

## **ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH**

### **XI. Paul's Edifying Concluding Remarks, Romans 15:14-16:27**

#### **A. The Godly Believer's Competency To Counsel (Romans 15:14 et al.)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. After having shown how God's righteousness is applied by faith from start to finish (cf. Romans 1:16-17) in Romans 1:18-15:13, the Apostle Paul gave his longest concluding remarks in any of his epistles in Scripture in Romans 15:14-16:27, remarks that apply God's righteousness in the godly believer in various practical ways.
- B. One very significant result of God's righteousness applied to the believer to the full is its capacity to equip him to counsel, what Romans 15:14 teaches. We view this verse for our insight, application and edification:

#### **II. The Godly Believer's Competency To Counsel, Romans 15:14 et al.**

- A. In Romans 15:14 KJV, the Apostle Paul wrote, "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."
- B. The Greek verb rendered "admonish" is *noutheteo* (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 572; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972 (Zon.), p. 279), and it refers to the effort "to influence the mind and disposition by appropriate instruction, exhortation, warning and correction." (Theol. Dict. of the N. T., 1975, vol. IV, p. 1019)
- C. According to Christian Psychiatrist Dr. Frank B. Minirth, M. D., this meaning of *noutheteo* fits counseling:
  - 1. Dr. Minirth taught our Senior Theology class at Dallas Theological Seminary in 1976 that with the Bible knowledge we had as seminary grads, heeding 1 Thessalonians 5:14 NIV would equip us to counsel well.
  - 2. This verse directs that we "warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone," what fits the meaning of *noutheteo* in Romans 15:14.
- D. Since "admonish" in Romans 15:14 KJV then really means "counsel," and one must be "full of goodness" and "filled with all knowledge" to be "able" to counsel adequately according to Romans 15:14 KJV, we need to know what "goodness" and "knowledge" mean to discern the Biblical qualifications for counseling as follows:
  - 1. The Greek noun rendered "goodness" is *agathosune*, and its use in the New Testament implies "moral excellence as well as goodness." (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 571; Ibid., Theol. Dict. of the N. T., vol. I, p. 18) In the context of the book of Romans, such goodness is the product of one's having believed in Christ to be justified by God's grace, thus becoming permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and then to rely on the Holy Spirit in one's life to produce goodness in thought and action, Romans 3:21-28; 8:3-4.
  - 2. The Greek noun translated "knowledge" is *gnosis* (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 81), and in the context of Romans it refers to "Christian knowledge" (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 162-163), that is, knowledge about God and how to relate to Him in view of the problem of sin, the knowledge that is taught in Romans 1:1-15:13 of the epistle's entire preceding context!
- E. In conjunction with this verse, several other passages of Scripture further clarify effective Biblical counseling:
  - 1. 2 Timothy 3:15-17 claim that all Scripture is divinely inspired and fully, permanently equips the believer for every good work, and that would also involve counseling.
  - 2. Jesus was predicted in Isaiah 9:6 to be the "Wonderful Counselor" (ESV, NIV) to meet the needs of the inner man, and He is also the "Word of God" personified in Revelation 19:11-16. Thus, exposing the needy to the exposition of Scripture will also bring them under the wonderful counsel of Christ Himself!
- F. Furthermore, testimonies by reputable Christian practitioners validate the information given above:
  - 1. A Christian counseling therapist told a group of conservative pastors of the American Mission to Open Churches in Olcott, New York that the qualities of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 are each the opposite of a major psychotic disorder. Thus, he concluded that mentally and emotionally troubled people need to rely on the Holy Spirit to enjoy spiritual victory over mental problems!
  - 2. Dr. Minirth's booklet, You Can Measure Your Mental Health, p. 14, reported that psychological tests on Christians found that "those who spent time daily with the Word, were found to be more mature, more mentally healthy, and to show no significant pathology" versus Christians who spent less time in Scripture.

**Lesson:** *Aside from medical issues, the problems of the inner man are caused by sin that needs to be addressed by applying Bible truth. Thus, godly believers who rely on the Spirit and know Scripture are competent to counsel.*

**Application:** *(1) May we get to know Scripture and rely on the Holy Spirit to counsel adequately. (2) May we seek the help of godly Biblical counselors instead of secular counselors to handle the needs of the inner man.*