

January 6, 2020

Love People (Part 3)

Romans 12:17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "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." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

First I have to always remind myself that people are really not the enemy. Satan is the enemy, people are the prize! Those who do not know God yet are simply acting like they do not know God yet!

Verse 17 says repay no one evil for evil. When you become a child of God, He as your Father will watch over you, protect you, and even fight for you. This will happen only when we take our hands off of trying to get even or bringing "pay backs" to others for what they have done to us. Instead we are to, as Ephesians 4:32 says, Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Just as God forgave you! That means completely! When we hold a grudge against someone or allow a root of bitterness to begin to grow in our lives, then the only one who wins is the evil one who hates God and hates you. As you forgive others, it also allows you to turn over the punishment to God as well. He says that vengeance is His and His alone.

Verses 20-21 then command us to treat, even those who have hurt you, with kindness, compassion, and love.

Just a word about heaping coals of fire on his head.... I used to think this meant "killing someone with kindness." In fact, this is a reference to a very important custom in that day. If a widow or unmarried woman had no husband to take care of her on cold days, she would put a jar or bucket on her head and walk through the streets. When people saw this, they would offer her coals from their fires to help her get her fire started by pouring coals into her jar. I wonder what would happen if we started loving people by seeing their needs rather than their imperfections; loving rather than judging; caring rather than cursing? The last part of this passage says by doing so, we will overcome evil with good!

Dear Lord, help me to love rather than judge. Help me to see needs instead of faults. Help me to love people like You love people; unconditionally!