



## Clanking Chains: Persistence in Benevolence Brings Prosperity; Children Are under the Tyranny of Their Sinful Natures & Require Parental Severity, Rom 11:22

- 9) On the other hand, when pastors teach doctrine and the flocks apply it one of the results is the proper instruction of children and the transfer of the biblically based culture over to succeeding generations.
- 10) This leads to national blessing, ergo, “Behold the benevolence of God!”
- 11) Parents thus become a critical and crucial link in the sustenance of a client nation. In order to prevent the severity of God upon the entire nation, parents must first be willing to impose severity upon their children when necessary.
- 12) However, I repeat, the primary purpose of parental authority is to exhibit benevolence in leadership so that the child will willingly comply with biblical principles rather than being compelled to do so by force. I repeat the definition supplied by:

### Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, 3:513-15:

*A virtue of honest folk.* Anyone who shows goodness and concern toward others can be described as *chrēstos*. The term takes on an ethical meaning: the person who is *chrēstos* (man, woman, or child) behaves properly, conforms to the rule of honesty, what is called “good morals.” (p. 513)

Paul borrows from this vocabulary, making *chrēstotēs* a fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22, a virtue of the apostles in 2 Corinthians 6:6, and of all Christians in Ephesians 4:32. (p. 514)

We recently translated *chrēstotēs* in Ephesians 4:32 as “become kind, performing gracious acts.” Whether the source of *chrēstotēs* is divine or human, it is a reflection of divine love and integrity that may be described as “benevolence”:

*An expression of love.* The occurrences are so common and so diverse that it is impossible to discern the specific nuance in each instance: goodness, kindness, willingness to be of service, honesty, nobility, loyalty, probity. The point is love, a loving attitude that includes a willingness to serve one’s neighbor. This virtue is possessed only by magnanimous and unselfish souls who are characterized by kindness, friendliness, and liberality: the Christian is both delicate and generous in his relations with other believers, seeking to be useful, considerate, helpful, beneficent, always in an agreeable way, even with a smile; the expression of a person who is happy to meet his neighbor and to be able to offer him his help. (p. 515)

- 13) These paragraphs define the manner by which the believer should express the love of God. It is a mental attitude of benevolence toward others and the first place it should be directed is toward one’s children.
- 14) Parental authority must first assume the loving mental attitude of benevolence but be prepared to switch over to severity when called for. However, when functioning under severity the mental attitude of benevolence serves as a balance that prevents tyranny.
- 15) We note from Romans 11:22 that benevolence remains the approach God takes toward Gentile client nations as long as its believers are advancing spiritually and carrying on the duties of client nation status.
- 16) However, this approach is replaced by severity if there is spiritual decline, apostasy, and negative volition. This is revealed next by the introduction of a protasis in the third class condition, the conditional particle:

ἐάν, *ean* - “If”



This participle combined with the subjunctive mood of the verb found in the protasis denotes uncertainty. This construction indicates what is called the “more probable future condition.” The third class condition indicates that persistence of positive volition is the contingency that must occur if the status quo of benevolence is to be maintained. This persistence is indicated by the second person plural, present active subjunctive of the verb:

**ἐπιμένω, epimenō** - “(If) you persist”

- present: Perfective; denotes the continuation of existing results. Here is a fact which has come to be in the past but is emphasized as a present reality. It stresses the continuance of results through present time. The idea here is that if spiritual advance presently underway continues into the future then the condition of the apodosis will be fulfilled.
- active: Positive and advancing Gentile believers in the Church Age produce the action of the verb.
- subj.: Potential for a third class condition implying a future reference and qualifying it by an element of contingency. Fulfillment is conditional upon positive volition.

The Gentile believer must continue in status quo spiritual advance. The environment in which this advance is to continue is indicated by the locative of sphere from the noun:

**χρηστότης, chrēstotēs** - “benevolence”

**Romans 11:22b** - Therefore, behold the benevolence of God and the severity of God. On the one hand, severity to those who fell, but, on the other hand, to you the benevolence of God, if you continue to persist in the sphere of the benevolence of God ...

- 1) Severity is avoided by functioning in the sphere of the benevolence of God. The structure of this sentence actually places the apodosis first in the verse, “To you, the benevolence of God if ...”; then follows the condition that enables this circumstance to continue.
- 2) It must be remembered however, that children are not believers, they are under the tyranny of a developing sinful nature, and they do not have rebound as a problem-solving device.
- 3) Consequently, parents must expect misbehavior and occasional rebellion. They must not be surprised or disappointed. It must be regarded as a simple fact of life. It is to be expected and they must be prepared to deal with it.
- 4) There are two approaches: (1) benevolence and (2) severity. Benevolence if they continue to function in the sphere of benevolence and severity if they do not.
- 5) The issue in parental authority is to always maintain a mental attitude of benevolence even when functioning in the status of severity. This is how violence, sin, and emotion are kept out of the disciplinary phase of authority.
- 6) That children will and even must encounter severity is implied by the concluding sentence of Romans 11:22. It is introduced by the conjunction:



**ἐπεὶ, εἰ** -

Generally translated in the Koine Greek as “since” or “because,” but in Attic Greek it is rendered, “if it were different,” or “otherwise.”

- 7) This presents an alternative through ellipsis, meaning if you do not continue you will be cut off from blessing by divine discipline and you will bring upon yourself the severity of God.
- 8) This potential shift over to severity is indicated by the future passive indicative of the verb:

**ἐκκόπτω, εκκοπτῶ** -

“to be cut off” This refers to the fifth cycle of discipline.

future: Gnomonic; a statement of a fact which may be rightfully expected under normal conditions. The stated condition is client nation reversionism in which the Pivot shrinks and there is a major historical trend away from the provisions of divine benevolence designed for spiritual growth and client nation function.

passive: Gentile believers receive the action through rejection of doctrine and resultant reversionism.

indic.: Denotes the verbal idea as actually occurring thus predictive of the five cycles of discipline if spiritual growth in the sphere of divine benevolence does not continue.

- 9) This completes our exegesis of the verse from which we are now able to present an expanded translation:

**Romans 11:22 - Therefore, behold the benevolence of God and the severity of God. On the one hand, severity to those who fell, but, on the other hand, to you the benevolence of God, if you continue to persist in the sphere of the benevolence of God, otherwise you also shall be cut off [ a shift from the blessings of benevolence to the discipline of severity ].**

- 10) Parents need to be so knowledgeable about divine policy that they are able to train the malleable souls of their unbelieving children to orient and adjust to His establishment standards so that once they are saved they will be able to orient and adjust to His divine standards.
- 11) Again, it is important to realize that children from birth up to around age 10 or 12 must be considered to be unbelievers. As such they are under the control of their sinful natures and will submit to its trends if not countered by parental discipline.
- 12) Our sequence of passages has indicated that parents are to approach their children from the mental attitude of benevolence. However, they are to be ever vigilant in their oversight so that when necessary they can become severe.
- 13) The responsibilities of parenthood are quite complex and extremely important. How you manage your child’s soul contributes to his ability to orient to authority in life and especially how he will respond to the gospel and to doctrine should he become a believer.



- 14) I have been led to a couple of books that I believe provide excellent illustrations of the critical balance that exists between benevolence and severity. I recommend these books to all parents and even grandparents. I will quote liberally from each. The two are:

**Roberts, Monty. *The Man Who Listens to Horses: The Story of a Real-Life Horse Whisperer.* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997).**

\_\_\_\_\_. ***Horse Sense for People.* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000).**

Both books in addition to other titles and videos may be purchased from his Web site: [www.montyroberts.com](http://www.montyroberts.com).