



# A PICTURE OF THE FULL LIFE

December 4, 2022

## WORSHIP

God So Loved  
Emmanuel  
God with Us  
Goodness of God  
Amazing Love

## WELCOME

If you were to paint a picture of your whole life, what would it look like? What colors will be dominant, what colors will be more subdued, and why?

## WORD

### ROMANS 15:14-18

(READ UNTIL END OF ROMANS 15),

### ROMANS 16:25-27

<sup>14</sup> And concerning you, my brothers and sisters, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

<sup>15</sup> But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given to me from God, <sup>16</sup> to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. <sup>18</sup> For I will not presume to speak of anything [b]except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed...

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, <sup>26</sup> but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

Living the full life is the life Jesus intends for us to live. The entire book of Romans is a picture of a full life: we realize our sin (Chapters 1-3), our need for salvation (Chapters 3-5), sanctification—our power to live righteously (Chapters 6-8), God's sovereignty (Chapters 9-11), and service—what do we do for the rest of our lives (Chapters 12-16).

Paul gives us a picture of the full life in the remainder of Romans 15, and we need to pattern our life after what that picture looks like.

### I. RECIPIENT OF GOD'S GRACE (Romans 15:14-15)

Paul encouraged the Christians in Rome (v.14) and emphasized that whatever he has become and has done were all by the grace of God (v.15). He was merely a recipient of God's grace (Romans 12:3, 1 Corinthians 3:10, 1 Corinthians 15:10). Our story is a story of God's grace.

In 1 Timothy 1:13-14, he reviews how he used to be—a “blasphemer” (reverses spiritual truth), “persecutor” (one who hunts down), “violent aggressor” (finds pleasure in hurting). That is why he says that he is the worst of sinners, but he found hope (1 Timothy 1:15-16). If there was hope for Paul, there is hope for you. God can change anybody. No one is out of reach of the grace of God.

Grace is the very opposite of merit. Grace is not only undeserved favor, but it is favor shown to one who has deserved the very opposite (Harry Ironside).

### II. MINISTER OF GOD'S GOSPEL (Romans 15:16)

A “minister” is a servant who works for the benefit of the community. A “priest” is one who performs a sacred rite; the Bible says we are priests. Sharing the gospel is our sacred rite or duty! The job of the priest in the Old Testament is representing people to God and representing God to people.

When we pray or intercede for people who don't know Jesus, we are representing them before God. When we pray with them, care for them and share our testimony or gospel with them, we are representing God to the people.

Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 that the gospel is the most important and urgent message he needs to share. It's like saying “send it right away, send it twice”.

Paul in Philippians 2:5-8 elucidates the heart of God as he talks about the humiliation of Christ. Jesus is God but He came to earth and took on the appearance of man. There was nothing special about His appearance. When He suffered and died for us, He was disfigured. He became a bondservant—obedient to a gruesome, painful death. This is why we are ministers of God's gospel. The only thing we can boast about is Jesus and His gospel (1 Peter 2:9).



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### III. INSTRUMENT OF GOD'S POWER (Romans 15:17-21)

Paul recalled the sovereignty of God—though the Jews rejected the Messiah, it became a wide-open door for the gospel to reach the Gentiles (Romans 15:17-18). He really wanted to take the gospel to where it has never been before because it was Jesus' marching order for him. He knew he couldn't have done those things without the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:19-21).

We also see specific manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power in Paul's life. In Acts 19:11-12, evil spirits were cast out and sick people were healed. For us today, this is the Spirit-filled life, we operate moment by moment by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We need to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) because this is what the Holy Spirit does in our life (Galatians 5:22-23). We are meant to live the full life as instruments of God's power.

God specializes in using ordinary people to do extraordinary things (Chip Ingram).

### IV. SERVANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE (Romans 15:22-28)

Paul's life is an irony of God's grace—from a religious, arrogant, zealous person persecuting Christians to a servant going about to many parts of the world serving God and people even if it cost his very life. He wrote the Christians in Rome that he was going to the saints in Jerusalem (Romans 15:22-25). The Gentile Christians gave material things to the Jewish Christians and Paul was the messenger bringing precious gifts (Romans 15:26-28). He was a servant of God's people.

### PEOPLE LIVING THE FULL LIFE

Romans 16 give a picture of a full life-- Phoebe was a servant and a saint, chosen by God's sovereignty (vv.1-2). Prisca and Aquila were Paul's fellow workers in a house fellowship (vv.3-5). If it were not for them, Paul would have died prematurely, and the work of the gospel would have been derailed. Going through vv.6-16, we find real people, living epistles, some unnamed, who were pictures of the full life.

The apostle Paul also mentioned that there were people with him who were greeting the Roman Christians (Romans 16:21-23): Timothy was Paul's protege and later became the pastor of Ephesus. Tertius was the secretary of Paul, writing down the dictations of Paul. Erastus was a city treasurer, a government official.

### A WARNING

In Romans 16:17-18, Paul inserts a warning about something that can shatter this picture of a full life: to turn away from "dissensions" (separates people from pointless factions) and "hindrances" (bait for a trap; draws one to sin). Be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil (Romans 16:19). All of these things come against the church of Jesus, whether from the inside or from the outside, Paul declares in v.20 that the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet as a fulfillment of the prophecy in Genesis 3.

Romans 16:25-27 is a picture of the full life and ends in a doxology to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members.)

1. What is your personal story of how you gave your life to Jesus?
2. What will you do to share the gospel more regularly?
3. How will you practice the Spirit-filled life?
4. How can you best serve God and His people at this time?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people to find and experience the full life in Jesus Christ. In this last month of the year, give your time, talent, and treasure to those who are helpless, hopeless, and powerless. Share your personal testimony and the gospel of Jesus Christ, the reason for the Christmas season!

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's provision for families deeply affected by inflation.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; escalating tension in East Asian countries to stop.

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

## MEMORY VERSE

### Romans 16:27

to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.