

**March 10, 2019**

**Session 65: Edification Prayer**

Before we get started I need to correct something. I have talked as though the mercies of God are all of the things which were given to us in Christ. While those may technically be called mercies, the particular mercies which Paul has in view in Romans 12:1 are the mercies which pertain to our new identity in Christ. It is on the basis of who we have been made to be in Christ that we are called to perform our reasonable service.

That is not to say that we cannot love, know and thank God for those other things; of course we can, and should. So, if you want to talk to God about what He has done by interrupting Israel's program and bringing in a DoGG, that is perfectly fine. If your prayers are about God offering us Gentiles a gospel of grace, there is something to be gained from that too, for we can love God for that also. We can thank God for dealing with us out of grace, giving us His Spirit, giving us unlimited and unrestricted access to Him, or for our liberty in Christ. We can love Him for all those things and come to know Him better because of our understanding of them. These things should be a part of our prayer life.

But, the particular mercies which Paul has in view in Romans 12:1, the mercies which must be working in us, are the mercies that particularly pertain to our new identity in Christ. And just to be clear, up to the time of Romans 11, those pertain to our justification and our sanctification. The only part of our exaltation that we have encountered in any form, up to this point, is our heavenly vocation. (Rom. 8)

The reason I bring this up is because for this group in Monahans, we have a restricted amount of time in which to get these mercies adequately installed in us before we get back to the checkpoint of Romans 12:1.

The reason I am still saying that we should keep including these other things in our prayer life is because our ability to live out of the godly thinking of Romans 12:3 is dependent upon our loving God for more than just saving us from hell.

**This part in red is “new” for Monahans, but I have already taught it in 61-62 for GR. So, when I get to here in Glen Rose, I can skip this with only a brief reminder.**

### **Loving God for Forgiveness**

But first things first; how do we know that we love God for saving us, for forgiving us? Because we have availed ourselves of His offer of salvation by trusting Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior. This is an important principle: we cannot love God for something that is not working in us!

Since we have trusted Christ to save us and forgive our sins, our love for Him with regard to our “forgiveness” is an easy way for us to love God.

### **Deepening our Love**

But what about the depth of our love in connection with our forgiveness? Our love for God deepens with greater knowledge of all that forgiveness entails. More precisely, I should say that our love deepens as that knowledge works in us to persuade us it is true and as we live in accordance with it. Remember, we cannot love God for something that is not working in us.

Our forgiveness in Christ not only does the obvious thing (forgive our sins), but it also does something else; it has the power to transform us from being “under sin” to being forgiven. Forgiveness in Christ is a necessary step to changing who we are by nature; changing our identity.

Our complete forgiveness in Christ sets the stage for the next component of our justification. It is a perfect and complete forgiveness.

It was not so for Israel. According to the book of Hebrews Israel's forgiveness, which was on the basis of Day of Atonement and other sacrifices, had no such power.

### **Session 66: The Details of Forgiveness**

Hebrews 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can **never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.** 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

And by the way, that “perfection” is what they desperately needed. But guess what, that is exactly the kind of forgiveness we received when we were JUEL.

### **Deepening our Love**

Our forgiveness in Christ is not temporary or ineffective in that it must be repeated over and over. We are given a permanent forgiveness which never needs to be repeated.

Hebrews 10:12 But this man, after he had offered **one sacrifice for sins for ever**, sat down on the right hand of God;

Israel's brand of forgiveness had to be repeated “year by year.”

Our forgiveness in Christ requires no ceremony or observances on our part.

That was not the case for Israel's kind of forgiveness. They had to make these sacrifices in strict accordance with regulations set down in the

Law. (lambs without blemish, done on certain days, performed according to guidelines, else the whole sacrifice was worthless. Sometimes, the high priest was even killed!) These ceremonies and regulations are the “rudiments of the world” meant for childhood training, not adult adopted sons.

Hebrews 10:3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins **every year**.

Israel’s sacrifices did not have the power to reach out and affect the sins they had not yet committed in future of their lives. On the other hand, Jesus was able to cover all our sins before we ever committed any of them. Our justification not only takes the sins we have already committed into account, but it is also reaches out to cover the sins we have not yet committed. There is another depth of reason to love God for our forgiveness in Christ.

Not so for Israel:

Hebrews 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

The present day equivalent is a man who thinks he must get saved every day, or every time he sins. That man is unaware of the forgiveness which is in Christ. He equates forgiveness in Christ to be like the forgiveness offered under bulls and goats; it has no power to affect future sins.

### **Deepening our Love**

Our justified status in Christ is of such a nature that no matter what we do, we cannot undo our forgiveness. We cannot lose our salvation. We cannot become unjustified.

We are permanently justified unto eternal life and nothing can alter that fact. That knowledge provides a deeper reason for us to love God in connection with our forgiveness.

Our forgiveness in Christ eliminates the need to confess our sins in order to restore our relationship with God. That is another depth of understanding and reason for another depth of love for God in connection with our forgiveness.

Our prayers regarding the mercy of God's forgiveness in Christ should acknowledge the depth of this forgiveness which we have in Christ.

### **Israel's Forgiveness**

Could not perfect

Temporary

Ceremonies & Sacrifices

### **Our J-Forgiveness**

Transforms us

Permanent

No observances

In Christ, our forgiveness:

- Impacts our Salvation – never lose it
- Impacts our Relationship – never changes

As we understand the depth of our forgiveness under grace, we learn to love God because there is nothing we can ever do which will undo our justified status before God and there is nothing we can ever do which will change the way God thinks about us and deals with us.

We suffer no injury to our position in Christ by anything we do. God does not give us the cold shoulder or stop hearing our prayers because of something we do. The closeness of our relationship with God is as permanent as our justification. Therefore, when we understand the depth of our forgiveness, we will not see the need to employ 1 John 1:9 in order to get back in God's good graces. And we certainly will not think we need to get saved again.

So, let's tie this up: We love God because we are not going to hell, but we also love God for:

- A forgiveness that is permanent (no repeat needed)
- A forgiveness that encompasses all future sins
- A forgiveness that is complete (does not require ceremony)
- A forgiveness that transforms us (wipes the slate clean)
- A forgiveness that impacts our daily relationship w/God

Here is the bottom line: In the time past of their program, Israelites could never love God for the depth of forgiveness which we enjoy every day as adopted sons and daughters. Think about that.

But as we understand the depth of our forgiveness under grace, we learn to love God because there is nothing we can ever do which will undo our justified status before God and there is nothing we can ever do which will change the way God thinks about us and deals with us. We suffer no injury to our position in Christ by anything we do. God does not give us the cold shoulder or stop hearing our prayers because of something we do.

As we want our love for God to deepen, think about this: In the time past of their program, Israelites could never love God for the depth of forgiveness which we enjoy every day as adopted sons and daughters. Think about that.

But what about those things which we did not know about when we trusted Christ?

The measure of loving God for our imputed righteousness is in accordance with our knowledge of that doctrine and its effectual work in us. That is why it is imperative for us to know about these things for they are not naturally apparent to us in the gospel.

It is out of the “seed bed” of our abounding love for our heavenly Father that this first form of doctrine (Rm. 12:3) springs forth. Or, to say it another way, our love for God is the foundation upon which the multi-storied edifice of our Sonship will be erected.

There is something else we should be aware of: if we are to attain the necessary skill which we will utilize in the heavenly places, they must first be working in us down here on earth, employed in our everyday lives. And the only motivation which will succeed in the obtaining of these skills is our desire to be like our heavenly Father in every aspect of thought or deed. We might want to be talking to God about this too.

We left off last time talking about causes of stagnation in our prayer life. This week, we take up our session with:

### **The Solution for Stagnation:**

Therefore, when we observe that we have become stagnant, we need to either 1) re-engage in sonship prayer or 2) we need to get moving in our sonship life. And by “get moving” I mean that we should be learning the next form of doctrine, responding properly to it and praying accordingly.

Therefore, our “loveknowlitude” will be ever-increasing because our love for God will abound beyond the things which were given to us in Christ. Our knowledge of Him and gratitude for Him is meant to increase beyond the mercies of God. Of course we will deepen all of those virtues with regard to the mercies of God, but we will also be adding to them at the same time.

In the last two weeks, we got more specific by learning about the mechanics of Relationship Prayer and how it works.

We learned that Relationship Prayer involves praying about the “mercies of God” which are the things which have been given to us in Christ. We learned what those things were.

What does prayer about the mercies of God accomplish? What should we be expecting when we engage in Relationship Praying?

This kind of prayer is the means by which the mercies of God do their effectual work in us. This is different from edification prayer in that we already possess the mercies of God; they were given to us by grace when we trusted Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are not praying for forgiveness, righteousness or peace with God; we are praying *about* those things so that they will produce certain “virtues” in us; virtues which must be in us before we begin the education proper in Romans 12.

If we do not know what those mercies are, we will not have those mercies working in us. If we do not have those mercies working in us, then we will not be able to pass the checkpoint of Romans 12:1. The inability to pass the checkpoint of Romans 12:1 means that the education will only be information in our heads but not edification in our hearts.

Praying “about” the mercies of God means we are talking to God out of our knowledge and understanding of those things; knowledge that comes from His word. Be sure and ground your prayers in the word of truth.

I want to give you an idea of what should be in our minds as we are praying about the mercies of God.

When we pray about the mercies of God, it means we are:

- Thinking about those mercies individually and what we understand about each one
- Thinking about how they impact us (in our thinking and actions)

- Learning to value and esteem those things for what they are (We recognize what each mercy does for us and what it would be like if we did not have it)

Our forgiveness should be mean enough to us that instead of seeing it as a license to sin, we see it as a measure of our Father's love to us, we see it as necessary to truly being "righteous" before God. That kind of forgiveness, which is not predicated upon our future actions, should produce the virtue of gratitude which makes us want to serve God instead of serving sin.

- Understanding some things about God by the things He has done for us

What does it tell us about God when we know that He has forgiven us of all iniquities? Just think about it. Go back in your bible to Romans 4 and refresh your thinking with what was told to you back there about this issue.

### **Post-doctrinal Exhortation:**

One last exhortation on this: the more you do this, the more natural it feels and the more "skilled" you become at it. This is praying in the will of God and in accordance with the word of God, so get used to this kind of praying. Relationship Prayer is meant to install the mercies of God in our inner man. So, spend time with this kind of praying. Do it everywhere you can, whenever you can.

This would be a great way to start family prayer, teaching one another about the proper way to pray and going over the different mercies of God. Have a discussion about each mercy before you pray.

### **Edification Prayer**

Let us make sure we all understand what edification is. Edification is the “building up” of our inner man. Edification is the word of truth effectually working in us to produce godly thinking and godly living.

There are many ways we could talk about this.

The results of edification are:

- A joint-heir inheritance with Christ (Rm. 8:17)
- Glory is revealed in us (Rm.8:18)
- A heavenly vocation in the creature (Rm. 8:19-21)
- All things work together for good (Rm. 8:28)
- We are conformed to the image of God’s Son (Rm. 8:29)
- We become more than conquerors (Rm. 8:37) **Sufferings of Christ**