

Title: Game On - Romans 15 1-13

Read:

¹⁻² Those of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, "How can I help?" ³⁻⁶ That's exactly what Jesus did. He didn't make it easy for himself by avoiding people's troubles, but waded right in and helped out. "I took on the troubles of the troubled," is the way Scripture puts it. Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it's written for us. God wants the combination of his steady, constant calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize us, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next. May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we'll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus! ⁷⁻
¹³ So reach out and welcome one another to God's glory. Jesus did it; now you do it! Jesus, staying true to God's purposes, reached out in a special way to the Jewish insiders so that the old ancestral promises would come true for them. As a result, the non-Jewish outsiders have been able to experience mercy and to show appreciation to God. Just think of all the Scriptures that will come true in what we do! For instance: Then I'll join outsiders in a hymn-sing; I'll sing to your name! And this one: Outsiders and insiders, rejoice together! And again: People of all nations, celebrate God! All colors and races, give hearty praise! And Isaiah's word: There's the root of our ancestor Jesse, breaking through the earth and growing tree tall, Tall enough for everyone everywhere to see and take hope! Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

Think:

Ever watch a game of football where it was obvious the team were not united? A guy puts the ball up the field, but there is no one there to receive it, because the team just haven't practised enough, they are not united. The same happens when a band are singing together for the first time. It all seems a bit stilted and some of the singers keep missing their notes, it's just a mess. On the other hand have you ever watched a doubles tennis game, where the two people playing know each other really well. They anticipate each others moves, where one person steps back the other steps forward and takes the shot. They can do this because they have spent hours encouraging each other, learning each others good and bad points and learning where to step in to help and where to accept help. That's exactly what God wants from his team. He doesn't want us to have a go at another Christian friend; he wants us to encourage other Christians. Where they stuff up, he wants us to step in to help them. When we stuff up he wants us to seek and accept help from other Christians. Christian life is not a solo life, it is a team game.

Pray:

Lord thank you for putting other Christians in my life. Please help me to know when I need to accept help and when I need to offer help to others. Amen.

Action:

So if the game is on, who is it on with? Who can you encourage today? A Friend? A leader? Go on do it now. Bye.