

April 10, 2022

The Way

Pastor David Uth

Passage: Romans 12:14-21

*14*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. *15*Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. *16*Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. *17*Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. *18*If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. *19*Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." *20*To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." *21*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Background

As we close our series walking through Romans chapter 12, we find Paul's practical instructions for how the believers in Rome should actively live with those who may oppose, and even, oppress them for following "The Way" of Jesus. Drawing from both the OT Scripture and alluding to the teachings of Jesus, Paul shows how "genuine love" (vs. 9) for those *against* us manifests in choosing to bless others, walk in humility, and trust God with our situations. Today, Pastor David will encourage us to filter our own stories through Paul's instructions so that we show Christlike love to unbelievers and trust God to deal justly with us and others in His time, for His Glory and for our good.

Service Notes

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Instructions

This discussion guide is to help you facilitate a conversation with your small group. The “Getting Started” section serves as a quick opener and introduction to the group conversation. In the “Talk it Over” section, feel free to use all or only some of the questions. Our hope is to have meaningful conversations around God’s Word, not simply answer all the questions. Finally, the “Live it Out” section is to help identify a specific next step. Use these questions as a guide to find practical ways to apply the passage to our everyday life.

Getting Started

- What is one thing God has taught you this past week? How can we pray for you?

Talk it Over

- **Read Romans 12:14 and Matthew 5:43-48.** If Paul is alluding to Jesus’ sermon on the mount, how does Jesus elaborate on the way we should treat our “enemies”? In what ways do we see Jesus in His earthly ministry “practice what He preached” on this issue? What would it look like to actively “bless” rather than “curse” those who come against us?
- **Read Romans 12:15-18.** Throughout chapter 12, Paul continually warns against an inflated view of oneself and calls believers to humility. So how does humility help us weep/celebrate with those who weep/celebrate? How do we see Jesus live this out? What do you think it looks like to “associate with the lowly” in today’s world? What role does humility play in that for us? How do Christians get this wrong sometimes? In what ways did Jesus demonstrate the humility to associate with the “lowly”? What can that teach us? How does humility help us “live at peace” and pursue even with those who might oppose or wish ill-will towards us?
- **Read Romans 12:17-21 and Matthew 5:38-42.** Paul quotes from two OT passages (Deut. 32:35, Prov. 25:21-22) that deal with our desire to “get even” when we’ve been wronged. Why do we always feel the need to avenge ourselves? In the final week of His life, how did Jesus choose to not “get even” despite all the wrong done to Him? What should that teach us? How can we daily remind ourselves that God is the ultimate judge? According to **Matthew 5:38-42**, how does Jesus teach us to respond to being wronged? How does God need to help you grow in dealing with past/current hurt? What do you think it means to overcome evil with good? How does the life of Jesus shape our understanding of this?

Live it Out

- What is one area of your life in which you need to trust God with the “outcome” rather than seeking revenge or resolution to a matter? What is one practical way you can seek to “overcome evil with good” this week in how you treat someone who has wronged you?