

Romans 15 (Part 1): 1-16 - Jesus Our Hope and Our Example

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Romans Chapter 15. You'll remember last week we got through Romans Chapter 14 and we talked about how to deal with those difficult situations where somebody has a strong conviction about something, but it isn't necessarily covered in the Word and Paul was obviously dealing with that in the early Church. We talked about how we still deal with that in the body of Christ today. There are just things that people have very strong feelings about and they're just not in the Scriptures.

I remember not that terribly long ago, I was talking to a brother who was just very passionate about the fact that when you go to church on a Sunday morning, you put on your Sunday best. Okay, that's cool— but there's nothing in the Bible about that.

And I was trying to convey that. I was like, hey, you're free, you are free, liberty in Christ and stuff. And the only reason that I felt the need to say that that wasn't in the Word is because sometimes there can be a little bit of a critical edge to some of the things that people hold and hold to, that just frankly, again, aren't in the Word.

And, I was raised in the home where we were like, I, can you believe this? When I was a little boy, I had to wear a suit to church in the morning. And I remember all those Sunday mornings, we had a regular routine. My brother and I would have to stand up on a chair and my dad would shine our shoes.

He was in the Navy, so that was a big deal. And (Pastor imitates his dad talking) Shine your shoes and get them all. And then they'd, of course, they'd slick down our hair. Oh, I'm glad those days are gone. Greasy kid stuff. You remember that stuff? Oh, if it didn't work in your hair, just put it in your crankcase.

And then it was just this whole suit and tie thing— even though we did the clip on ties. Do you guys remember those? I didn't even know they had things that went around your neck until I was in my teens. But that was Sunday morning. That was our routine and that some of you were raised that way. You put on your Sunday best to go to church and it just becomes this tradition that stays

with people. And they become very passionate about it and they have very strong convictions about it. And they develop very strong ideas, (Pastor speaks in a chastising voice) hey, it's respectful to God sort of a thing.

And if that's the way somebody feels, I'm like, hey, do it; put on your Sunday best. But Paul talked about not criticizing those who don't share that conviction because of the fact that it's really a gray area. It's a disputable matter. It's not in the Word. And that was really the crux of chapter 14: Don't let these things become the focal point of how you think the body of Christ ought to function.

Now remember here, we're not talking about things that are clearly defined in the Word of God. If a brother comes and says, I just really feel the liberty in Christ to divorce my wife and marry this other guy's wife, we're going to have something to say about that. We're going to say no, and we can take them to chapter and verse. And we can be very clear about what the Word has to say on that thing. But there are many, many things that are just not clearly spelled out for us as Believers. And we often hold very different opinions about those matters.

It's interesting, after second service last week, I had a father and son come up to me— with a difference of opinion and they wanted me to referee a little bit. And of course you remember the crux of what Paul said last week was— it wasn't the issue about defining who's right and who's wrong.

It was defining: How are we treating one another in the midst of our differences of opinion? Are we still loving one another? Are we still respecting and honoring one another? And so it was all around just an interesting week.

Now you'll remember that Paul revealed something about those individuals who tend to hold strong convictions about gray areas in the Word. Do you remember what he referred to those people as? He talked about them as those who are weak in faith.

And that's not meant as an insult. It's not meant as a dig. It is a description of the fact that these individuals do not feel the liberty to indulge or engage in certain things or practices or beliefs, for one reason or another. And, it's just, it's where they're at and we're all at different levels of faith.

Do you realize that? We're at different levels in our faith, levels of growth and levels of maturity and levels of strength. And we have to be willing to let people be at different levels. That was the key of what Paul was saying in the chapter last week.

And so he continues with this thought a bit in the first few verses here of chapter 15 and in verse 1, if you look with me there. He says, “*We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*” (ESV)

Now I want to talk about what this verse means, but before I do, I want to quickly hear about one of the words that is in this verse. And it may not be in your Bible if you have a different translation on your lap, but it's the word, failings. If you have an NIV (New International Version) or an ESV (English Standard Version), which is the translation I'm reading from here, your word is, failings.

Now, if you have a different translation, you have perhaps a different word. I have to tell you right off, I don't like this word. I don't like the fact that they rendered this word failings because really that's not what the Greek word means. It simply means, weaknesses.

They probably used failings for various reasons, least of which is not to create a redundancy because what Paul is saying here, “*We need to bear with the weaknesses of the weak.*” That's literally what he said, “*the weaknesses of the weak,*” not the failings of the weak.

And here's why that's an important distinction. I don't think someone's convictions are necessarily failings. They're just their convictions. If somebody believes— and he talked about last week in chapter 14, some of the convictions people held. Some of them had to do with Sabbath keeping and some people were very passionate and still remain very passionate about, you go to church on the Sabbath. And they consider one day special.

And he, remember he said, another man considers every day alike. Well, I don't necessarily consider that a failing. Somebody who feels like when you go to church, you should put on your Sunday best, they can be very passionate again about that. I don't necessarily consider that a failing. It's just their convictions. It is the outgrowth of where they're at in their faith, right? It's just where they're at. I like the fact that, and some of you, I think the New American Standard Bible (NASB) really handles this one correctly when it talks about the weaknesses of the weak.

The point here though, is that Paul is saying that those who are stronger in their faith have an obligation to bear with individuals whose faith is not as weak and who are passionate about things that are not in the Word necessarily and who are very vocal about those convictions and those passions.

And he's basically saying, if your faith is strong and that means you have the liberty to think beyond some of those things and to be free to wear jeans on a Sunday morning or to go to church any day of the week and say, That's cool. That's okay. That's where your faith is.

Paul says you have an obligation to bear with those who don't feel that way and who may be critical about you over the thing. And the reason Paul says that is that sometimes we feel the tendency or the desire to want to straighten them out. We talked about this last week and rather than feeling that desire to straighten people out, just let them deal with it. Let the Holy Spirit deal with their heart. And so he says just leave them alone on that.

But it's more than just leave them alone. You'll notice that he says in this verse basically, we who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings. And again, that's a bad word. I'll say the weaknesses of the weak. And look at the last part, *“and not to please ourselves.”* *“Not to please ourselves.”* In other words, think about how I can please them. Think about how we can please them.

Now, this is a challenging area. I know. And it can be a slippery slope, no pun intended to the morning. But we're talking here about foregoing, potentially, our freedoms for the sake of the brother or the sister who might otherwise be stumbled over the exercise of our freedom.

You remember one of the things we talked about last week was the consumption of alcohol, which by the way, I'll just say right off the bat, I personally have made a decision in my life not to consume alcohol in any way, shape or form at any time. And some of you have done the same.

Now, however, given that I have that personal conviction, I don't hold the personal conviction that it is wrong for everyone in the sense that if you consume any alcohol at all, that it is a sin.

I'm not going to tell you that because the Bible doesn't say that. The Bible says drunkenness is a sin, and we talked about this last week. We are never ever, as Believers, to be under the influence of anything beyond ourselves than the Holy Spirit, other than the Holy Spirit. We are to be, we're to be not filled with wine, Paul says, but we're to be filled instead with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18) In other words, drunkenness is out. Always, ever, and that sort of thing.

But you cannot make a case, Biblically speaking, that every single drink or if somebody were to sit down and have a glass of wine with dinner for example, you can't make a case that it is a sin.

You can however, make a case, and that's what Paul's doing here, that it is often necessary to forego your liberties for the sake of other people. That you can make a case for. Okay? And we talked about that last week as well.

I don't mean to be redundant, but since Paul's talking about it here, as we kick off chapter 15 it bears some repetition. There are people who have very strong feelings about alcoholic beverages of any kind.

And to see you as a Believer indulging in your freedom, not unto drunkenness obviously, but to consume, they would be greatly offended. What is our response to be to a brother or sister in that way? Paul says here, don't look down on them.

In fact, if there's an obligation here at all, it is to those who have the freedom, who have the liberty. You are the ones with the greater obligation to minister to your brother and sister who are struggling perhaps with the exercise of your freedom and to not please yourself.

I've got to tell you something. This is really difficult for all of us to do, myself included. For me to forego a freedom, for you to forego a freedom— that's hard. It's hard when you've got somebody who's angry at you or offended at you because of your liberty in Jesus and the Holy Spirit speaking to your heart about just, well just drop it then.

Remember how Paul ended the chapter last week? He said in conclusion, “*It is (better) good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that would cause your brother to stumble.*” (Romans 14:21)

And he lassoed everything else up in that by saying, or anything else that your brother may be offended about, or concerned about or potentially stumbling over. It's better not to do those things than to cause your brother to stumble. Ugh!

And we all get very frustrated. It's like, you big baby. It's like, grow up! That's what we want to say. Grow up! That's not what we're supposed to do. The obligation is on our part; for those who have that liberty.

You remember how Paul talked about this in Philippians? When he wrote to the Philippians, he reminded us that this whole idea of setting aside my rights is exactly what Jesus did for us. Let me put this one up on the screen just to remind you of it from Philippians chapter 2. He said,

Philippians 2:4-7 (NIV84)

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, (freedoms, desires) but also to the interests of others. (And this is really the key right here) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: (Problem is it isn't very often. Is it? But then he reminds us of the attitude of Christ) Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

What's that mean? Who did not consider His right and His freedom to be— to live apart from our suffering and life on this planet. He didn't consider that His right and His freedom, something to be grasped. He let go of it so that He might become like you and I; that He might experience things like hunger, thirst, pain, agony, sadness and the things that you and I feel from the specifically human perspective of feeling those things.

He didn't consider those things something to be held on to here. Let me ask you a question. You have freedoms in Jesus. Do you consider those freedoms something to be held on to when your brother or sister is bothered by it or offended by it? Or would you consider changing?

I have to ask myself that same question because I'm not always positive the answer is going to be a profound or resounding yes. I'm just not sure sometimes. Because again, my heart wants to say, grow up! But this is what he's talking about here.

Notice he says, after that Jesus made Himself nothing. Do you know what the implications are of making yourself nothing? Making yourself nothing. Literally divesting yourself of those freedoms and rights....

Boy, this is something we in America, we're hot on the topic of this thing. My rights, my freedoms, and to some degree, we see some of those freedoms going away in our country and we're fairly possessive of the things that we feel are making an exit. And so we're like, yeah, that's my freedom. That's my right! We'll talk about the Bill of Rights or the amendment to this, that, the other

thing. And we'll say, I have a constitutional right to do, thus and thus. And you are absolutely right. You do have that.

Now, are you willing to lay it down? Are you willing to lay down your freedoms for others? Paul says Jesus did it, and this is the example that He wants you to follow, that He wants us to follow. And we're sitting here going, I don't know if I want to do that— but I do want to be Christ-like. At least I think I do. I say I do.

Have you ever prayed that? Lord, make me more like You. He says, okay, lay down your life for others. I'd like to be like You in every other way. I don't really want it to hurt.

Now, in verse 2 you might have noticed. Did I read verse 2? *“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on Me.”*

By the way, that's a quotation of Psalm 69 and it's basically a Messianic prophecy, declaration, that says that the junk that should have fallen to our lot fell to His lot. They used the word, reproaches. We don't use that word much anymore. But, you know what he's talking about. And again, that is a reminder of what Jesus did for you and I, and what we are to do for others.

Just the very quotation of something from the Old Testament leads Paul to a further thought in verse 4. Look with me there in your Bible. Verse 4 says, *“For whatever was written in former days.”*

And by saying that, Paul is basically summing up the entire Old Testament, all right? What was written, *Whatever was written in former days, was written for our instruction, (Your Bible may say, learning) that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.*” Stop there.

First of all, this is a wonderful verse that reminds you and I of the importance of studying the Old Testament. Some Christians really struggle with that. I've read through the Old Testament, pastor Paul, and I just don't get it. I don't get anything out of it. It's just— ugh, so I just stay in the New Testament. Heard a lot of people say that over the years.

But Paul is saying here; he's reminding us here that those 39 books that make up the Old Testament were given to us and written for more than just telling us about the history of Israel. They were written and preserved for us for our

instruction; for our learning. And that's what happens when we study the Word of God. It instructs us. We get done with an Old Testament study and on a Wednesday night here at Calvary Chapel, and we've been instructed.

Not that it doesn't happen again in the New Testament as well; it certainly does, but very much in the Old we are instructed by the Word of God. But I want you to see something else from this verse that we just read, and for the sake of illustrating it. Just so we're all looking at the same thing, I want to put the verse up on the screen here in the ESV so that we can look at it and we can see it here again. It says again,

Romans 15:4 (ESV)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

For whatever was written in former days, the beforehand was written for our instruction, (our learning) that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.

I don't know if you ever go through your Bible and look at a verse and just dissect it, but it's a good way to learn what the Scripture is saying. This Scripture has some interesting things to say to you and I.

One of the things that you want to do when you're looking at a verse is you want to say, What's the payoff? What's the goal? And if there is one, What is the promise? Now in this particular verse, there's a promise and it's basically encompassed in the last section of this and we'll underline it for you that

Romans 15:4 (ESV)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

For whatever was written in former days, the beforehand was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.

Okay, that's the goal. Okay, this verse shoots toward a target. Right? And the target is hope; that “*we might have hope.*”

Now when you're looking at a verse of the Bible, you need to say, Okay, that's wonderful. It talks about this goal of hope. Now, how do I get there? How do I get to this place that I want to be?

Well, I want you to see that in this verse, there are two ingredients and I'm using the word ingredients. It's a clumsy one to use, but there are two very important things that I want you to see from this verse to get to that place of hope. And the first is described this way, which I will further highlight for you there.

Romans 15:4 (ESV)

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It's endurance, “*that through endurance.*” That word, endurance is an interesting word and it's the first ingredient of getting to a place of hope. But do you know that the word endurance— you don't endure good times; you endure bad times. You enjoy good times. When I'm going through good times, good seasons, I'm having a good time. I'm enjoying it, hey, this is wonderful.

But then something bad happens, and we are forced to endure that bad thing. It speaks of difficulty and suffering. In fact, your Bible instead of endurance, your Bible may actually have a different word. It might be patience. It might be perseverance. But those all speak of trudging through affliction and pain.

And by the way, affliction and pain is something we all have in common. We all go through; we all experience difficulty, pain, challenges, and so forth. And if there's one thing we've learned in life, not everybody winds up with hope who goes through endurance, who is afflicted and full of pain. You with me? Not everybody does.

Do you understand that I've shown you the goal of this verse? Which is hope. I've shown you that part of the element of getting to the place of hope is that you have to have something to hope for. And you realize that through your times of pain and suffering and trial and difficulty, but not everybody gets there.

In fact, there's nothing in hardship that naturally brings hope. Let me say that again because that's really important. There's nothing inherently in hardship that naturally brings hope. Our sorrows, our griefs, our pains— none of those things inspire hope in and of them-self. In and of them-self, they inspire quite the opposite. They inspire hopelessness. That's why some people go through difficulties in life and they end up bitter and dark and angry and just sour. And you've probably met such people in your lifetime.

So what's the missing element here? What's the bridge between the endurance that people go through, their pain and agony and trials, to get to that place of hope? That's what we have to find; the connecting link. And that's what we're going to highlight here for you.

Romans 15:4 (ESV)

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and **through the encouragement of the Scriptures** we might have hope.*

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and **through the encouragement of the Scriptures** we might have hope.*

Notice again, Paul says that through endurance and you endure difficulty. You end up with hope “*through the encouragement of the Scriptures.*” That people, is the connecting link.

And that is why you and I can endure all those things in life and wind up in a place of hope— because we have found the bridge. And that's what's highlighted in yellow there, the bridge, the connecting bridge; the link between your difficulties and your pains and your sorrows and your trials, and the hope that God wants you to have.

We spend time in the Word and we see how God's faithfulness is played out in the lives of His people. And we're encouraged to trust in Him with all of our hearts. And that's what the Word does in our life. How many, and I'm not asking for a show of hands, but how many of you have, like me, have just lived in the Psalms during a time of difficulty?

The Psalms are such a place of comfort because we see in them human suffering, but we see something more than human suffering. We see faith in God and the faithfulness of God in the midst of human suffering.

You read through the Psalms when you're going through a hard time because it lifts you up. It picks you up and it says, his is life lived on a fallen sin-soaked planet. This is life. These challenges— these bummers, these sorrows, these griefs, this brokenness, this is what life is like on planet earth— because of sin. But what is the key to having hope? It is knowing the faithfulness of God through the Word.

I've got to be honest with you. I don't know how people without the Word of God do it. The fact of the matter is, sometimes they don't; most of the time they don't. And that's why we see people in the world running after so many diversions and distractions because they're just trying to make the pain go away: If I can't hope in anything else in this life, I'll create some false hope, whatever it may be....

Paul goes on; verse 5. He says, *“May the God of endurance, ...”* By the way that's where that endurance comes from. *“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another (and that's the point of what he's talking about here, people living together without picking each other apart) in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Notice that end of verse 6: *“that... you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* It should come as no surprise to us at all that when we treat one another respectfully; we honor one another, and we stop picking at each other every time there's a fault, that it brings glory to God.

Verse 7 says, *“Therefore, welcome one another as Christ welcomed you, (and once again) for the glory of God.”* Oh man, if only our churches throughout the ages would keep this verse in mind. Welcome others as you have been welcomed.

You and I were welcomed into the kingdom of God when we got down on our knees and we said, Jesus, I need Your forgiveness; I need Your life. He welcomed us. Right? Isn't that what He did?

He said, hey, you're Mine; come on in. Grabbed us by the hand, lifted us up off our knees and said, here, now I'm going to robe you in My righteousness. I'm going to pour out My forgiveness and My love and My tenderness on you. And you are Mine and we're all really happy about that. Now, Paul says, go do likewise. Go welcome other people, as you've been welcomed, forgive other people as you've been forgiven, love other people like you've been loved. Boy, I tell you, he's really meddling now, isn't he?

Verse 8, *“For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised.”* That's another way of talking about the Jews, so you can just put that in there. *“For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the Jews to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, (he's referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.”*

Here he's reaching back and telling us again about when you read the Old Testament and you read about God's promises. Just this last October, I started reading through the Bible again in a year and so I started back in Genesis. And I started reading again about how God just picked this man named Abram, who He later renamed Abraham, who He drew to Himself and made all kinds of crazy promises to— just outlandish promises to this man. And then He said, oh, and I'm passing these along to your kids too.

And so the same promise that was given to Abraham was given to his son Isaac. And that same promise then was passed down to Isaac's son Jacob. And from Jacob to all of his sons, which became essentially the twelve tribes of Israel. And how God made these promises. But He didn't just make promises; He kept them!

And you and I read that and we're just like, God, You're too much. Why would You do this? This is craziness! But we read it and we're encouraged by it because we see that God is true to His promises. It's one of the things reading the Old Testament shows us.

God's faithful. He's truthful. He doesn't ever deceive us or lie to us. And it brings glory to God. That's what he says in verse 9: *“in order that the Gentiles, (and that's us) might glorify God for His mercy.”* And remember what mercy is, you guys. Mercy is not getting what we deserve. We deserve punishment. Israel deserved punishment; they didn't get it.

Middle of verse 9, *“As it is written, “Therefore I will praise You among the Gentiles, and sing to Your Name.”* Paul's going to quote several passages here speaking about how the Gentiles will respond to this wonderful mercy of God.

“¹⁰ And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.” ¹¹ And again, “Praise the Lord, O you Gentiles, and let the peoples extol Him.” ¹² And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even He who arises to rule the Gentiles; (the root of Jesse of course speaking of Messiah) in Him will the Gentiles hope.” So all these passages that speak of you and I; you and I—praising God.

He says in verse 13, *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit You may abound in hope.”*

Don't skip too quickly past verse 13. Let me read it again for you: *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace.”* It doesn't stop there, does it?

There's a condition, and that condition is the next two words: *“...in believing,”* or as the NIV says, as you trust in Him. *“...in believing...”* That is so important that you and I see that the promises of God's Word come to us the same way that came to Abraham— by faith.

Abraham believed God, and you and I need to believe God when He says something and when that happens, when we believe Him, there is this joy, and there is a peace that comes into our life through that faith, through that believing.

You can't sit around and say, well, as soon as I'm filled with joy and peace, then I'm going to start believing. No, you've got it backwards. You believe first, and then God pours joy and peace into your heart. I know it doesn't seem to make sense the way you and I might do things. We want the proof. There's just something interesting about the way God works. You don't start walking on the water until you put your feet on the surface.

Verse 14 goes on. It says, *“I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.”* He's saying, you guys are pretty mature in the Lord.

“¹⁵ But on some points I've written to you very boldly by way of reminder because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, (who he's writing to) in the priestly service of the gospel of God so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

That's a very long way of Paul telling them, Just because you guys are mature in Christ don't think that you're going to get out of getting reminders from me. He starts off by saying, hey, I'm personally convinced you guys are doing really well in the Lord but I've still spoken to you pretty boldly on some matters here because you needed to be reminded about them.

And do you know that when we get into the Word of God much of it is just reminder? Do you know that? If you get into the Word and you're reading through it you're going, you know I've read this before. I don't know why I have

to keep reading this stuff over and over again. I'll tell you why you need to keep reading this stuff over and over again— because we all need reminders! We need reminders of what God's Word says. You don't just know it, you need to be reminded so you put it into practice.

Remember what Peter wrote when he talked about this? Let me put this up on the screen here for you because Peter was the consummate reminder-er. He says,

2 Peter 1:12-13 (ESV)

Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder,

Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them, (in fact, he says, you're even) and are established in the truth that you have. (he says) I think it right, as long as I'm in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder,

He says, so I feel the need to do this. I'm going to keep reminding you of things. So don't ever get to the feeling like, I'm not coming to church anymore. I just keep hearing the same stuff. That's life you guys, that's what we need to do. We go through; we keep reading the Scripture; we keep going through the Word; we keep reminding ourselves of what needs to happen in our lives.

If somebody ever says that to you, I bet I've heard all that stuff before. Just ask him this, well, are you doing it? Because it's not those who, is it? It's those who put it into practice. And we need those reminders so that we are constantly encouraged to walk out the Word of God.

And I'm glad we have the reminders of God's Word. And it's okay that every time we get into the Word, we don't have this aha moment. Sometimes we look for those, and people will write about it on Facebook or they'll tell you something and say, oh, I was going through my devotions today and I was just like, oh God, this is so great. I never knew this before! This just came out. And those are great. Those are wonderful.

And from the standpoint that you've got to learn and when God reveals something to you, it's exciting and it's wonderful. And you can, and there's nothing wrong about being excited about it, but we read that in somebody else's life and we go, wow God, it's been a long time since I've had an aha moment. Maybe it's time for me just to have that tingly, warm, fuzzy feeling that just says, whoa, look at this!

And God's Word says, no, you've been in, you've been in Christ long enough. You've been reading the Word long enough. You've been studying the Scriptures. Now we're just going to keep going over things. We're just going to keep reminding you day by day.

This is what it means to walk with Me. This is what it means to give up your life. This is what it means to love others in the way that I loved you. This is what it means to welcome others the way you were welcomed into the kingdom of God. And I'll keep telling you that until you have it down. Sounds good. Sounds like a plan. We all need to be reminded.