

12.

Romans 15:30-33

Be Prayerful

Three times in his epistle to the Romans (12:1; 15:30; 16:17), Paul *appeals* for an urgent and compelling response the Roman Christians. Each of these appeals carry an enormous gravity within them.

1. In Romans 15:30, what is Paul appealing for - and what does this tell us about this appeal?

2. What two things in this appeal that would have given it more weight for the Romans to really take to heart what Paul is asking of them? (Rom. 15:30)

3. Paul requests that they strive *together* with him in prayer. There may be a sense that he is not merely appealing for them to *individually* join with him in prayer, but that *they join together* to pray for him. Is there any reason to think that praying together with other believers can be more effective than individual praying?

F.F. Bruce, in his commentary on Romans, notes, “Three years after he wrote this letter, Paul at last realized his hope of visiting Rome. He realized it in a way which he had not expected when he wrote. The misgivings he expected about his

reception in at Jerusalem in Romans xv. 31 proved to be well founded” (1963, 17). Paul would be arrested without charges shortly after arriving in Jerusalem. He was held by Roman authorities while they waited to hear from Jewish leaders about what to charge Paul with. Eventually Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar. He eventually arrived under guard in Rome around AD 60, where he was placed under house arrest by the Romans.

4. What seems to be Paul’s fear, and thus his prayer request, based on his statement in Romans 15:31? (Note Acts 23:12-14)
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We know that Paul had some prophetic insight about the danger which awaited him in Jerusalem (Acts 20:22-24).

5. Was he requesting prayer for his circumstances to be made more comfortable? Discuss.
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In Romans 15:32, even though he has asked for prayer that he can fulfil his Christ-given mission, he still reflects a surrender to God.

6. What expression in Romans 15:32 indicates Paul’s attitude about his future?
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7. How does Paul’s desire to connect with the Roman believers reflect the positive fruits of Christian fellowship? (Romans 15:32)
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Paul begins to sign off his epistle with a statement to the Romans about who God is. There are three “*the God of*” declarations made by Paul in his closing two chapters to them which are worth reflecting on: (i) Romans 15:5; (ii) Romans 15:13; (iii) Romans 15:33; 16:20.

Amen.