

“The Romans Road Rebooted”—Part 20

AUGUST 31, 2014

Today we are going to look at this passage in light of the Church both local and universal!

- **READ ROMANS 15:20-33 (ESV)**

1. What is the CHURCH?

- **CHURCH (WEBSTER’S DICT., 1828 ED.)**

A particular number of Christians, united under one form of ecclesiastical government, in one creed, and using the same ritual and ceremonies; as the English church; the Gallican church; the Presbyterian church; the Romish church; the Greek church. The followers of Christ in a particular city or province; as the church of Ephesus, or of Antioch.

The collective body of Christians, or of those who profess to believe in Christ, and acknowledge him to be the Savior of mankind. In this sense, the church is sometimes called the Catholic or Universal Church.

- **EKKLĒSÍA (THAYER’S GREEK DICT.)**

In a Christian sense, an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting; a company of Christian, or of those who, hoping for eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, observe their own religious rites, hold their own religious meetings, and manage their own affairs, according to regulations prescribed for the body for order's sake; those who anywhere, in a city, village, constitute such a company and are united into one body; the whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth; the assembly of faithful Christians already dead and received into heaven

2. There are some things we must learn about the Church.

- **ROMANS 16:1-16 (ESV)**

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae,² that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well.⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.⁸ Greet Ampliatius, my beloved in the Lord.⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus.¹¹ Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

✚ There are different ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES and CALLINGS in the Church.

- **ROMANS 12:3-5 (ESV)**

³*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

- **1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11 (ESV)**

⁹*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

- **1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-31 (ESV)**

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

 **There are ESSENTIALS that UNITE the Church.**

- **RUPERTUS MELDENIUS (CIRCA 1627)**

Wrote in a tract on Christian unity: **IN ESSENTIALS UNITY, IN NON-ESSENTIALS LIBERTY, IN ALL THINGS CHARITY.**

- **EPHESIANS 4:1-6 (ESV)**

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- **CCC FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT (SECTION--OUR BELIEFS)**

The essential doctrines of the faith are found in the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed is the same as the Apostles' Creed except that it is more specific on the doctrine of the Trinity. All who believe in these creeds are Christians (at least outwardly). Those who deny these two creeds are not Christians. In the non-essential doctrines there must be liberty to debate without calling each other non-Christians. This does not mean that the non-essential doctrines are not important. They can be very important, but that is no excuse for divisions. In all things there must be charity. While we do have some minor differences with some of the documents listed below, we do agree with the majority of the material.

CREEDS: The Apostles' Creed—A creed dating back to the first century church; **The Nicene Creed**—Adopted by the churches at the First Ecumenical Council in 325 A.D.; **The Athanasian Creed**—Written c.373 A.D., it expands on the Nicene Creed.

CONFESSIONS & CATECHISMS:

The Canons of Dort—Written in 1618 A.D., “The Synod of Dort was held in order to settle a serious controversy in the Dutch churches initiated by the rise of Arminianism.” “The Decision of the Synod of Dort on the Five Main Points of Doctrine in Dispute in the Netherlands is popularly known as the Canons of Dort.”; **The Belgic Confession**—Revised in 1618 A.D. and written in 1567 making it the oldest confession of the reformed faith; **The Westminster Confession**—1647 version; **The Heidelberg Catechism**—The first edition appeared in 1563; **The Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms**—Catechisms based on the Westminster Confession.

✚ **Therefore, anyone who SEEKS to DIVIDE the Church, does not BELONG to Christ.**

- **ROMANS 16:17-19 (ESV)**

¹⁷ I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. ¹⁹ For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.

- **MATTHEW 7:15-20 (ESV)**

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

- **JAMES 4:1-10 (ESV)**

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

- **JOHN 10:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

- **1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 (ESV)**

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

- **1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 (NIV)**

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

- **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11 (ESV)**

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

✚ The Church is **TRIUMPHANT** and **VICTORIOUS** and cannot be **DEFEATED** because of Christ.

• **ROMANS 16:20, 25-27 (ESV)**

²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

• **MATTHEW 16:13-19 (ESV)**

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

• **HEBREWS 1:1-4 (ESV)**

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

• **ROMANS 8:31-39 (ESV)**

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

• **JOHN 10:27-30 (ESV)**

²⁷ “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.³⁰ I and the Father are one.”