



HEBRON

Sunday, March 31, 2019

Dr. Landon Dowden

THE GOSPEL COMMUNITY IN THE COMMUNITY (Part 3)

Romans 12:17-21 (ESV)

**INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS ON 12:17-21:**

- The Gospel of Christ transforms the way we view and treat the people who harm us most.
- The Gospel demands that I not treat my enemies as they deserve to be treated, but rather that I treat them as Christ has treated me.

**THE GOSPEL COMMUNITY IN THE COMMUNITY:**

**I. THE GOSPEL ENABLES US TO DO WHAT IS HONORABLE IN THE SIGHT OF ALL, NEVER REPAYING EVIL WITH EVIL.**

- a. The reality: People will treat us in evil ways.
- b. Our reaction:
  - i. Repay no one evil with evil. (Matt. 5:38-48)
  - ii. Give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

**II. THE GOSPEL ENABLES US TO LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL, SO FAR AS IT DEPENDS ON US.**

- a. The reality:
  - i. Some people are cranky and divisive – these people better not be Christians!!!!
  - ii. If we stand for Truth, we will not live peaceably with everyone.
- b. Our reaction:
  - i. As the Spirit empowers us, we are to strive to live in peace with those around us.
  - ii. As far as it depends on us . . . and . . . if possible.
    1. Are we quick to say “I’m sorry. Please forgive me. I messed up?”
    2. Are we quick to work toward reconciliation? Even when we were wronged?
    3. Are we intentional about avoiding harmful words?
    4. Are we desirous of avoiding unnecessary conflict?



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**III. THE GOSPEL ENABLES US TO GIVE PLACE TO GOD'S WRATH, NEVER AVENGING OURSELVES.**

- a. The reality:
  - i. There are times we want to “get even” with someone who has hurt us.
- b. Our reaction:
  - i. Give place to God's wrath: (God's controlled anger toward sin)
    - 1. God's wrath will be awful. (Matt. 13:41-42; 24:51; 8:12; Is. 66:24; Mark 9:48; Rev. 6:15-16)
    - 2. God's wrath will be eternal. (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)
    - 3. God's wrath will be just. (Rom. 1:18-20; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; Rom. 2:5)

**IV. THE GOSPEL ENABLES US TO OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD, NEVER BEING OVERCOME BY EVIL.**

- a. Piper: Paul's call to us Christians to love our enemies (in Romans 12:20) and to overcome evil with good (in Romans 12:21) is based on what Christ did for us. Christ loved his enemies, and (in that way) he overcame evil with good. Not one of us would be a Christian if Christ had not loved his enemies and overcome our evil—our insubordination and willfulness and self-centeredness—with his great good—his death and resurrection.
- b. Boice:
  - i. We must know with deep gratitude that this is how God has treated us.
  - ii. We must study the example of Jesus.
  - iii. We must be close to Christ and strive to draw closer to him always.

**V. CONSIDERING ROMANS 12:**

- a. Boice: As we look back over this remarkable chapter, starting with the offering of our bodies to God as living sacrifices and ending with the offering of ourselves and own best efforts to others in order that, by the grace of God, we might overcome their evil with good, we marvel at the wisdom, scope, and power of a gospel that can do that. It is a gospel that can take sinners who have lived only for themselves and turn them into men and women who actually overcome the evil of this world.



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Who could ever think up a gospel like that? Not us, for sure. Only God could devise such a powerful gospel.

**VI. APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

- a. Are we doing what's honorable in the sight of all? Or are we repaying evil with evil?
- b. Are we living peaceably with all? Or are we a source of conflict and division?
- c. Are we giving place to God's wrath? Or are we avenging ourselves?
- d. Are we overcoming evil with good? Or are we being overcome by evil?