

## GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH

### Part VI: God's Righteousness Applied To Practical Living, Romans 12:1-15:13

#### H. God's Righteousness Applied To Following Christ In Edifying Others Over Pleasing Ourselves (Romans 15:1-13)

##### I. Introduction

- A. God's true righteousness was obviously presented in the life of Christ, so we who are justified by God should see that righteousness lived out in our lives as it was lived out in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.
- B. That is a great calling, for Christ Himself did not please Himself, but bore the insults laid on Him by sinners because of His identification with God the Father, Romans 15:3; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 495.
- C. Similarly, we believers are called of God to bear with the weaknesses of fellow spiritually weak believers in our ultimate application of God's righteousness to living, and Romans 15:1-13 explains this truth (as follows):

##### II. God's Righteousness Applied To Following Christ In Edifying Others Over Pleasing Ourselves.

- A. In summing up his discussion on not causing others to sin through exercising one's liberties in Christ, Paul claimed that believers who are strong in the faith regarding their convictions and conscience should bear the "infirmities, weaknesses" of the weak instead of seeking to please themselves, Romans 15:1; *Ibid.*, p. 494.
- B. Specifically, each mature believer should seek to please his fellow, spiritually weaker brother for his good, for his spiritual edification in the Lord, Romans 15:2.
- C. The example for such a ministry is Jesus Christ Himself: He did not seek to please Himself, but He faced the insults of others because He associated Himself with God the Father Whom the people had already rejected, Romans 15:3 in citing Psalm 69:9; *Ibid.*, p. 494-495. Jesus came to do the will of the Father (John 4:34) even if doing so meant that He had to face the cross (Matthew 26:38-39).
- D. Paul then "stated a significant principle concerning the purpose and ministry of the Scriptures: . . . As Christians learn from the *past* (what is written in the OT about others who did not please themselves) they are motivated to endure and be comforted in the *present*, looking ahead in hope (confidence) to the *future*," Romans 15:4; *Ibid.*, p. 495.
- E. Accordingly, Paul trusted that God's steadfast endurance and encouragement provided to his Christian readers by the Scriptures would grant them the privilege of living in harmony with one another in accord with the example and testimony of Christ Jesus, Romans 15:5. He hoped that they might unitedly glorify God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 15:6.
- F. Thus, Paul urged his readers to welcome one another as Christ has welcomed them to the glory of God, v. 7.
- G. An underlying tension in the Church of Rome was the competition between Jews who viewed themselves as the favored people of God via the Abrahamic Covenant and Roman Gentiles who viewed themselves as lead citizens of the city that ruled that part of the world. Accordingly, Paul applied his teaching on edifying others over pleasing one's self in countering this Jewish and Gentile tension in Romans 15:8-13 (as follows):
  1. Paul explained to his readers that Christ became a servant to the circumcised Hebrew people to demonstrate God's truthfulness in confirming the promises given to the patriarchs, Romans 15:8.
  2. However, Christ also came that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy through Christ as well, Romans 15:9a, and to prove this point, Paul cited several Hebrew Old Testament passages in Romans 15:9b-13, quotations that are taken from all three divisions of the Old Testament, *Ibid.*, p. 495-496:
    - a. Paul cited from *the Psalms* in David's song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:50 and Psalm 18:49 where David said he would praise God among the Gentiles, singing to His name, Romans 15:9; *Ibid.*, p. 496.
    - b. In Romans 15:10, Paul cited from *the Law* at Moses' "valedictory song to the people of Israel" in Deuteronomy 32:43 where Moses called the Gentiles to rejoice in the Lord with His people Israel. (*Ibid.*)
    - c. In Romans 15:11, Paul cited from *the Psalms* in Psalm 117:1, the shortest and middle chapter of the Bible, calling for the Gentiles to praise Israel's Lord. (*Ibid.*)
    - d. In Romans 15:12, Paul cited from *the Prophets* at Isaiah's messianic prophecy of Isaiah 11:10 where Messiah, the Root of Jesse comes and in Him would the saved Gentiles hope. (*Ibid.*)
  3. Paul then hoped that God might fill his readers with all joy and peace in believing in Christ that by the power of the Holy Spirit they might abound in hope in the Lord, Romans 15:13.

**Lesson:** *Believers should follow Christ's example of seeking their brothers' good instead of pleasing themselves.*

**Application:** *May we rely on the Lord to focus on seeking our spiritual brothers' good versus pleasing ourselves.*