

Women & More

The 'Us' Whom God is For

February 21, 2013

Scripture teaches that *God is For Us!*—and it was the title of a lesson in Book III of *Women & More*. Now we want to examine closely the ‘us’ whom God is for. Who are we—this ‘us’ God is for? And the first and foremost answer is: The ones who *trust* in Jesus Christ for salvation and for life will be those whom God is for!

“...as at the first Christ Jesus was
the trust of your faith,
the source of your life,
the principle of your action,
and the joy of your spirit,
so let Him be till life’s end.”

Charles Spurgeon

When we trust God, we need no other evidence than His Word!

Prepare by Soaking in Scripture:

Psalm 34:7

Psalm 103:17-18

Romans 8:28

1 Corinthians 2:9

Galatians 6:10

Scripture to Memorize:

1 Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxiety (mistrust) on him because **he cares for you.**”

NOTES on Speaking Session:**Questions for Mentor-group Discussion:**

1. True faith **counts on God**; it **trusts** before it sees. Examine yourself to see if this—counting on God and **trusting** before it sees—is true of you **some** of the time, **most** of the time, or **all** of the time—check the appropriate box and write out any modifying comment, remembering that ‘trust’ is not **true** trust until it is tested!

- most** of the time—_____
- some** of the time—_____
- all** of the time—_____

2. We’ve said that the ones who *trust* in Jesus Christ for salvation and for life will be those whom God is for. Does that mean that He is not for those who have not trusted in Him for salvation or for those saved who mistrust Him? Give explanation.

•The lost—unsaved: **2 Peter 3:9b** “*He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*”

•The mistrusting—saved: Re-read **Scripture to Memorize—1 Peter 5:7**.

3. Read through the following reassuring words by Charles Spurgeon several times.

“However difficult and painful *your* road, it is marked by the footsteps of *the* Savior; and even when *you reach* the dark valley of the shadow of death, and the deep waters of the swelling Jordan, *you will* find His footprints there. Take courage! Royal feet have left a blood-red track upon the road, and consecrated the thorny path for ever.”

Recommended Reading:

Morning/Evening Daily Readings, C. H. Spurgeon

God Always Gets His 'Man' (woman)

Remember that God had wanted a man—as He continuously wants men and women for His providential use—and so He placed within Hannah a desire for a man-child. God was going to bring forth the desires of His divine heart by placing in a trusting woman that very desire. She would ask God for the man-child and then vow to give him back to God for all of his life. Samuel would be that child—the man that God had fore-wanted. **Are we blessed yet?**

Our lesson is all about Hannah's intense 'trust' in the Almighty and His supreme ability to answer a specific prayer for her—amid adversarial torment. Little did she know that God Himself had placed that desire within her—and fully intended, upon her trust and ask, to provide the desire of her heart. Look briefly at the birthing of 'trust' in Samuel—passed down from his mother.

Samuel's call happened during the night on his bed and before he knew the LORD, personally. He did not recognize the voice of God, because as yet he did not know the voice of God. Bible commentators *Jamison, Fausset and Brown* contend that Samuel would have been around 12 years old—the age when young boys would first be introduced to temple visitation. We know that eventually Samuel's words would become equivalent to the LORD's words (1 Samuel 4:1).

Israel had become willing to exchange humble faith in the protection and power of the LORD Almighty (1 Samuel 1:3) for misguided reliance on the naked strength of the fighting men of Israel (2 Samuel 24:4). The reprobate sons of Eli were exceedingly sinful, under the eye and very light reproof of Eli. And to Eli's discredit, they had been given Egyptian names: Hophni (Tadpole) and Phinehas (The Nubian)—nothing to live up to. There is importance in the names we give to our offspring. In contrast, the literal meaning of Samuel is 'Name of God', and God would reveal to Samuel his plans for the destruction of the house of Eli.

Initially 1st and 2nd Samuel were one book, that formed the bridge connecting Israel's judges to the Davidic Kingdom. In the days of the judges, Israel had no king. Israel's last two judges: Eli a failure, and Samuel a success. Ushering in the first two kings, we have Saul—the abortive king—a failure, and David—the ideal king—a success. Samuel's life began in 1080 and extended to 970 BC (the death of David). **God's plans happen and He will use our 'trust' in Him to make it so!**

► God is FOR those who...

- ♥belong to the family of **believers**—Galatians 6:10 “*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*”
- ♥**trust** in the Lord and **rely** on Him—Isaiah 50:11 “*Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.*” Adrian Rogers said, “The faith that was born in the light is often developed in the dark. And some things are seen and understood in the dark—symbol of perplexity in Isaiah 45:3, 7—that can never be seen or understood in the light.” When we’re perplexed: 1) **trust** in the LORD; 2) **rely** on God. If we truly ‘trust’ the Lord God we will practice informed, inspired, intentional, involved, immediate and impassioned reliance upon Him!
- ♥have **faith** in Him—Hebrews 11:6 “*For without faith it is impossible to please God....*” It is absolutely impossible to please God without faith!
- ♥**fear** Him—Psalm 34:7 “*The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.*”
- ♥**keep covenant with** and **obey** Him—Psalm 103:17-18 “*But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children—with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.*” We want to please the *One* we love; it is the essence of relationship. And a relationship is more important than a reason!
- ♥are **humble** and **contrite** and **trembles at His word**—Isaiah 66:2b “*This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.*”
- ♥**love** Him—1 Corinthians 2:9 “*...no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him.*” Jesus is preparing a place **for us** and preparing us for that place (ref: John 14:1-2).
- ♥have been **called**—Romans 8:28 “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*”
- ♥are **His saints** who contend for the faith—Jude 3—“*Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.*”

► God is NOT for those who...

- are **godless**, **change the grace of God** into a license for immorality, and **deny Jesus**—Jude 4 “*For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.*” Then Jude gives a litany of sinful and godless actions **carried out in the church** by ones God is NOT for—but who will receive His everlasting punishment. Psalm 37:1 “*Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.*”

Imprecatory Words in Scripture

The definition from *Webster's New American Dictionary*: imprecate, imprecated, imprecating, **imprecation is to curse.** ► Imprecatory words are words that curse.

I. OLD TESTAMENT: **Psalm 129** is not only a *Psalm of Ascent*, and a “command confidence” Psalm, but the last half is called “*imprecatory*,” as it invokes a curse and invites God’s judgment. As New Testament Christ-followers, we follow the “love your enemies” command and do not *imprecate*. So we don’t like to consider a circumstance where *imprecating* by one of His followers would be tolerated by a loving God. But we know that God has the right to curse evil; He has placed one on Satan and all of his cohorts. Their end is cursed, or in the Greek Old Testament reference *anathema*. The devil is doomed, as are his followers.

KEY: In **Psalm 129:1** the writer says that he and his people (Israel) have been **oppressed** (severely bullied, abused, and harassed) from youth. And in the last half of the Psalm he’s **crying out to God to put an end to the oppression, and to the oppressor**, and that’s the part—end to the oppressor—that we find offensive! It’s a very short step from the oppression to the oppressor! Oppression has a “causer,” so it’s naturally assumed that if the “causer”—oppressor—is stopped, that the oppression will stop.

Then and now, God hears the one who cries out to Him for release from the oppressor. The psalmist was crying out for a people and a nation that were God’s own—*chosen*—“Zion” (denoting the LORD’s—Covenant Father—presence among His people). **The enemies who hate “Zion” are those oppressors who have no regard for God or his promises, and are already cursed by God.** The psalmist is asking God to end the oppression and to carry out the divine ban, or “curse” (*anathema*) on the oppressors. As defender of Israel God promises: “*I will contend with those who contend with you*” **Isaiah 49:25a.**

♥In the 1 Samuel account of Hannah and her oppressor, Peninnah, Hannah sings a song of praise and gratitude to God in chapter 2 for giving her, first of all Samuel, and then her many children. And tucked in that song of thanks to, and worship of, the God of heaven, she imprecates her tormentor in verses 3a, 4b, 5a and c, 9b and d. Some of it had already come to pass for Peninnah, and some of it would eventually come to pass. God would hear Hannah’s prayer for punishment upon Peninnah.

II. NEW TESTAMENT: Is imprecation an exclusively Old Testament occurrence? No. A New Testament example is in **Galatians 1:6-10**, where the Apostle Paul imprecates those who trouble the church by distorting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Within the Galatian churches, false teachers were distorting the gospel, so that Paul's converts to Christ were deserting the gospel that they had previously received when he'd preached it to them. The Galatian Christians were being oppressed; and where there is oppression, there is at least one oppressor.

The "causers" or oppressors were the false teachers. These false teachers were troubling the churches because they were changing the gospel, creating false doctrine—twisting God's truth into a lie. About manipulation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, John R. W. Stott says, "You cannot modify or supplement the gospel without radically changing its character."

► Paul's first reaction to this situation is astonishment. In **Galatians 1:6, 7**: "*I am **astonished** that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently **some people** (oppressors) are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.*"

►► His second reaction was indignation over the "some people" (false teachers) of verse 7, upon whom he now pronounces a curse—imprecates. **Verses 8, 9**: "*But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, **let him be eternally condemned!** ¶As we have already said, so now I say again: **If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!***"

If "anybody," in verse 9 is the oppressor of the gospel and turning those who had received it away after a false gospel, "let him (them) be eternally condemned." Condemned is another word for accursed, or anathema for the divine ban, which is the curse of God resting upon anything or anyone devoted by God to rejection and destruction. So **Paul wants these false teachers to fall under the divine ban**—that God's judgment would fall on them. Paul is not calling down his personal judgment on them, but God's own pre-stated and promised ban (curse). John MacArthur, Jr., believes Paul's thorn in the flesh was a constant, nagging, bullying **oppressor**—a person—and not an ailment.

This is a hard thing to understand, and the good news is that we don't have to understand it to **accept God's Word on it**. We will do the **Hebrews 11:6** thing, and take God at His Word by faith! Should you or I imprecate on the evil and godlessness in the world? God has already done so, and we can leave it at that—thankfully!