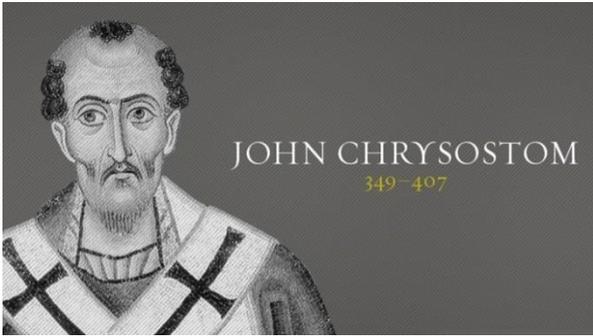


“Romans: Great News from Rome to the Ends of the Earth”

ZGC Bible Week – 7 February 2019 – Pastor Mark Blair

Romans 10.1 – 12.21 – Day 4



"As often as I hear the Epistles of St. Paul read, twice a week, or often three or four times, I rejoice each time over this spiritual trumpet, and I exult and am kindled with holy desires, when I hear the voice which is to me so dear and familiar, and then I imagine that I see him before me, and that I hear him speak." St. John Chrysostom

Chapters 9,10,11 Paul attributes unbelief of most Jews to God’s sovereign purpose, but he also ascribes their unbelief to their own blindness and arrogance...God’s sovereignty and human responsibility stand in relationship to each in Scripture as an “antinomy” — an apparent contradiction...the Bible holds both of these truths together: 1) the complete sovereignty of God over all history; and 2) the complete responsibility of every person.

10:1-4 Why was Israel Ignorant of Salvation by God’s Righteousness?

vv. 1-2 The Jews have a zeal for God, but their zeal is misplaced and mistaken

v. 3 They recognized their need for righteousness, but tried to create their own

v. 4 Once we grasp the radical nature of Christ’s work, it is the end of legalism

10:5-8 -The two ways of righteousness in the Bible

v. 5 Moses (in Leviticus 18:5) tells us that we must obey the entire law to be saved

vv. 6-8 But Moses (in Deut.30:14) tells us we can get a new life through simple belief

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

10:9-15-How to become righteous God's way

v. 9a 1st need: to confess the work of Christ in history

v. 9b 2nd need: to trust in that work from the heart

v. 10 (Justification and salvation are essentially the same thing)

vv. 11-13 This is accessible to anyone and everyone

vv. 14-15 3rd need: to communicate the message of the good news through people

10:16-21 Return to the question: Why did Israel reject God's way of righteousness?

vv. 16-17 Not all Israel has believed, as Isaiah foretold

v. 18 Did they not hear the message? Of course they did

vv. 19-20 Did they not understand the message? The Jews knew about

the need for righteousness but the Gentiles did not

v. 21 The reason is stubbornness of heart

So why is anybody lost? Is it because they are not elected? No! What accounts for the lost is their rejection of the gospel... We are not responsible for our acceptance of the gospel, but we are responsible for our rejection of it. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Why do you think that people more concerned about religion and righteousness might be more prone to miss the gospel?... Religious people are either:

a) offended by the gospel ("You mean you could be a criminal and believe in Jesus and be saved? — that's too easy!")

or else b) they run the gospel through their own works-righteousness grid and reinterpret it to fit in. Thus, they think they have already heard the gospel.

10:4 How is Christ the end of the law?

1. Direct confrontation to legalistic moralists and religious people
2. Not saying category of law is ended, or that binding nature of the law is ended.
3. Christ ended Law “system” as a way of righteousness, to be acceptable to God.

10:9-13 How to become a Christian?

1. Truth must be known, basic Gospel content:
 - a) Jesus’ Person. “Jesus is Lord” – supreme authority over the world. ‘kurios’ Greek OT translation for God’s personal name “Yahweh.”
 - b) Jesus’ Work. “God raised him from dead” Life, death, resurrection for our sins.
2. Truth must be believed from the heart - not that the whole heart must be purified perfectly – we trust our whole self to the person and work of Christ as our righteousness.
3. Confess with the mouth - not a separate action from believing from the heart - Hebrew “parallelism” not two separate things to do. NOT a “work” to be saved, or “magic words.”
4. Equally possible and available to anyone (v.11) and to everyone (verses 11-13)

10:14-17 What about evangelism?

“Sent” v.15 Messengers must be sent – “apostello” (“sent”) - Christ through his church sends out missionaries, preachers, and lay people to be messengers of that apostolic word.

“Preach” v.14c “kerysso” = “herald” - a living “Tweet”! Heralds operated in the streets.

“Heard” v.14b. Faith cannot happen mystically - response to understood Biblical content.

“Believe” v.13. This makes us Christians.

So, evangelism is:

1. Absolutely necessary: “How can they believe without someone preaching to them” v.15
2. Requires a willingness to speak out (preach)
3. Requires not just proclamation but persuasion, getting a person’s understanding (hear)
4. Requires transmission of a body of truth that is not a person’s opinion but the authoritative revelation from Christ and his apostles.

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

10:18-21 Why is Israel inexcusable?

1st Question: Didn't they hear the gospel? (v.18)

Answer: Of course they did (v.18) Gospel was widespread as God's creation declaring glory of God all over world (Psalm 19) Wherever Jewish community existed, gospel preached

2nd Question: Well, didn't they understand it? (v.19)

Answer: It is possible to be exposed to the gospel and not really understand it. But they did understand - Deut. 32:21 - only the Gentiles did not understand.

3rd Question (implicit): Then why didn't they believe.?

Answer: Gentiles had found God, though they did not seek him (v.20), quotes Isaiah about how God held out his hands to Israel but they did not respond because of obstinacy (v.21) Thus Israel is not to be excused for their refusal.

Romans 11:1-36 - God and Israel

11:1a: Question #1: Did God reject Israel? NO!

11:1b-10 – Israel's unbelief is not total: God has not rejected Israel, but the majority are hard toward the gospel.

v. 1b Paul is a believer and a Jew.

v. 2a God foreknew a people from eternity.

vv. 2b-3 Elijah also mistakenly thought there were no believers left in Israel

v. 4 But there were many!

v. 5 So today there are many Jewish believers

v. 6 Who are chosen by sheer grace.

v. 7 Though ALL Israel did not find the righteousness of God, the elect did

vv. 8-10 OT describes the hardness God gave to those who had rejected him.

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

11:11a – Question #2: Did they fall beyond recovery? NO!

11:11b-32 – Israel’s unbelief is not final. Hardening on Majority is temporary;
in the future this will change.

11:11-16 - Stages of Blessing

1. [v.11] Israel’s difficulties with the gospel led to the salvation of Gentiles.
2. [v.12] Eventually, Israel’s full belief will bring greater blessing to the world.
3. [vv.13-14] Through the success of the gospel to Gentiles, Israel will be won.
4. [v.15] If Israel’s unbelief has had this benefit, imagine the benefit of their belief.
5. [v.16] Since God has brought some of Israel in, we can look to him to bring the whole in.

11:17-24 - The Olive Tree

v. 17 Gentiles are like a wild branch that has been grafted into a tree.

They benefit from the Biblical religion of Israel

vv. 18-22 So (Gentiles) don’t be arrogant! The Jews who disbelieved were broken off,
and so will you if you disbelieve

vv. 22-24 And (Jews) don’t be discouraged! Anyone who believes can be grafted back

vv. 25-32: The Mystery

vv. 25-26 Recap of the three stages of blessing.

vv. 28-29 Currently most of Israel rejects the gospel, and they are under his judgment,
but God remembers his promises to their forefathers.

vv. 30-31 Recap of the three stages of blessing.

v. 32 Both Jews & Gentiles deserve damnation, both will receive mercy.

11:33-36 - Doxology!

v. 33 God’s wisdom (seen in the doctrines of free justification and election)
is an infinite depth of richness

vv. 34-35 Puts us in state of complete dependence on him, for knowledge and grace

v. 36 God is creator, sustainer, and heir of all things.

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

We must remember as well that “hardening” does not necessarily mean bitterness, wrath and hostility toward Christianity per se...A hardened person is someone who is completely obtuse to the gospel of free justification and adoption...a person can be trying so desperately (earnestly) hard to please and serve God that he or she comes to vigorously resist the idea of grace...you conclude you must cleanse and purify your heart to approach him. You find any concept of “free total acceptance” as dishonoring to a holy God! Tim Keller

11:25-32 The ‘mystery’ that “all Israel will be saved” (v.26). What does it mean?

1. Who? “Israel” clearly means ethnic Israel in contrast with the Gentiles.
2. What? “Israel” as a whole will experience salvation through Jesus Christ - Paul is encouraging most strongly the continued evangelization of Jewish people.

“It is understandable that since the holocaust Jews have demanded an end to Christian missionary activity among them, and that many Christians have felt embarrassed about continuing it. It is even mooted that Jewish evangelism is an unacceptable form of anti-Semitism. So some Christians have attempted to develop... ‘two-covenant theology’...namely that there are two different salvation tracks--the Christian track for the believing remnant and believing Gentiles, and the track for historical Israel that relies on God’s covenant with them... Romans 11 stands in clear opposition to this trend because of its insistence on the fact that there is only one olive tree, to which Jewish and Gentile believers both belong.”

John Stott, Romans

3. How many? “All Israel” probably not mean “every Jew without exception”

11:33-36 What we learn about our own Worship:

1. No worship without truth. Paul quotes Scripture as he praises God spontaneously. (v.34 - Is.40:13, v. 35 - Job 41:11). Worship is “mind filling” not emptying.
2. No teaching or study of truth without worship. Doctrine is a basis for praise. He uses truth to see God. Be disturbed, comforted, challenged by Truth - feel its power.
3. Doctrines that exalts God brings Joy. Praise comes as we see our weakness and dependence on him. We never gave God anything — he owes us nothing.
4. Mystery is not Troubling. “how unsearchable his judgments and how inscrutable his ways” (v.33 KJV) Worship does not require full understanding.
5. Declaration balanced with Devotion. Who and Why we Worship – We Love Him

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

Does God control everything? Romans 8-11 - Sovereignty of God over all History.

Everything that happens is under God's direction.

Romans 8:28 – “We know that, for the ones loving him, God works together all things for good...”

Ephesians 1:11 tells us that he also does this for everyone (“him who works all things in accord with his purpose”)

A. God conforms all events to cohere in his master plan.

1. His plan includes “little things.” Ultimately, there are no accidents. Proverbs 16:33 – “The lot is cast into the lap, but the disposal thereof is from the Lord.” Even the flip of the coin is part of his plan.

2. His plan includes “bad things.” The evil of the world was not God's original design. Death, disease, sin and decay are a temporary result of sin (Rom.8:18-23). God is distressed by our distress (Is. 63:9) and he is grieved by our pain (Lam. 3:22). Therefore, he is weaving into his plan even those troubles and sorrows and pain, because his plan, in the end, will result in glory for him and “good” for his people (Rom.8:28). “Not even a sparrow falls to the ground except by my Father's will” (Matt.10:29). “Whenever evil befalls a city, is it not the Lord who caused it?” (Amos 3:6). “I am the Lord and there is no other... I bring prosperity and create disaster. I the Lord do all these things.” (Is. 45:6-7)

3. His plan includes sins. Sins are very major part of “all things.” (If our sins were left out of the plan of God, there'd not be much left!) Psalm 76:10 says of God, “You make the wrath of men to praise thee,” meaning that God will overrule and control things so that even wicked and violent events come out for the good of his people and his glory. In Genesis 50:20 Joseph says to his brothers, “You intended me harm, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of lives.” Joseph is explaining that his brothers' evil action of selling him into slavery was used by God to do great good.

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

B. YET all choices are free acts for which we are responsible.

Romans 9:16 – “It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.” Romans 9:31-32 – “Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works.”

His plan works through our choices, not around or in spite of our choices.

Greek “fate” or Islamic “kismet” are quite different from Christian doctrine of God’s sovereignty... Our choices have consequences, and we are never forced by God to do anything other than what we want. But God works out his will perfectly through our willing actions. It is a marvel!

Tim Keller

“Why does man act the way he does?”... What the World Says...

1. Contingency – Random, no reason; accidental and haphazard.

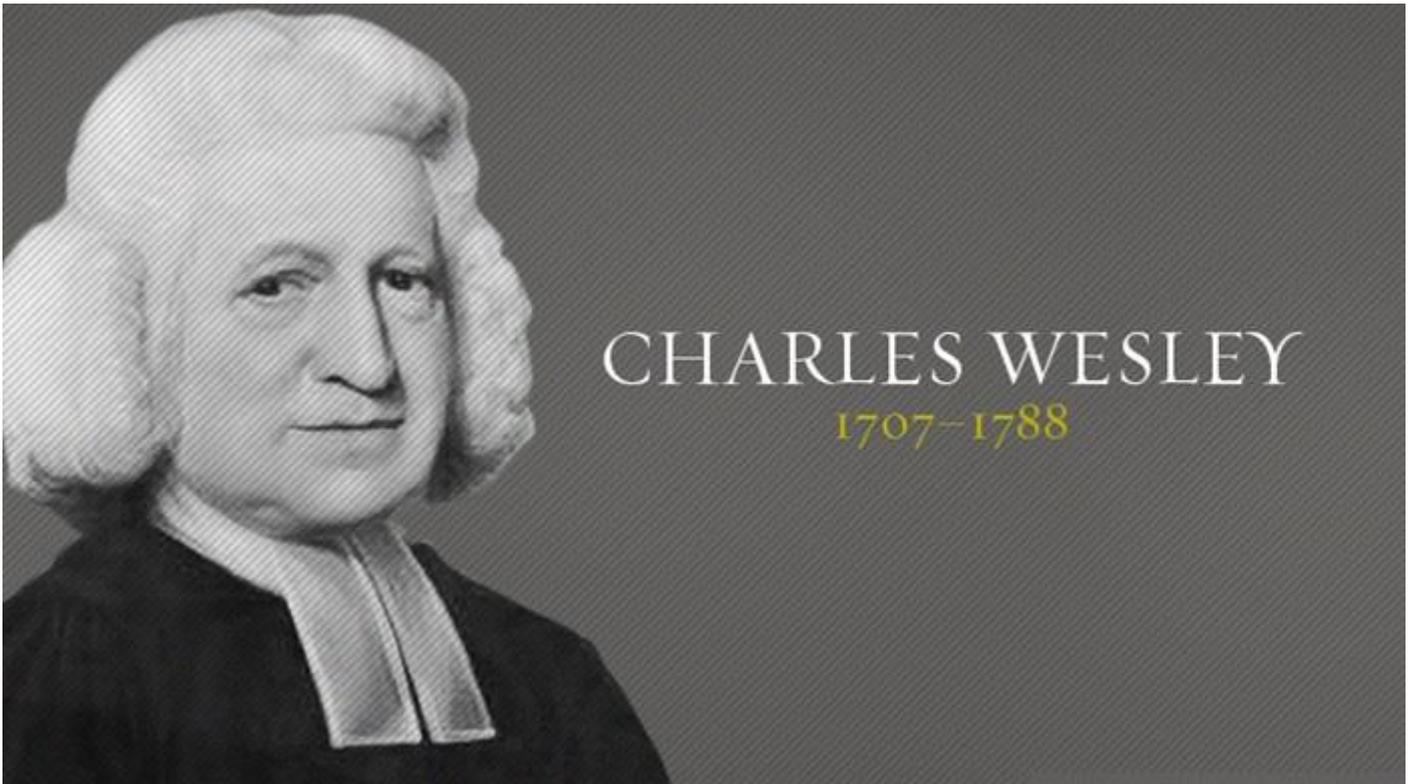
2. Determinism - ‘you cannot help it, you are like that...’ Everything is determined and you are not free at all... Biological view > determined by various glands in body

3. Psychoanalysis. Our apparently deliberate actions are in fact determined by motives of which we are unaware...’

“He brings to pass the actions of personal beings in a way that preserves their freedom and responsibility to the full. Is that inconceivable? We can persuade others, yet their freedom is preserved when they do what we persuaded them to do of their free will. Shall not then God be able to do with certainty what we with our little power do with uncertainty? Does God who made the soul know how to move it in accordance with its own nature so that its freedom is not destroyed?”

J. Gresham Machen

Romans 10.1 – 12.21



Long my imprisoned Spirit lay
 Fast bound in sin and nature's night
 Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
 I woke — the dungeon flamed with light!
 My chains fell off, my heart was free,
 I rose, went forth, and followed thee! - Charles Wesley, "And Can It Be?"

"If anybody is lost, the blame is theirs, but if anybody is saved, the credit is God's This antinomy contains a mystery which our present knowledge cannot solve; but it is consistent with Scripture, history, and experience."

John Stott, Romans

If we reject the idea of election, then we are forced to eventually say that one of the persons was humbler or more open to the truth or more virtuous in some way. In other words, the real differentiating factor, and the critical cause of one's salvation over others is something better in you. In other words, you are back into justification by works! Paul already mentioned that the doctrine of election is necessary to preserve the doctrine of justification.

Tim Keller

Romans 12:1-8 New relationships: God and the Church

12:1-2 – How to relate to God

- v. 1 Offer yourselves
- v. 1a How: remember who he is (mercies)
- v. 1b What: your entire life as sacrifice
- v. 1c Why: it is your logical service

- v. 2 Be transformed
- v. 2a Don't: be conformed to this world
- v. 2b Do: be transformed by mind renewal
- v. 2c Result: discernment of the will of God

12:3-4 – How to relate to ourselves

- v. 3a Assess yourself with humility and accuracy
- v. 3b You are the same: in your standing in the gospel (the standard of faith)
- v. 4 You are different: in your abilities to minister (not... same function)

12:5-8 – How to relate to others in the church

- v. 5 We are all one – not separate.
- v. 6a We are all distinct – not absorbed.
- v.6b Some prophesy
- v.7a Some serve people's material needs
- v.7b Some teach
- v.8a Some counsel
- v.8b Some give generously
- v.8c Some lead
- v. 8d Some work with the poor and sick

1. vv.1-2 Two things to do - Christian living from a Knowledge of the Gospel

1. “offer our bodies as a living sacrifice” - “temple” terminology here - not a sin offering (Jesus has finished those); “whole burnt offering” valuable, without defect, expensive!

- a) Actively, to be willing to obey God in anything he says in any area of life
- b) Passively, to be willing to thank God for anything he sends in any area of life.

True Worship is body, mind, and soul - practical and total - everything that we do.

“living” - sacrifice is a constant thing - a “living killing!”

2. “not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed”

Mind-renewal is the means to the end of transformation - recognize and reject world’s pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving. We put ourselves entirely at God’s disposal and become transformed from the inside out into the image of him.

12:1-2 How can we bring our hearts to “offer” ourselves wholly?

1. “view” the mercies of God - lack of contemplation of the mercies of God toward us arouses unholiness. There is no way to sustain a pattern of holiness and Christian living without a “kindling” of our heart by deep meditation on the mercy and grace of God.

How do we do that specifically?

“mercies” is plural - merciful acts and deeds - “count our blessings” - look at the cross

2. Our “rational” (logican) worship.

- a) the whole offering is only logical in light of the mercies of God
- b) we must offer ourselves “rationally,” compelled by our clear thinking

If such “heart reasonings” as this do not move you, do not break the ice over your soul, you must ask yourself if you have ever understood the gospel.

3. Christian life occurs through the “renewing of the mind” - way to be transformed into the pattern of Christ. We are to have our minds inflamed with the truth about Christ!

Truth from God’s word “dwell in us richly” (see Col.3:9-16); “be made new in the spirit of your minds” (Eph.4:23) - “imagination” is captured by Christ.

Romans 10.1 – 12.21

12:3-4 Thinking of Ourselves

1. Danger of self-centeredness and egocentricity - being “high-minded”. We are prone to exaggerate our own level of wisdom and competence and sincerity and power.

2. Think “soberly” - rigorously accurate, completely in touch with reality. We are to think straight about ourselves, not too low or too high.

12:3-4 Sources of a Christian’s self-image

Most people reading this verse have thought that the ‘measure of faith’ means “the amount of faith.” In other words, Paul is saying that our opinion of ourselves depends on the amount of faith we have, God having given some more than others.

In the context of all Paul has been saying in Romans, that seems unlikely.

Word “measure” is Greek word “metron” (“meter”), and it most likely means a standard of measurement, not an amount. In other words, Paul is saying: “All of you have been given your saving faith in Christ crucified, and that is how you are to measure yourself.” That means we are first to realize we are all the same.

1. “measure” /evaluate ourselves by the gospel in which we believe. Regardless of our background, abilities, etc., we are all saved in Christ. God loves us equally “in Christ.” So we should also think of ourselves. This is then a very direct command to start our self-appreciation by remembering who we are in the gospel.

2. Think of ourselves as having distinct gifts and abilities within the Body of Christ. We are all different as well. “you are God’s workmanship, created in Christ for good works that God has prepared beforehand for us to do.” (Ephesians 2.10) So the second way to get a good “self-image” is to get to work in ministry, find out what God has equipped you to do best, and do it with all your might!

12:3-8 “steps” to discern one’s spiritual gifts.

1. Self-examination. “take a sober look at yourself”

A. Feelings — what do we enjoy doing? What ministry is satisfying and attractive to you?

B. Perceptions of needs — what problems do you most notice? the poor? counseling? church is too disorganized? Perhaps God is calling through your sensitivity.

C. Effectiveness — are we any good at what we enjoy? Are people helped? Ask!

2. Experience. v.6 “having... let him use it” - you learn your gifts as you minister

Try all kinds of ministry as a way to learn your spiritual “aptitudes.”

3. Biblical lists. vv.6-8 – Illustrative list of spiritual gifts.

(see also I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4, not exhaustive!) spiritual gift lists can help you better process your own experience.

“Ability to speak or act in a particular way — performing ability, as we may call it--is only a charisma [spiritual gift] if and as God uses it to edify. Some natural abilities [talents] that God has given he never uses in this way, while sometimes he edifies through performances that to competent judges seem substandard... What constitutes and identifies a charisma is not the form of the action but the blessing of God.” J.I. Packer, *Keep in Step With the Spirit*

12:9-21 New relationships: Friends and enemies

12:9-16 – Love Toward Christians

v. 9a Love without hypocrisy

v. 9b Love with truth

v. 10a Love with affection

v. 10b Love with respect

v. 11 Love with zeal

v. 12 Love with patience

v. 13 Love with practical generosity

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- v. 14 Love without bitterness
- v. 15 Love with empathy
- v. 16a Love with unity of mind
- v.16b Love with humility

12:17-21 – Love Toward Enemies

- [v. 14 Control of the tongue]
- [vv. 15-16 Control of the attitude]
- v. 15 Empathy
- v. 16 Humility
- vv. 17-21 Control of the actions
- v. 17a What to avoid: repayment
- vv. 17b,20 What to do: plan good deeds
- v. 18 What to do: seek peaceful relations
- v. 19 Why to do it: only God is judge
- v. 21 Summary

12:9 3 Imperatives about Truth: “be sincere,” “hate... evil,” “cling to... good”

1. Love must be true to our heart. “sincere” in Greek is *an-hypokritos* (unhypocritical). Within the church a culture of “niceness” can develop in which a veneer of pleasantness covers over a spirit of backbiting, gossip, prejudice. We need “tough love” - people love each other enough to confront and be direct about problems and sins in oneself and friends.

2. Negatively (hate) and Positively (cling) that our love must be true to God’s will. Love must “remember” and operate on the basis of the moral order of God. When we love someone, it so often distorts our view of good and evil.

Real love “is so passionately devoted to the beloved so that it hates every evil which is incompatible with his or her highest welfare.”

John Stott

12:9 How can we love unlovely persons who we do not like and yet still be “sincere?”

We must work on our hearts to put aside condescension, irritability, bias, and selfishness. A Christian goes about doing love while repenting, softening the heart through the recollection of his sacrifice for us (Rom.12:1-2) - we are not loved because we are lovely

12:10-16 Biblical definition of love.

1. Real love is truthful v. 9 Let love be genuine
2. Real love is patient. v.10a “Be devoted to one another in brotherly affection.”
3. Real love is putting others first. v.10b “honor one another above yourselves”
4. Real love combines feeling with action. “rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” v.15

12:17-21 “overcome evil with good” - military word, it means to “overpower”

The only way to defeat evil is with doing good to the one who has done harm. In other words, if you hate a person who has wronged you, that person has won! The only way to defeat the evil is to forgive and love the person.

Our basic goal is to forgive and love and show kindness to the evildoer.

- 1) Spread of evil is checked toward us. Its hatred and pride does not infect us,
- 2) Spread of evil may be checked in the evildoer – may be softened & helped by our love.

What this means practically:

1. To not avoid the hostile person. v.18 “as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all.”
2. To express loving words and actions. v.14 “bless” and v.20 “feed... your enemy.”
3. To forgive, and forego any repayment. v.19 “never avenge yourselves”

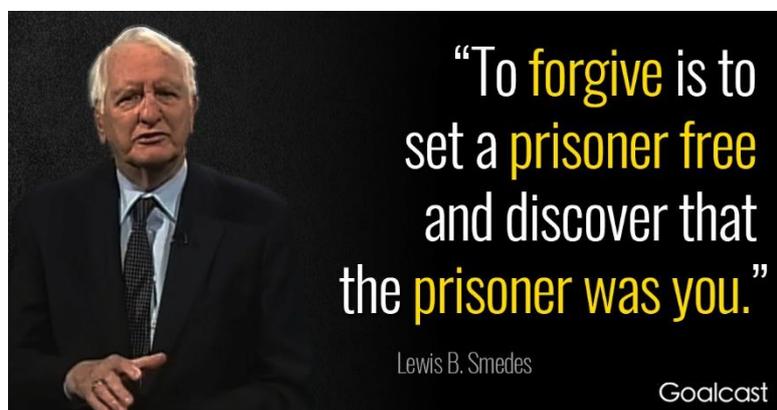
Both the power and the model for this is, of course, the gospel. Christ died for us while we were his enemies. (Romans 5:6-10)

“leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: ‘vengeance is mine... says the Lord’ v.19 - all resentment and vengeance is taking on God’s role as judge. It is playing God.

1. Only God is qualified to be judge (we are imperfect and deserve judgment ourselves)
2. Only God knows enough to be judge (we don’t know all about the offender, what he/she has faced and deserves)
3. Jesus took the judgment of God. Either these persons you are angry at will repent some day and Jesus will take their judgment, or they will not and God will deal with it. But in either process, you are not involved.
4. If God decided to square all accounts with us, where would we be?

“If you cannot free people from their wrongs... you enslave yourself to your own painful past, and by fastening yourself to the past, you let your hate become your future. You can reverse your future only by releasing other people from their pasts.

Lewis Smedes (1921-2002), “Forgive and Forget”



“If a careless friend breaks a lamp at my home, I will forgive him. That means I will not make him buy a new lamp. I have set him free from the penalty of sin... I... say, ‘I release you from your debt...’ But when the offender has walked away... we are not finished. We have dealt with the penalty, but the damage remains. There is still a price to be paid. The lamp is still broken... who will pay for it? I must pay for it myself. A lamp is easy to price and pay for. But what about damage that is intangible, unpriceable... broken relationships? ruined reputations? missed opportunities? [there are payments that can be made].”

Dan Hamilton, “Forgiveness”

“Following Christ means walking the road he walked, and in order to forgive us He had to die... Forgiveness is relinquishment. It is a laying down... His follower may not refuse to relinquish his own right, his own territory, his own comfort... No one can take it from us, any more than anyone could take the life of Jesus if He had not laid it down of His own will. But we can do as He did. We can offer it up, writing off whatever loss it may entail, in the sure knowledge that the man who loses his life or his reputation or his ‘face’ or anything else for the sake of Christ will save it.”

Elizabeth Elliot, “As We Forgive Those”

“Once upon a time, I was engaged to a young woman who changed her mind. I forgave her... but [only] in small sums over a year... [They were made] whenever I spoke to her and refrained from rehashing the past, whenever I renounced jealousy and self-pity, whenever [I saw her] with another man, whenever I praised her to others when I wanted to slice away at her reputation. Those were the payments — but she never saw them. And her own payment were unseen by me... but I do know that she forgave me... [Forgiveness] is more than a matter of refusing to hate someone. It is also a matter of choosing to demonstrate love and acceptance to the offender... Pain is the consequence of sin; there is no easy way to deal with it. Wood, nails and pain are the currency of forgiveness, the love that heals.”

Dan Hamilton, “Forgiveness”

“Love alone has the power to release memory’s grip on yesterday’s evil, for only love is the power that moves us toward people without expectation of return and therefore with a great tolerance for hurt. Love does not demand explanations and apologies or keep accounts. Love does not take pleasure in remembering how much we have coming from people who hurt us. For live is the power whose only direction is the help, healing, and salvation of the other person.”

– Lewis Smedes, “Love within Limits”