If you don't walk the walk, it is probably best not to talk the talk.
Unknown

ROMANS CHAPTER FIFTEEN
Prayer Study #455
First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

Romans 15 Amplified Bible (AMP)

15 *We who are strong [in our convictions and of robust faith] ought to bear with the failings and the frailties and the tender scruples of the weak; [we ought to help carry the doubts and qualms of others] and not to please ourselves.*
2 *Let each one of us make it a practice to please (make happy) his neighbor for his good and for his true welfare, to edify him [to strengthen him and build him up spiritually].*
3 *For Christ did not please Himself [gave no thought to His own interests]; but, as it is written, The reproaches and abuses of those who reproached and abused you fell on Me.*
4 *For whatever was thus written, in former days, was written for our instruction, that by [our steadfast and patient] endurance and the encouragement [drawn] from the Scriptures we might hold fast to and cherish hope.*
5 *Now may the God Who gives the power of patient endurance (steadfastness) and Who supplies encouragement, grant you to live in such mutual harmony and such full sympathy with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,*
6 *That together you may [unanimously] with united hearts and one voice, praise and glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah).*

In these verses Paul is dealing with how Christian believers should treat each other, with an emphasis on the stronger, more mature believers being patient with the weaker, more immature believers. In this passage he summarizes the characteristics, which any local Body of Christ should have:

a. Each member should be considerate of every other member.
b. The emphasis in each fellowship should be the study of scripture.
c. Each member should have fortitude or be strong in coping with life.
d. The fellowship should be marked by hope. As Barclay puts it, "Christians are always realists but never pessimists.
e. The fellowship should be marked by harmony. This does not mean that there won't be differences of opinion, but in the end the body should be in unity. This is possible only when we have the mind of Christ on an issue. The power of being of one mind is seen on the Day of Pentecost when the disciples were in one accord and in one place (Acts 2:1).
f. The fellowship should be marked by praise. Even in difficult times, people should be full of praise because they know that God is working all things

together for good.

g. To summarize all of this, Paul uses the example of Christ and says that the fellowship should always take as its inspiration and example, Jesus Christ, who did not live to please Himself.

Also in this passage, we find, specifically in verses 3 and 4, strong support for Old Testament Scriptures for instruction and example for the New Testament Church. Paul practices what he preaches as evidenced by his own use of the Old Testament giving many, many references from the Old Testament in his epistles.

7 *Welcome and receive [to your hearts] one another, then, even as Christ has welcomed and received you, for the glory of God.*
8 *For I tell you that Christ (the Messiah) became a servant and a minister to the circumcised (the Jews) in order to show God's truthfulness and honesty by confirming (verifying) the promises [given] to our fathers,*
9 *And [also in order] that the Gentiles (nations) might glorify God for His mercy [not covenanted] to them. As it is written, Therefore, I will praise You among the Gentiles and sing praises to Your name.*
10 *Again it is said, Rejoice (exult), O Gentiles, along with His [own] people;*
11 *And again, Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise Him!*
12 *And further Isaiah says, There shall be a Sprout from the Root of Jesse, He Who rises to rule over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles hope.*
13 *May the God of your hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing [through the experience of your faith] that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound and be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope.*

In this passage Paul makes a final appeal for unity in the Body of Christ. All, whether Jew or Gentile, free or slave, weak or strong, should be in one accord, for there may be many differences, but there is only one Christ. To convince the Jews of this, Paul cites four passages from the Old Testament, using the Septuagint or Greek version. These passages are Psalm 18:50, Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 117:1, and Isaiah 11:10. Again Paul gives characteristics of the Christian faith. They are hope, joy, peace, and there is power.

In chapter 2, Paul dealt especially with the Jew. In this chapter 15, he deals more specifically with the Gentile. In chapters 9-11 he deals with both Jew and Gentile grafted into the same olive tree.

The root of Jesse is Jesus Christ. Jesse was King David's father, and Jesus was descended, on his mother's side, from David.

14 *Personally I am satisfied about you, my brethren, that you yourselves are rich in*

goodness, amply filled with all [spiritual] knowledge and competent to admonish and counsel and instruct one another also.
15 *Still on some points I have written to you the more boldly and unreservedly by way of reminder. [I have done so] because of the grace (the unmerited favor) bestowed on me by God*
16 *In making me a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. I act in the priestly service of the Gospel (the good news) of God, in order that the sacrificial offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable [to God], consecrated and made holy by the Holy Spirit.*
17 *In Christ Jesus, then, I have legitimate reason to glory (exult) in my work for God [in what through Christ Jesus I have accomplished concerning the things of God].*
18 *For [of course] I will not venture (presume) to speak thus of any work except what Christ has actually done through me [as an instrument in His hands] to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed,*
19 *[Even as my preaching has been accompanied] with the power of signs and wonders, [and all of it] by the power of the Holy Spirit. [The result is] that starting from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel [faithfully executing, accomplishing, carrying out to the full the good news] of Christ (the Messiah) in its entirety.*
20 *Thus my ambition has been to preach the Gospel, not where Christ's name has already been known, lest I build on another man's foundation;*
21 *But [instead I would act on the principle] as it is written, They shall see who have never been told of Him, and they shall understand who have never heard [of Him].*

Paul commends the church at Rome with three points. He says that they are full of goodness (Romans 3:12). They are filled with knowledge (Ephesians 1:17-18; 1st Corinthians 9:1). And finally, they are able to admonish one another (Acts 20:31).

In these verses Paul reveals his own character. He reveals that he is a man of tact, not lecturing the Romans in anger or nagging them, but only reminding them of what they already know. He does not brag on himself, except to say that he was the servant of Christ. He talks of what Christ has done with him, not what he himself had done. Barclay says, "It is when we stop thinking of what we can do and begin to think of what God can do with us that things begin to happen." It was Paul's one ambition to take the good news to men and women who had never heard it.

In verse 19 Paul gives the evidence of his apostleship. Signs and wonders have followed him. The power of the Holy Spirit has been with him. He has carried the Gospel message from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and he has fully preached the Gospel. In this day we would say that he was a full Gospel preacher.

22 *This [ambition] is the reason why I have so frequently been hindered from coming to visit you.*

23 *But now since I have no further opportunity for work in these regions, and since I have longed for enough years to come to you,*
24 *I hope to see you in passing [through Rome] as I go [on my intended trip] to Spain, and to be aided on my journey there by you, after I have enjoyed your company for a little while.*
25 *For the present, however, I am going to Jerusalem to bring aid (relief) for the saints (God's people there).*
26 *For it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make some contribution for the poor among the saints of Jerusalem.*
27 *They were pleased to do it; and surely they are in debt to them, for if these Gentiles have come to share in their [the Jerusalem Jews'] spiritual blessings, then they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.*
28 *When therefore I have completed this mission and have delivered to them [at Jerusalem] what has been raised, I shall go on by way of you to Spain.*
29 *And I know that when I do come to you, I shall come in the abundant blessing of the Gospel of Christ.*

Paul had both an immediate plan and a future plan. His immediate plan was to go to Jerusalem. He wanted to take an offering from the churches in Asia Minor to the Church at Jerusalem. Perhaps the biggest employer of the Jews was the Temple. The Temple was run by the Sadducees who hated Jesus and had Him crucified. Thus, many, when they became Christians, lost their jobs. Paul wanted to take some much needed help to these people. He felt a great responsibility to do this because when the Church at Jerusalem agreed for him to be the apostle to the Gentiles, the one responsibility they put on Paul was that he should remember the poor (Galatians 2:10). He also wanted the other churches to realize that they were all part of the Body of Christ and should remember their brothers and sisters suffering in other places.

Paul's future plan was to go to Spain, which was considered to be on the edge of the known world. Many scholarly and worldwide known people came out of Spain. Paul believed that tremendous things would happen for Christ if he could just get to Spain. As far as we know, however, he never made it to Spain. The trouble he encountered in Jerusalem led to his arrest and his long imprisonment in Rome and his ultimate death by beheading.

30 *I appeal to you [I entreat you], brethren, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love [given by] the Spirit, to unite with me in earnest wrestling in prayer to God in my behalf.*
31 *[Pray] that I may be delivered (rescued) from the unbelievers in Judea and that my mission of relief to Jerusalem may be acceptable and graciously received by the saints (God's people there),*

32 *So that by God's will I may subsequently come to you with joy (with a happy heart) and be refreshed [by the interval of rest] in your company.*
33 *May [our] peace-giving God be with you all! Amen (so be it).*

This is Paul's request for prayer. We must always remember to pray for those in ministry over us. We also should pray specific prayers. Paul is asking the Romans to pray that he might be delivered from the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem; that the offering the Gentiles gave to the Jewish Church in Jerusalem might be accepted; that he might eventually come to the Romans with joy; and that he and they together would be spiritually refreshed.

Love Lifted Me
James Rowe
1912

I was sinkin' deep in sin far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more.
But the master of the sea heard my despairing cry
From the waters lifted me. Now safe am I.

CHORUS
Love lifted me. Love lifted me.
When nothing else could help
Love lifted me.

All my heart to him I give, ever to him I'll cling.
In his blessed presence live, ever his praises sing.
Love so mighty and so true merits my soul's best song.
Faithful, loving service, too, To him belongs.

Souls in danger, look above, Jesus completely saves;
He will lift you by his love out of the angry waves;
He's the Master of the sea, billows his will obey;
He your Savior wants to be, be saved today.