerusalem's "spiritual things" (v. 27). Who poured spiritual things into your life, and how could you give something back to them or to others like them?

REFLECT

Paul had longed for many years to come to Rome and kept being "prevented" (vv. 22–23). What delay in your life is God using right now, and how are you handling the wait?

RESPOND — TODAY

Do one concrete act of giving today — money, a meal, your time — for someone in need among God's people, and do it quietly as fellowship, not as a favor.

❐ READ IT ❐ PRAYED IT ❐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 15:13)

DAY 5 OF 5

Strive Together in Prayer

READ · ROMANS 15:30–33

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What three specific things did Paul ask the Romans to pray for in verses 31–32?

REFLECT

Paul asked a church he had never met to "strive together with me in your prayers" (v. 30). What keeps you from asking your brothers to pray for you in specific, honest terms?

REFLECT

God answered Paul's prayer by a road he would not have chosen — he reached Rome in chains (Acts 28:30–31). What are you praying for right now where you need to leave the way of the answer to God?

RESPOND — TODAY

Text or tell one brother a specific prayer request today — the real one — and ask him to pray with you for it this week.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 15:13)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Verse 2 says to please your neighbor "for his good, to his edification." What is the difference between people-pleasing and pleasing a brother for his good, and where did you face that choice this week?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Paul calls God "the God who gives perseverance and encouragement" (v. 5), "the God of hope" (v. 13) and "the God of peace" (v. 33). Which of those names did you need most this week, and how did He show Himself that way?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

Paul says he fully preached the gospel "from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum" (v. 19). What would it take for the men in this group to carry the gospel to one place where it is not yet known?

MY PRAYER

God of hope, fill me with all joy and peace in believing, and give me strong shoulders for the brother who…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · ROMANS 15:13

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."