

Grace Bible Church
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 07/05/09
Success does not bring happiness, happiness brings success.

What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. (Rom9:14-16)

When Paul says that it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy, he is dealing with pursuing blessings not salvation. That's why he mentioned in Rom 9:4, **who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises,**

That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. (Rom 9:8)

For this is a word of promise: “At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.” And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, (Rom 9:9-11)

Divine blessing in time must be imputed to the perfect righteousness of God which is in us. That sets up the pipeline that is established between the justice of God and the righteousness of God. That's the whole point behind this passage, blessings not salvation.

It was said to her, that is Rebecka, “The older will serve the younger.” (Rom 9:12)

Notice the word “serve” in this verse because we are talking about serving or blessing in this life, not salvation.

Just as it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!
For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. (Rom 9:13-16)

It is not from him who desires blessing, and not from him who runs after blessing, but from God who shows mercy.

Let's note some principles:

1. Neither thought, nor action can extract blessing from God. There is nothing man can do, or think for divine blessing.
2. Divine blessing is an imputation from the justice of God, to the righteousness of God, at the different stages of spiritual growth and thereafter. Neither wishing nor running is going to get the job done as we have noted all too well.
3. God can only provide blessing for capacity for blessing.
4. God's imputed blessing is designed to glorify God as the tactical victory of the angelic conflict.
5. The tactical victory compliments the strategic victory of our Lord's death, burial, resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of the Father.
6. Rom 9:16, is saying that, "if God doesn't promote you, you are not promoted."
7. Capacity through maximum doctrine resident in the soul then, is the key to blessing from God.

We have the potential for blessing in the imputation of divine righteousness, we have the justice of God on the giving end. Our point of reference is the justice of God. A pipeline is established between the justice and righteousness of God. This sets up the principle that you can't work in any way, there's no action, no thought, no deed by which you can obtain blessing from God. You can't receive it through giving, you can't receive it through witnessing, you can't receive it through prayer, you can't receive it through working around the church. The whole point is, that we all start out minus capacity and given equal privilege and equal opportunity. These blessings include fantastic wealth and riches and if you're minus capacity for divine blessings, having wealth and riches would only make you miserable.

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf, and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and {attaining} to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, {resulting} in a true knowledge of God's mystery, {that is,} Christ {Himself}, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:1-3).

If you're minus capacity for love, having your right man, or right woman would only make you miserable. The doctrine of right man right woman is a doctrine which I have taught often and clearly, and if you have any trouble with it, it's your problem, your loss! It is taught very clearly in Gen 2:18-25, Ecc 9:9, 1Co 7:17, Pro 18:22, 19:12, Pro 5, 31, just to name a few.

Having success or a promotion, if you are minus the capacity for that success or promotion, will only make you miserable. In fact, success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it. However, when success turns a believer's head it always leaves him facing in the wrong direction. A successful person is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him or her. However, success is not the key to happiness, happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will eventually be successful. Life's real failure is when you do not realize how close you were to success when you gave up.

“Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My

servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.” (Jos 1:7-8)

Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go. Hang on to who or what? **Now, my son, the Lord be with you that you may be successful, (1Ch 22:11)**

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved. Unfortunately most people give up just when they're about to achieve success. They quit on the one yard line. They give up at the last minute of the game one foot from a winning touch. Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom. Don't be occupied with your enemies.

Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life, but by the obstacles which they have overcome while trying to succeed. He conquers who endures and perseveres. Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence, including talent. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

The phrase “press on” has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race." People will listen more intently when you explain your mistakes than when you explain your successes. Success usually always occurs in private but failure in full public view. Minus capacity is the secret, and minus must become plus, and the only way it is possible is through Bible doctrine resident in the soul, and the means by which doctrine is transferred to the soul, is, of course, the perception on a daily basis. It is a grace system of perception, it does not depend upon human IQ.

8. Many people have success and accompanying misery, because they have no capacity for their success.

9. Many people are promoted into a perpetual state of misery and frustration, because they have no capacity for promotion, rank, power, or authority.

10. Blessing requires capacity for happiness, for that blessing.

The real key to blessing then is capacity for blessing. God provides the capacity through doctrine resident in the soul, and there must be capacity before, not after. There must be capacity before the blessing is imputed, or the imputation of divine blessing and the continual imputation of divine blessings is the basis for the glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ.

From now on, members of the Royal family of God, whatever is true [doctrinal], whatever is honorable [noble or worthy of respect], whatever is just [fair or right], whatever is pure [of proper motivation] whatever personal loves exist, Whatever is commendable, if there is any virtue [and there is for the mature believer says the first class condition] and if anything worthy of praise [and there is for the mature believer says the first class condition], be concentrating on these things. These things [doctrinal principles] also you have learned [manthano - learned from a teacher under strict academic discipline] and received [or accepted through metabolization of doctrine] and having heard [under discipline]. And have understood by means of me [Paul's teaching ministry]. Be putting these into action and the God of prosperity shall be with you, all of you [supergrace believers]. Now, I have received much inner happiness by means of the Lord greatly, that now at length

you have revived your concern or thinking for me; indeed, you also were thinking about me, but you lacked the opportunity to express it. Not because I am speaking with reference to poverty or lack; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. In fact, I have come to experience, or I have come to know how to be degraded. [That's divine discipline for reversionism.]

Also I have come to know, what it is to live in prosperity, [that's supergrace, or ultrasuper grace.] **In every place and in all circumstances I have been initiated into the mystery both how to be well fed, saturated with doctrine, and to hunger for more doctrine, leading to ultra super grace. I have the endowed power,** [maximum doctrine resident in the soul] **to attain all things,** [ultra super grace and dying grace] **By means of the One, God the Holy Spirit who keeps on pouring the power, the doctrine into me. (Phi 4:8-13)**

If the axe is dull and he does not sharpen {its} edge, then he must exert more strength. Wisdom has the advantage of giving success. (Ecc 10:10)

The phrase "If the axe is dull" refers to the tools that someone uses in positions of authority, therefore he must exert more strength because his tools are dull. However, wisdom teaches the individual to keep his tools sharp! It is no good to work with tools that are dull! The principle is the fact that with Bible doctrine, you can sharpen your spiritual tools so that you do not have to exert so much human strength in solving your problems! The spiritual application is this, do not attempt great undertakings until you have counted the cost and have the proper tools or the suitable instruments to carry it out.

It may not give popularity and it may not mean that you are the most respected by the crowd, but ultimately, as God gauges it, you will be the most successful. You will know that you're trafficking in wrong ahead of time and you won't do the stupid things that those among your peers will do, only to discover later how wrong it really was! Wisdom prepares the way for success! The point is that whatever the goal of the individual is, he cannot be effective with dull and unsharpened tools. Unskillful and slothful workmen often increase their difficulties by over exertion with the wrong tools or power. In working for God, our tools must be from Him! We may put a lot of effort into something but without the right tools it's like a dull axe fighting with knotty wood.

The stubborn fool will resist the tools and therefore will have no apparent result. For the believer, the dull tool may be his prayer life! The dull tool may be his understanding of doctrine! The dull tool may be his lack of the filling of the Spirit! Most believers have been ignoring the spiritual exercise needed for the sharpness of their spiritual tools of prayer, perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, and the filling of the Spirit! For many believers, they have indulged into the lust of the world and the things of God have become clouded! Yet the weapons or the tools that they need are still available even though they may be unsharpened and dull because of lack of use! They need to substitute their life of complaining and striving about others and their situation with the sustained energy from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.