

Going Deeper

Sermon Study Guide

Series: Gospel Behavior – Part 3
“**Returning Evil With Good**”

Text: Romans 12:17-21

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Scripture Text: ROMANS 12:17-21 NKJV

¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance *is* Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. ²⁰Therefore

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Sermon text and audio are available at https://bvcob.com/sermon_post/.

1. Disagreements over SOCIETAL ISSUES are often not as meaningful as disagreements with SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS.
2. Our culture is becoming more DIVIDED
3. If we will follow these WORDS we can change our WORLD.
4. We often think of evil as needing to be REPAID. Vs 17-18
 - a. What do you do with the BALANCE of pain?
 - b. Can I truly DEAL with the DEFICIT of pain by doing good?
 - c. Living peaceably with all men doesn't mean never DISAGREEING with them, it just means not being DISAGREEABLE with them.
5. Revenge is a PAYMENT that really increases your DEBT. Vs 19-20
 - a. God is much better qualified to SETTLE the account.
 - b. Paying out revenge actually puts us in a DEFICIT with God.
 - c. The Jesus follower is not to HARM his enemy but rather is to HELP his enemy.
6. How do we OVERCOME evil? Vs 21
 - a. Evil has the ABILITY to overcome each of us.
 - b. When evil COMES UPON us, we OVERCOME evil with good.
 - c. Jesus demonstrated this on the CROSS.

Study

Open with prayer and then read Romans 12:17-21.

1. These instructions in Roman 12:17-21 can be compared to the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5:43-47.

Matthew 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' **44** But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, **45** that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. **46** For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? NKJV

How would your personal world be changed if the principles about "love of enemy" as described by Jesus and Paul were generally carried out by you and by all who you daily interact with?

2. While paying back evil for evil is often our initial emotional impulse to wrongdoing toward us, Paul implies in vs. 17 that our actions are noticed by others. When has your witness for Christ been affected, either because you returned evil for evil, or because you returned good for evil?

3. It can be very difficult to move into the active engagement of doing good for your enemy. What are you most likely to do when faced with an act of 'evil' toward you?

- a. actively seek to return evil
- b. quietly retaliate (a.k.a. passive/aggressive actions)

- c. passively ignore/turn your back/block
- d. actively seek to return good

4. Throughout these verses (Rom. 12:17-21) we are not called to retaliate, nor are we called to passively ignore evil done against us, but rather to actively do something good for our 'enemy' in the face of evil. Give examples of active engagement of doing good in exchange for evil.

5. In verse 18 Paul acknowledges that it takes more than one person in a relationship to have a peaceful relationship. When have you not done all you can do to bring peace to a volatile situation or relationship? Is there something you can do to follow this command in verse 18 more faithfully?

6. Verse 19 indicates that we are not to take the place of God, becoming the judge and purveyor of punishment, but rather we should be patient and allow God to exercise His role of judgement in His time. What should be our attitude and actions toward the offending party as we allow for God's wise judgement to be completed?

7. Prov. 25:21-22 is quoted in verse 20, indicating that when we do good toward the one doing evil to us, shame and discomfort is heaped on the head of the evil-doer. In today's social/political/religious climate, are people sufficiently ashamed of doing evil in order for Godly behavior to have an impact changing the heart of the ungodly person?

8. Where in your life must evil be overcome? What good will you employ to overcome it?

CLOSE YOUR TIME WITH PRAYER FOR ONE ANOTHER.