

Living in Harmony
“God’s Glory - The Goal of Christian Harmony”
Romans 15:5-13

OPENING of SERVICE

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:24-27

- the last of the Hallel Psalms
- Recited at **Passover, Tabernacles, Pentecost**
- **Psalm 118:25** was one of the **most familiar phrases** in the OT
- EVERYONE knew this Psalm

A MESSIANIC CRY!

- From Psalm 118:22 “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”
- **JESUS** quotes this of himself. “*Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “ ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? ”* (Matthew 21:42)
- **PETER** quotes this of Jesus: “*He is “ ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ ”* (Acts 4:11, NIV)
- “*As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,” ”* (1 Peter 2:4–7, NIV)

On the ROAD from BETHANY, there were PILGRIMS who PRAISED and PHARISEES who SCOLDED. **Luke 19:38-40**
JESUS will be PRAISED!

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God’s Glory is HARMED when His People are in CONFLICT

March 27, 2010

GREENSBURG, PA - A judge has been asked to settle a Pennsylvania church's dispute over the removal of two elders because one was allegedly quarrelsome and the other didn't speak in tongues.

Pastor Roy Aiken Jr. sued in January to enforce a November vote ousting the men from the Christian Fellowship Center of Greensburg's board of directors. Since then, the pastor and the ousted elders have formed separate boards vying for control of the church.

Westmoreland County Judge Anthony Marsili on Monday ordered the church to be governed by the board that existed before the ouster. If the church can't do that, Marsili says he'll hear arguments in June and decide himself which group is in charge.
<http://www.onenewsnow.com/Church/Default.aspx?id=949798>

Relationships.

Marriages.

Families.

Leadership.

A 1989 survey found that “more than one-third of the responding ministers spent more than 20 percent of their time actually involved in attempting to resolve acute conflict.”¹

Review from 2 weeks ago. Rom 15:1-13

FIVE REQUIREMENTS

- I. **Strong Believers are the key to Church Harmony. 15:1**
- II. **Harmonious Christian Living Requires GENUINE Selflessness. 15:1b-2**
“Not to please ourselves”
- III. **Harmonious Christian Living Requires that we IMITATE CHRIST. Rom 15:3**
 - A. **JESUS.** 22x in the gospels “follow me.”
 - B. **This is ALSO TAUGHT in PHIL 2:1-5**
 - C. Here in ROMANS 15 there are **TWO EXAMPLES** to follow
 1. In **SELFLESS SACRIFICE.** Romans 15:3 “*For even Christ did not*

¹L. Randolph Lowery and Richard W. Meyers, *Conflict Management and Counseling* (Waco: Word Publishing, 1991), 24.

please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.”

2. In SERVANTHOOD. Romans 15:8 *“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*

IV. **Harmonious Christian Living Requires a LIFE LONG COMMITMENT**

- A. WE MUST **HOLD ON** (endurance)
- B. We must **BELIEVE** (encouragement of Scriptures) if we are to live in harmony.

V. **GOD’S GLORY Demands that we live in Harmony.**

- A. Ken Sande, “4 Gs”n (Glorify God, Get the Log out of your eye, Gently Restore, Go and be reconciled).
- B. “Glorify God”
 1. **15:5**
 2. **15:8**
 3. **Four OT quotations** re. the salvation of the Gentiles. **ROME** was a **GENTILE church!** Paul is saying, “God is saving Gentiles **for His glory.**” **Don’t destroy His glory** because of **SELFISHNESS.**

- C. The four quotations are from FOUR OT PASSAGES “taken from all three divisions of the Old Testament—the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44)—and from three great Jewish heroes: Moses, David, and Isaiah.” (Witmer, BKC).

1. The first quotation (**Rom. 15:9**) from David’s song of deliverance (2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49);
2. The second (**Rom. 15:10**), from Moses’ victory song to the people of Israel (Deut. 32:43);
3. The third (**Rom. 15:11**), from both the shortest and the middle chapter of the Bible (Ps. 117:1);
4. The fourth (**Rom. 15:12**), from Isaiah’s messianic prophecy (Isa. 11:10).

D. **Four Reasons Why is Harmony So Important.**

1. Of all the Problems in CORINTH, DIVISION is addressed first!
 - a. **PROBLEMS** at Corinth:
 - (1) sexual sin
 - (2) taking believers to court
 - (3) corruption of the Lord’s supper
 - (4) misuse of spiritual gifts
 - (5) doubt about the resurrection
 - b. Paul **BEGINS** by talking about **HARMONY.**
 - (1) **1 Corinthians 1:10**

(2) **1 Corinthians 6:7-8**

2. Of all the VIRTUES of the Christian Life, Jesus emphasized UNITY on the night He was betrayed.
 - a. John 17:20-23
 - b. Notice the importance of GOD'S GLORY in Christ's prayer!
3. We are His BODY. **Eph 1:22-23**
4. We are LIVING STONES. **1 Peter 2:4-5**

E. How Can God be Glorified when there is CONFLICT between Christians?
(Points from Sande, "The Peacemaker," 31ff)

1. You can TRUST GOD
2. You can OBEY GOD
3. You can IMITATE CHRIST (1 Peter 2:21-23) *"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly"*
 - a. **Sometimes, for the GLORY of GOD, we must give up our rights. It is better to SUFFER LOSS then to tarnish God's Glory. It is better to SUFFER LOSS then to get our way at the expense of others. Steven Covey says "win-win" 7 habits, 205-234 But are you willing to "lose" your argument in order to honor God? JESUS DID!**
 - b. **Jesus** prayed for those hurt him. *"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. "*
(Luke 6:27-28, NIV)
4. You can experience **personal victory**.
 - a. **Romans 12:20** (quoting Prov 5:21-22)
 - b. **Job** was restored when he PRAYED for his friends. *"And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends. And the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. "* (Job 42:10, ESV)

VI. Division is one of Satan's Most EFFECTIVE TOOLS for hindering the Gospel.

*Living in love with the saints above, I KNOW that will be GLORY
But living below with the saints I know, now that's ANOTHER STORY!*

A. *"I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of*

you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.”(1 Cor 1:10)

- B. *“The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers. ” (1 Corinthians 6:7–8, NIV)*

VII. Conclusion - if you are facing a conflict, there is something more important than GETTING your WAY, or being TREATED FAIRLY. It is more important to GLORIFY GOD.

- A. We should settle our disputes Biblically for GOD’S GLORY
- B. We should forgive for GOD’S GLORY