

Life aboard the Fellowship

Refresh One Another

Romans 15:30-33

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Introduction to Text: We are concluding a series of messages entitled “Life aboard the Fellowship” in Romans 15. There are 8 imperatives (as I see it) that we are given in Romans 15—actions that we are to pursue in our relationships with one another (especially relationships in the context of the local church). We have thus far considered the first seven; today we consider the last. The first action is given to us in verse 1. We are to “Bear with one Another when there is a difference of opinion over things not specifically covered in Scripture. The second action that we talked about is in verses 2-4 and deals with the idea of “Pleasing One Another.” We encounter the third action in verses 5 and 6, which is the idea of “Agreeing with one another.” The fourth action is that we “Accept one another.” The fifth action that we talked about is “Serving One Another.” The sixth action concerns the difficult subject of “Admonishing One Another.” Last time, we considered the very practical fellowship idea of “Praying for one Another” or as the text described it—“Striving together with one another.” Today we come to the end of this very practical section.

Let’s read this text again to see the idea of “Refresh one Another.”

Text: ³⁰ Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, ³¹ that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, ³² that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you. ³³ Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

Refreshment, what does it mean? We talk about having refreshments—usually some kind of snack item. But that is not what is meant here. This is a deeply personal and needed thing I sense from Paul’s words. The Gospel of Matthew gives us the words of Jesus, “Come to Me, and all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The reason that this is important is because essentially this is essentially the same word. The only difference is that in Romans the word adds a prefix that means “with” giving the idea of refreshing together. So, the idea of rest is a good idea. I think that communicates to us.

The Importance of Refreshment

Everybody needs a minister of refreshment.

Why? Everybody needs a minister of refreshment because there are other things and other people that at the same time keep knocking us down. Romans 16 is a list of people—some who have made things good for Paul; others who have made things miserable for Paul.

In the Library of Congress, there is a box that contains the items found in Abraham Lincoln’s pockets on the evening of his assassination. Among other things, there were nine newspaper clippings mostly

concerned with the great deeds of Lincoln. One of the clippings was a reporter's account of a speech made by British statesmen, John Bright, in which Bright called Lincoln, "one of the greatest men of all times." The world acknowledges that now, but in 1865 many Americans shared a different opinion about Lincoln. Perhaps it is that the President carried these clippings around to encourage him in some of his most discouraging times.¹

The Intangible Nature of Refreshment

Refreshment is hard to define, but easy to recognize.

Paul never mentions how they will refresh one another, but it seems that both know. This is not the only time Paul talked about this idea of refreshment. Look at 2 Timothy 1:16-18.

¹⁶ The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found *me*. ¹⁸ The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered *to me* at Ephesus.

This much we know, Onesiphorus was intentional about refreshing Paul.

On websites there is a refresh button. Many news services have this. As I understand it, the refresh button brings everything back to current status. It starts everything fresh. Isn't that a nice idea? Don't you need that sometimes? A re-boot! A start-over! A refreshment!

The Imperatives of Refreshment

- Must be in the will of God.
- Must be willing to enter life together.

As I think about those relationships of refreshment that I have, these things are the key.

So What?

- Be honest with yourself.
- Make refreshment a priority.
- Work towards mutual refreshment.

Don't forget this!

Jesus said, "I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

¹ Chuck Swindoll, *The Quest for Character*, p. 61-63.