

## A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

### GIVE GLORY AND HONOR TO GOD

Romans 15:5-6 "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The goal of a choir director is to prepare the choir properly so that when they sing in the worship service all the members sing the same words, their notes on pitch, and at the same time. If this happens, the choir produces a harmonious sound that is pleasant to their audience. The last thing the director wants is for a voice, or God forbid, an entire section of the choir to sing out of harmony with the rest of the choir or wrong words.

A Christian congregation in worship follows a liturgy where it speaks the same words in unison. Of greatest importance is the unity of a congregation speaking the words of one of the creeds to indicate unanimous agreement on what the members believe. In doing so each member tells all the other members they believe what the entire congregation believes. The Bible frequently calls believers the "one body of Christ." Imagine if one part of a body determined to go in one direction while another part insisted on going the opposite direction.

St. Paul, here in Romans 15:5-6 encourages the Roman congregation to have unity. What they believe, teach, confess, and practice, he says, should be determined by Jesus Christ. The purpose of the unity is not just for harmony and to prevent factions and discord, but most important that all the congregation does gives glory and honor to God. God is a god of peace! Jesus said He came into the world to bring peace.

There is also a practical reason for Paul's encouragement to the church to be "of one mind." Not only does their unity give glory to God, but when the congregation is focused upon giving God glory by being united in heart and words, their harmony lifts the congregation above the temptations to form factions that divide over the various issues of congregational life. This is how Luther viewed these two verses from Romans 15 when he explained the phrase "*grant you to live in harmony.*" He said Paul was encouraging the Romans ". . . to be of the same mind in feeling and thought, *with one another* so that there be no divisions or schisms among (them). . . (that they be) *in accord [in harmony, unison] with Jesus Christ.* . ."

Today's words from St. Paul encourage you and your fellow congregational members to strive to speak with one voice words that give glory and honor to your heavenly Father and His Son Jesus.

Prayer: LORD, help me and my fellow Christians to be united in thought, words and actions that give glory and honor to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise Him, for He is your health and salvation!  
Let all who hear Now to His temple draw near, Joining in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is wondrously reigning  
And, as on wings of an eagle uplifting, sustaining, Have you not seen  
All that is needful has been Sent by His gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who has fearfully, wondrously made you,  
Health has bestowed, when heedlessly falling, has stayed you.  
What need or grief Ever has failed of relief? Wings of His mercy did shade you.

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;  
Surely His goodness and mercy shall daily attend you. Ponder anew  
What the Almighty can do As with His love He befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!  
Let the Amen Sound from His people again; Gladly forever adore Him!  
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