

## What Blesses God, Part 3 - Romans 15:7-9 – August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013

- Today's teaching will be part three of a series I've titled; "What Blesses God."
- By way of introduction, and for the benefit of those who may not have been with us for the first two I'll quickly set the stage for our third one.

### 1. Bearing with others (Verses 1-3)

- Paul says we who are strong should bear with the failings of the weak to build them up, then quoting Psalm 69:9 he uses Christ's example.

### 2. Unifying among others (Verses 4-6)

- Paul prays that the God who gives endurance and encouragement would also give us a spirit of unity among ourselves as we follow Jesus.

### 3. Accepting of others (Verses 7-9)

(7) Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (8) For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs (9) so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name."

- v7 Paul exhorts us to be accepting one of another, just as Jesus Christ accepted us, because in so doing, we in turn bring praise to God.
- v8 He tells us why, saying; "Christ became a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs."
- v9 He quotes Psalm 18:49 saying, it's so the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy, praising Him and also, singing hymns to His name.

- Perhaps you'll bear with me for just a bit, as I provide a template of sorts with which to better understand the text we have before us today.
- First and foremost, it's important we understand that we are blessed, when we seek first to bless God, which in turn brings glory to God.
- Secondly, the ways in which I can bless and glorify God are not the ways I would think, such that God is blessed by my treatment of others.

- The third part of this template is what I like to call, "the why behind the what," and in this case, we even have the "how" packaged with it.
- Let me explain, the "what" is blessing God, the "how" is by my treatment of others, and the "why" is because of the way Jesus treated me.
- In other words, the reason "why" I am able to bless God, by my accepting of others, is because of "how" the Lord had first accepted me.

Charles Spurgeon - "If the Lord Jesus has indeed [accepted] us, and bears with our weaknesses and follies, well may we have patience with one another, and show pity to each other's infirmities. ...Christ did not receive us because we were perfect, because he could see no fault in us, or because he hoped to gain somewhat at our hands. Ah, no! But, in loving condescension covering our faults, and seeking our good, He welcomed us to his heart; so, in the same way, and with the same purpose, let us [accept] one another."

- It's interesting to note that Paul would quote Psalm 18:49, which mentions the Gentiles glorifying and praising God for His mercy to them.
- I find this interesting because Paul is likening their unwillingness to accept one another, to the Jews unwillingness to accept the Gentiles.
- Rather than scorning them he's exhorting them to, once again, look to how Jesus Christ confirmed the promise of bringing them together.

One commentator said it best this way, "Because the aim of glorifying God by a heartfelt [acceptance] in the church is so central to the letter, Paul says to accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ...When incompatible people, [such as Jews and Gentiles], actually do [accept] one another, and love one another sincerely, they prove that God's King is bringing together the world under His rule, (just as Christ accepted you). When that happens, their [acceptance] of one another will bring praise to God."

- Here's the bottom line, when I accept others just as Christ accepted me, it not only brings praise to God, it will also bless the heart of God.
- And, the reason it blesses the heart of God is because we are children of God, in that as brothers and sisters in Christ, we're getting along.
- Who here among us as parents are not truly blessed when our children get along with each other in the way that they treat each other?

- How much more so is this true for our heavenly Father? When we, as siblings in Christ, honor each other, our heavenly Father is blessed.
- Conversely, He's not blessed when we are in this sibling rivalry, as it were, such that we are unwilling to be both accepting and reconciling.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest that in turn, the Lord will not be accepting of us nor will He be accepting of our gifts and service to Him.

Matthew 5:23-26 NIV "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, (24) leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. (25) "Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. (26) I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny."

- In other words, when I offer gifts of service and there remembrance I have at ought with another, it won't be accepted until I make it right.
- So much so, the hand of God's blessing on me and me blessing God, depends on me be reconciled with them as much as it lies within me.
- Then, if and when I do reconcile with them, my gifts and offerings and sacrifice to the Lord, in my service for the Lord, will be acceptable.

- Before we close, there's one more thing I need to point out here. Notice the urgency with which Jesus describes this as being time driven.
- He says to settle matters quickly with those we have made our adversary or we'll be judged and condemning in the court of our own mind.
- It comes by way of the enemy getting the upper hand in my life while tying the hand of God's blessing on my life, and my life blessing God.

Romans 12:16-18 NIV Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (17) Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. (18) If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.