



# Sermon Growth Guide

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## IN THE STRUGGLE TOGETHER | Romans 15:30-33

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**Key Verse:** Romans 15:30 - "I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me."

**Big Idea:** We are called to partner with other believers.

### Foundations

This week we continue in some of the closing arguments of Romans. In these last remarks, we read Paul's heart in preaching the gospel of Christ, his future hopes and plans, joining together in prayer, personal greetings and encouragements to the believers, and final cautions. Within all of these is the spirit of unity and togetherness that Paul preached.

Pastor Tim taught on three struggles that we should be aware of: we're against a culture that is running from God's truth, in a fight with dark spiritual forces that bend minds, and in a struggle within ourselves to bring our will in line with God's will.

Throughout the Bible, we see constant striving for unity and the perils of brokenness. We talk here at the church about "no one hurts alone." There is power in togetherness. Galatians 6:2 tells us "Carry each others burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." We see others well when we come alongside them and share their hurts, pains, and dreams.

There is also power in coming together in prayer. Paul asks the Romans to pray for him. He asks prayer for his protection, that his mission will be successful, and that he can return to those who bring him so much joy and refreshment. These things weigh on his mind and heart, yet he wants God's will. As Pastor Tim said, "Prayer is not a manipulation to bend God's will, but a spiritual discipline to align our will with God's will." We know from history that Paul will soon be arrested and will need those prayers and strength that come from fellow believers.

### Understanding God's Word

Together, read Romans 15:30-33. Paul asks the Romans to pray for him and come alongside him. He's looking for others who will partner with him. He knows he is facing a physical threat in carrying funds to Jerusalem. He's intreating the believers to pray for him, as a way to 'join in the struggle together.'

Years ago, when social media was at its height, you would often hear of a disaster, and people would comment, "Thoughts and prayers." It became a trite saying that was ultimately derided by many. But the good thing about this, at the time, was that others felt buoyed and bonded to each other. Paul is asking to know that they are 'in it together.'

### Applying God's Word

As we look around us, who can we come alongside? Who can we join up with? Is there a way that we are struggling that we might ask others to join us in? Sometimes it is hard for us to receive the gifts that others give, whether because of pride or ego. What can we receive? What can we give?

### Witnessing God's Word

Look around at the world around you. Where do you see struggle? Where is God calling you to lift a burden? What can you be praying for? How can you unite with believers around the world?