

Series: Romans
Title: Christ Pleas'd Not Himself
Text: Romans 15: 1-4
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Romans 15: 1: We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2: Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. 3: For even Christ pleas'd not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproach'd thee fell on me.

The apostle Paul exhorts believers to bear the infirmities of our weak brethren. Rather than pleasing ourselves, he exhorts us *to please our neighbor for his good to edification*. If a weak brother looks upon us with a critical eye due to the fact that we are exercising our liberty and he speaks harsh words, then if we are strong we ought to one, bear his infirmity, his weakness, his errors. Two, we should *not please ourselves* by exercising our liberty before him because that will only offend him more. Let us not please ourselves by reviling back and judging unrighteous judgment by imputing sinful motives when we have no idea what is in his heart. Three, let us *please our weak brother for his good to edification*—do what we can to pursue peace.

The only way sinners can do anything our Master commands is by Christ's power resting upon us. When overcome by our flesh we can do nothing but sin. But when Christ restrains our flesh and strengthens our inner man by making us remember he is our Righteousness, Holiness and Acceptance with God then we obey him constrained by his love for us. Therefore, Paul sets Christ before us—*For even Christ pleas'd not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproach'd thee fell on me.*

Let's turn to Psalm 69 from where Paul is quoting. Psalm 69 is quoted 7 or 8 times in the New Testament. The whole Psalm is Christ speaking. When our Substitute was in the garden of Gethsemane, tempted of the devil, did he please himself by taking matters into his own hands? When he was at Gabatha bearing reproach from wicked men, did he please himself by reviling back again. When he was at Golgotha bearing the fury of God's wrath, did he please himself by easing himself of the suffering? what did he do? He prayed to the Father, saying,

Psalm 69: 1: Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

Title: Christ Pleas'd Not Himself

Proposition: Christ pleas'd not himself but did all for the good of his elect to our edification.

Our blessed Savior subjected himself to every inconvenience, even the shameful, torturous death of the cross for the everlasting salvation of his elect. He did it looking only to the Father. Therefore, it is reasonable that we should please not ourselves but bear one another's weaknesses as we look to Christ alone.

Divisions: Christ pleas'd not himself: 1) But restored what he took not away 2) But made intercession to God for his people 3) But bore reproach for us

RESTORED THAT HE TOOK NOT AWAY

Psalm 69: 1: « To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A Psalm of David. » Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul. 2: I sink in deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. 3: I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. 4: They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.

Our Lord Jesus pleas'd not himself but bore the pain of the cross in order to restore to his people that which he took not away. He did so faithfully looking to his Father, crying out in his heart, "*Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.*" Rather than please himself, Christ bore the suffering and torment that his people would have had to bear. It was as waters come in unto his soul. What did our Savior say as he went to Gethsemane?

John 12: 27: Now is MY SOUL troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Mark 14:33: And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

Have you seen in movies a sand storm slowly coming across the dessert? A huge cloud moves across the dessert. The sky becomes dark. The thick cloud envelopes everything in its path so that whole buildings disappear. In Gethsemane, I picture our Substitute beholding all the sin of all his elect from every age coming upon him. I picture him beholding the fury of divine justice coming upon him like one of those sand clouds—and *he began to be sore amazed! And to be very heavy.*

Mark 14: 34: And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35: And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36: And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

Luke 22:44: And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

He continues in our text, praying, *“I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.”* In that part of the world there is a quicksand-like mud. When a person begins to sink down in it, the more he tries to free himself, the more it sucks him under. If someone does not pull him out, he will go under and die in the mire. Christ our Forerunner went before us into the deepest mire, the deepest waters as he suffered the eternal condemnation his people deserved due to our sin against God.

He suffered in soul and body. He said, *“the waters are come into my soul”, “I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God”, “Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness”.* He suffered the hate of enemies—*“They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty.”*

Yet, bearing the immeasurable weight of his people’s burden, Christ restored to us that which he had no part in taking from us—*“Then I restored that which I took not away.”* Christ restored the glory of God of which He had not robbed Him. He satisfied divine justice which Christ had never injured. Our Substitute fulfilled the law he had never broken. He restored righteousness he had never taken away. Christ made satisfaction for sins he had never committed. He did it all personally for you, child of God!

Therefore, brethren, in our text Paul calls for us to bear the pain of our weak brethren’s burden that we might restore them to Christ. *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, RESTORE such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER’S BURDEN, and so fulfil the law of Christ”* (Ga 6:1-2). It is very trying to bear with the sin and error of a fellow believer. But considering how Christ bore all the pain of our sin and our curse in order to restore us in righteousness, can we not stand far less pain in order to restore a weak brother to Christ? When we suffer painful trial, our comfort and confidence is that Christ our Forerunner has already suffered our *eternal condemnation* in our place—*“there is therefore now no condemnation.”* Knowing this we can be assured, God will surely save us from our light affliction. If Christ pleased not himself but suffered to save me, can I not deny myself that I might bear the infirmities of my weak brother for his good?

INTERCEDED FOR US

Psalm 69: 5: O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. 6: Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. 7: Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. 8: I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.

While Christ suffered rather than pleased himself by only praying to God for himself, he interceded for his people.

Christ is the spotless Lamb of God who knew no sin. But when God laid our sins on him, before God the Father and to our Redeemer, they became his. As our Representative, he perfected confession to God on our behalf, praying, *“O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.”* There is nothing we can do in righteousness. We cannot even own our sins before God in righteousness. There is enough sin in our confession of sin to send us to hell! But Christ did so for us!

As Christ bore our sins, he prayed for his people, that his sin-bearing state, his visage being marred more than any man, would not make his people confounded. He prayed that his death and burial would not make us ashamed of him—*“Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.”* How will his elect hear Christ owning our sin to be his own and not be confounded? How shall we believe God’s word that *“he hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”* and not be confounded (2 Cor 5:21)? It is only by Christ’s intercession for us. How shall we behold Christ on the cross, bearing reproach for the sake of God with shame covering his face and Christ not become a stranger to us? Only by Christ’s intercession for us.

Brethren, if it please God that we should bear reproach for our brethren and shame cover our face, let us not please ourselves by defending and exalting ourselves. May God give us grace to intercede for our brethren, asking God to not let my state confound my brethren. Let us ask God to not let my brethren think me a stranger. Only God can work that. So let us intercede for one another even as Christ interceded for us.

BORE REPROACH FOR US

Psalm 69: 9: For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. 10: When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. 11: I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. 12: They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards. 13: But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. 14: Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. 15: Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep

swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. 16: Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. 17: And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. 18: Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. 19: Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. 20: Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. 21: They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Christ pleased not himself but willingly bore reproach for the sake of saving his people. This is the verse Paul quotes in our text—*"For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."* In his zeal for God's house, our Lord cast the money changers out of the temple in righteous anger. But it only brought upon him the reproaches of men who hated God his Father

When he wept for our sins, what happened?—*"When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach."* Everything Christ did or said, sinners twisted it, slandered him and threw it back in his teeth. When he wept over man's sins sinners reproached him. He wept at the grave of Lazarus and over the city of Jerusalem, on account of their willful rejection and the ruin coming upon them; he wept in the garden and on the cross with strong crying and tears, yet it only brought reproach upon him from sinners who hated him as much as they hated his Father.

He went without food ministering to helpless sinners, preaching the gospel to them, healing the sick. He even went 40 days and nights fasting as he resisted the temptation of the devil. On one occasion, our Savior went without sleep the night before in order to minister to sinners then as he preached the next day there were so many around him that he could not eat bread. His own nearest family reproached him. They *"went out to lay hold on him: for they said, "He is beside himself" (Mk 3:21).* In order to fulfill the law, he must have fasted the day he was crucified because the law required the children of Israel to afflict their souls on the day of atonement. Yet, after all that, sinners reproached him, *saying things like, "by the prince of devils casteth he out devils" (Mk 3:22).*

When he bore the sin and shame of his people, men reproached him—*"I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them."* As he bore our sins on the cross, men passed by reproaching him

Matthew 27: 40: And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41: Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, 42: He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43: He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44: The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Even after his death they called him *"that deceiver" (Mt 27:63).* And it was *all men—"They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards."* From judges and religious leaders to the musicians who wrote the song of the drunkards, all kinds of men reproached him.

Luke 7: 31: And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? 32: They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. 33: For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. 34: The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! 35: But wisdom is justified of all her children.

When reproached for the good he was doing, did our Substitute please himself by reviling back? No, he said, *"But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation."* He only wanted the Father to deliver him when it was acceptable, that is, when justice had been fully satisfied. But he never reviled back. He kept casting his care on the Father, praying, *"Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."* In 1 Peter 3 we see what the Righteous One was doing as he prayed this to the Father.

1 Peter 3:19: For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20: For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. 21: For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, [everything he bore was for us, he suffered what we deserved] that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25: For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

So, brethren, when we do well and are reproached, even if a weak brother unrighteously judges your motives, remember the reproaches Christ bore for us. It may require us to bear slanderous reproaches in order to bear a weak brother's infirmities but let us do so following Christ our example who did the same for us. Remember how he bore it patiently without reviling again. God help us not to revile and threaten. Remember how Christ committed his cause to God that judges righteously and God give us grace to do the same.

Romans 15: 3: For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. 4: For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

God teach us and make us learn Christ that we might believe on him for all salvation and follow him in our walk. Our patience and comfort are knowing that Christ fully accomplished our warfare making us accepted of God. Therefore, knowing he shall hear us and deliver us out of our light affliction—"*For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners*" (Ps 69:33)—our hope is a good hope, Christ alone!

Amen!