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Romans 15: 1-9, 13

1-16-22

“We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.’ For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that through the patience and the comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one

another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.” (Romans 15: 1–9, 13 NKJV)

Recall that the Apostle Paul has been teaching (among other things) what our pastor has rightly called soteriology, framed and supported by proper Israelology, which issues in sound orthopraxy. That is, knowing that the God Who keeps ALL His promises to Israel is the same God Who saves believers by Grace alone, through Faith alone, in Christ alone, as explained in the Bible alone, to the glory of God alone...knowing this, we love one another as believers, and accept Romans’ counsel as the best guidance on HOW to love one another.

Remember that believers in Rome included “weak” and “strong” brothers and sisters among both Jews and Gentiles. Remember that the Apostle Paul wrapped up the entire message of Romans with orthopraxy for both groups.

“We then who are strong”... “Then” is what we might call a “sequel signal.” It means that what follows is a sequel to what came before. That is, the entire book prior and 13 verses to follow make the case for what will follow.

What will follow? **“We... who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak...not to please ourselves... [instead] each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.”**

So in light of all the Israelology we have studied in the last two years, the clarity of sound doctrine in soteriology, Israelology and orthopraxy, we are now urged to walk in this:

An others-pleasing patience, delivered through divine encouragement and hope specifically from the Scriptures and rooted in God’s own identity.

What is ‘edification’? Edification, in short, is building up the other based on biblical discernment of that person’s good.

What is our premium baseline for that ‘edification’ mode? Simply put, our example is Christ... particularly, the example of Christ when insulted. **‘For even Christ**

did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

Sometimes our sensitivity to insults is a great barrier to faith. Are we easily offended? Do we find our hackles going up a little too quickly?

“For” is another recap-and-reinforcement word, which reminds us that all the Old Testament / prior dispensation quotes serve this same end...the hope based on patience and comfort by which, and armed with which, we can respond to insults as Christ did and so bear with the scruples of the weak. **“For even Christ did not please himself, but...”** and Paul quotes Psalm 69, in which “the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on Me.”

Especially featured in this case is Psalm 69, esp. 35-36, quoted by the Apostle Paul here.

Psalm 69 is the Lord Jesus’ prayer, in His pre-existent glory, praying through David a prayer of confidence that God would **“save Zion.”** This millennial-kingdom confidence is maintained by the Lord Jesus despite the “reproach” of those who hate Him.

Why does this Israelology matter? Again, it's because Jesus' example of confidence in God's promises to Israel—a confidence that persists despite the reproach of unbelievers—is to be our example today! It's as if our confidence in the God of Israel gives us the capacity to shed insults, to let the reproach of unbelievers flow right over us and fall off like water off a duck's back (as we say in the *good* South!).

Finally, Paul says **“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

“Now” is still another recap-and-reinforcement word, drawing up everything prior and wrapping it up, with the additional temporal force of making it all focused and urgent in this moment. NOT last year, last month, last week, yesterday or even an hour ago is all this relevant, but NOW. What is newly relevant NOW? It is GOD HIMSELF who will grant you what you need to embody and practice this others-minded, insult-shedding mode of living, GOD HIMSELF who will do it

through the Word of God and through patience, encouragement and hope.

Further, GOD HIMSELF will do this by granting you likemindedness. You will SHARE this insult-shedding, others-preferring capacity that partakes of and reflects the actual likeness of the Lord Jesus Himself.

“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.” Paul now summarizes the content of no less than three recap-and-reinforcement words, one of them iterated twice (then (v1), for (v3-4), now (v5)) with this statement that really means everything prior: **“RECEIVE ONE ANOTHER, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO RECEIVED US, TO THE GLORY OF GOD.”**

ALL THIS IS TO GOD’S GLORY, NOT OURS (one more clear reason that it makes no sense to respond to insults).

Indeed, let us “let the reproaches of all who reproach you fall on Me” in faithful obedience to God’s Word.

We love our Candlelight family, because He loved us first!

Pastor Jason