

HOW TO GET RID OF YOUR ENEMIES!

Romans 12: 9 - 21

... is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, love does not rejoice iniquity but rejoices in the Truth; love beareth all things; love believeth in all things, hopeth all things and endureth all thing'. Now let's turn back to Romans 12: 9 through 21 is a practical application of what we just read. In generalities, Paul gives us the character of agape love or the love of Christ operating in our lives. But he only gives the general word to describe the lifestyle of those who are controlled by Agape love but in Rom. 12, beginning at V. 9, he makes it practical. In V. 9 through 13, he is talking about one believers relationship in love, to other believers or our relationships in the Body of Christ, the Church.

// Then V. 14 through 21, he is talking about our relationship in love even to our enemies, those who are lost and those who are outside of Christ. There are some wonderful words here for us to note this morning. He says in

V. 9 (read) the word 'dissimulation' is an old word. We don't use it much at all today. It is really the word 'without hypocrisy' - that's what the Greek word is. Let love be without hypocrisy. When you express your love, be sure that it is genuine love; it is not phoney - put on. Two-faced love! But that it is genuine; that it is sincere; that it is from the heart. Our word 'sincere' comes from the Latin word 'sincerus' which literally means without wax. Our love is to be without wax. Is to be open and above board and it is not to be a put on or insincere. Nothing hurts much more than insincere love. Because people eventually see through it.

So he's gonna talk about love and the first thing he says is 'be sure that it's real; be sure that it's sincere, be sure it's of your heart and not just a phoney acting of something. You say 'well, how can we know? How can we know?' This is where we need to know the Bible. The Bible tells us over and over again, what real love is and we're to know our Bible to such an extent that we will know how to express real love and then to depend upon the power of the H.S. to express it because we do not have the power within our selfishness. Only the H. S. will give us the power to really express and have love in sincerity toward our brothers. He says in

the next place here 'abhor that which is evil' and that's the word 'hate'. You say 'Xtns are to hate?' Yes, they are. They are to hate that which is evil. This is a real tragedy of the world in which we live. There's not much hatred of evil. There used to be a great deal more hatred of evil than there is today. We live in a tremendously tolerant age!

AN age where we know that many things are wrong, That many things are heart breaking; that many things are destroying us but we don't hate them enough to take a stand against them and to pay a price, if need be, to eradicate. A Xtn ought to hate the drug traffic. A Xtn ought to hate the porno traffic. A Xtn ought to hate the desecration of the Lords Day. Now in order to hate these things, you and I have got to be clear of them ourselves. But we live in a day that there's not much emphasis on hatred or not much interest or participation in fighting that which is really, really, evil. WE don't want to get involved.

Eph. 4: 26

This is costing us dearly. Paul commands in Eph. 4: 26 (read) Jes. was angry when He saw the Lords House taken over by commercialism and being misused. He was righteously angry. There's a book been written on this subject that 'We Have Lost Our Ability To Be Angry'. It isn't good. It really isn't. A preaching that has lost its ^{anger} righteous teaching that's lost its righteous anger - there is something wrong with it. And when Xtns lose their righteous anger, there is something desperately wrong. There's something wrong with us in this country. We do not hate evil too much anymore. Then he says, on the other hand

Francis Shauffer

'cleave to that which is good' or 'cling to that which is good'. Just as we ought to hate the evil, we ought to cleave or cling to those things which are good. Even if it costs us. This is not always easy to do because if you're trying to be popular; if you're trying to protect your enemy and you stand for certain things, then you're going to be greatly critisized. You are gonna be classified, you see, when you ~~XXXX~~ really take a stand for good, as well as taking a stand against evil. Against evil.

There are so many evils in our world today. But there's a lot of good. We ought to cleave

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and cling and defend that which is good. You take Jerry Falwell; Jerry Falwell is a controversial figure. I would not agree with Jerry Falwell in everything he does. Someone asked me one day 'why do you support Jerry Falwell?' I'll tell you exactly the reason I support him, because I believe that he supports that which is basically right. He's against abortion. Abortion is a terrible sin. He's against pornography and I'm against these things and therefore, I support him. Now you say 'is it popular?' It is not popular with many people.

I've been dressed down a number of times. Severely! By some people because I supported Jerry Falwell. This is an example of sometimes what we have to do in the world. We ought to stand up and we ought to support that which is good.

kindly affectioned - family affection

V. 10 (read) you see this phrase 'kindly affectioned'? In the Greek, that means 'to have family love' - that's literally what this word is. Be kindly affectioned or express a family type love one to another, in brotherly love. Now this tells us something about the Xtn fellowship. Paul looked upon the Lords people as a family, not primarily as an organization but a family. Jes. being the Elder Brother; the members of the Body being brothers and sisters and he says that we are to think of one another as brothers and sisters and we are to determine our relationship on this basis. Have family love, he says, one toward another.

You see, if we have a family, we love the family. We take care of the family. We defend the family. No man worth his salt would go out and talk about his wife. No wife, worth the name, would go out and talk about her husband. I hear this sometimes, but that's always trouble there. That is a terrible thing to see. Do you realize that the family of God ought to be so great that we would never go outside the fellowship and say anything that would hurt a member of this family. That's a pretty good way to show whether we really have family love.

It says 'IN brotherly love' and that's the word 'Philadelphia'. That's the word 'Philadelphia' in Greek, the city in Pennsylvania took this name. Wm. Penn just named it Philadelphia, meaning 'brotherly love'. Be kindly affectioned or show family love, one to another, in brotherly love'. And then he says 'in honor, preferring one another'. You ~~XXXX~~ remember

what he says in 1 Cor. 13 - that love seeketh not her own. Love does not seek its own interests. Well, here he is saying that love will put the brother first; put him out in front. It's certainly takes a lot of love to do that. It really does. That's not our nature to do that; WE want to be out in front. WE want to get the recognition. We want to be #1! But he says to put the brother out in front. To prefer him above yourself.

You say 'well, who's going to boost me, if I don't boost myself? Who is going to put me out front. Well, listen, when you put your brother out front, God will put you out front. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. But he that exalteth himself shall be humble. We need not worry about that. God will be out promoter and if we've got to promote ourselves and put ourselves out front, it doesn't amount to a hill of beans. I've noted that the people who God has used have not been people who've tried to get out in front. It's been people who have tried to serve the Lord. God has a way of putting them out in front.

James 4:10
1 Pet. 5:6
V. 11 (read) not slothful and that's the word 'not lazy'. Or the word 'poeky' or the word 'hesitant'. Not slothful in business. Now this has nothing to do with secular business. Oh it's been used. You know you can go to the Bible and you can pull phrases out and you can e-tablish most any doctrine and justify most any practice in the world. Now, of course, a man that's a Xtn will have dynamic in his life and he won't be pokey and he'll be creative in secular business. But when it says 'not slothful in business' it's talking about the business of the Lord!

Does the Lord have a business? He, indeed, does and it's the most important business this side of Heaven. You know it's really sad when someone is all excited about his secular business, puts everything in it; he's creative, you know, and all the time advancing, inovated, all the time doing everything he can to expand that business to make money and then he comes to the Lords business, he has no interest. Doesn't believe in spending money, doesn't believe in expanding money doing anything exciting. just to stay in the same old ruts. See, that's wrong. Here is a command that we are not to be slothful or we are not to be pokey or we are not to be lazy, in the Lords business.

As a matter of fact, there's nothing that God hates more than unenthusiastic service. Luke-warmness, Laodiceaism. The severest word Jes. ever spoke to a group of people on earth, He spoke it to people who were just lazy. Laodicean and didn't care about the Lords work. It is a terrible sin.

Some years ago, somebody wrote a book on preaching and in the book, the author said 'there's one unpardonable sin of preaching' and you know what the man said? 'Dullness'. I believe this with ALL MY heart! I believe that a preacher who is dull; there's something wrong with his soul. When we're handling the greatest Truths in the world, listen, I'm excited about the Lords business. It's the greatest business in the world and is something to be excited about. Something to be enthusiastic about; something to give our time and our money and our influence and our whole lives. It's the Lords business; it's ETERNAL business. The prophet, Amos, says 'woe unto ye who are at ease in Zion'. (

Amos 6:1

That word 'woe; is the word 'judgment'. Woe unto you who are at ease in Zion. So he says 'not lazy in the Lords business, fervant in Spirit'. And the word 'fervant' means 'burning'. Red hot! Red HOT! Did you know it's a command of God that we be red hot? That we be excited, indeed, in the Spirit. Serving the Lord. Notice: serving the Lord. Who is the Lord? That's the Lord, JC. Just think about it. Serving the Lord. Serving the Lord! AND there's no honor in the world like this and there's nothing that we should put on a level with serving the Lord. Serving the Lord. When I was teaching in the Seminary, I said to the students, I said 'listen, you go over here to the medical college, you've got to go through college, you've got to go through four years of medical school and you've got to go three years resident but there's no people on earth who ought to be as dedicated as the preacher and who ought to do his classwork and his homework and be totally consumed.

Those people working on bodies, they're not - their job is not nearly as important as we over here at this Seminary, who work on souls! Yet, that's not been the attitude a lot of times, you know. That the Lords work --- 'well, anybody can do the Lords work and it doesn't really matter how it's done. Doesn't matter what kind of building you meet in as a church. You can

just meet in a barn; nothing really matters.' My friends, the Bible doesn't teach that. The Lords work is FIRST! Absolutely, it is. And it should be first in the lives of those who are serving them, realizing that we're serving the Lord. Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Several years ago, the assistant to the President of the U. S. came to our church on God and Country. His name was Bob Maddox. While he was here, I asked him 'how do you enjoy your job?'

SM - He said 'oh, I really - I'm excited, I'm consumed about it'. I said 'well, it must be exciting to have an office there in the White H0use, and to serve that way,' He said 'but do you realize do you know why I'm so excited about my job?' I said 'well, I'd like to hear you say'. He says 'I'm excited to be serving the President of the U. S. of America'. Well, that's something to be excited about. It's certainly honorable to serve the President of the U.S. of America and to help him govern this monster of a nation. That's something! But listen, you and I are serving Someone so much greater than the President of the U. S. And that is: Jes. Christ!

JC: *"I'm excited about serving the Pres of the U S A." (Bob Maddox)*

There was a missionary in the East who was doing a great job and one of the oil companies got their eyes on him and they wanted to employ him in their business and their operation and they went to him and offered him a fabulous salary. He had a PHD. Why not have a PHD; why NOT have the highest degree you can have, if God leads you to do that? I say to my interns 'You go to the fullest extent so when you stand up, you'll know something and people will respect you. If you can go and get your PHD, get your PHD. Do it for the Lord. Well, this man had his PHD but he was a missionary. Just making a hundred dollars a month, that's all they gave them in those days.

They offered him this big job, I think making thirty thousand a year at that time and that would be two hundred thousand now. It's been twenty or twenty five years ago and he turned it down. The president of the company said 'why would you turn this down? Is the salary too small?' He said 'no, the salary wasn't too small. But the job was!' But the ~~job was~~ job was!! Serving the Lord! SErving the Lord, he says; don't be lazy in the Lords business. Be red hot

in the Spirit, serving the Lord!

V. 12 (read) it's really 'in THE hope'. Which indicates a definite hope. What is the hope of the Xtn? Hope doesn't mean something we hope will happen. It's a confident, expectation and assurance, based upon the promise of God. What is the hope? The hope that JC is Lord, absolutely. He's in control of History and one day, we are going to reign and rule with Him forever. WE cannot, we CANNOT lose! We're on the winning side. Can you rejoice in that? No matter what the ~~the~~ present situation is and no matter how great our troubles are, if we have this hope; and you know this was a mark of early Xtnity? We live in a day where there's such hopelessness and the reason there is, until people don't know about the hope. THE hope!

Xtnity is filled with hope. The hope that God is in control and that His people are winners and they shall be with Him and shall be like Him, forever. Then he says 'patient in tribulation'. Do Xtns have tribulations? Indeed! The word 'tribulation' means 'pressures' - back breaking, heart breaking, mind breaking pressures. Says to be patient. To be patient in them. Don't give up. Don't throw in the towel. Be patient and in 1 Cor. 13, Paul says that love is patient. Love gives us the ability to be patient and to stay under the burden. You take the word patient here is the Greek word meaning 'to stay under'. The ability to stay under the responsibilities, to stay under the demands of life.

God gives this to His people. So many people are just giving up, running out of their responsibility. God didn't make us to have an easy way. Not at all. People talk about they're not able to take all of life. You realize these bodies were made for ~~XXXX~~ great stress? We're hearing a lot today about burnout and burnout - too much work; under too much pressure over too long a period and the world says 'now the answer for burnout is just to relax and do less and take it easy and take more vacations.' That isn't true. That isn't true, at all! It's not the amount of work, basically, that we do - it's the reason for which we work. And if we really have the motive to serve the Lord and our eyes are upon Jes., it's amazing what we can do! In the midst of life, there'll be all kinds of tribulations and the Lord calls us to stay under that load and not get out from under it!

I have pastors to come to me - a steady stream of them - talking about leaving their church. I say 'why would you leave it?' Said 'well, i've just got to get out from under the load. I just got to go somewhere where the people are more reasonable and where I have a better setup.' I say 'well, don't you realize you're gonna find that - you gonna find pressures - y ou gonna find problems everywhere you go. You're just gonna exchange one set of problems for another set' and they look at me and say 'well, you don't mean that?' I say 'I DO mean that. Wherever people are, there'll be problems and there'll be things to test you and God wants you to settle down, prove yourselves. Trust Him!'

But the idea is that you move if you don't like it, you know. If it doesn't feel good. But that is not the Gospel and that is not what the Lord calls us to. Patient in tribulation. XM Then he says 'continuing ^{faithful} instant in prayer'. Or continuing faithful in prayer. The Bible calls to faithfulness in prayer over and over again. When I read that, I thought of the word of Jes., in Luke 18: 1 (read) the Greek verb 'faint' means 'fall out of battle'. How are we gonna stay in the battle? We've got to continue instant in prayer. There's not a person alive today who can consistently live a life of victory and be productive in life and happy and joyous, who has not learned the secret of prayer!

But no one is gonna be really defeated who will continue instant in prayer. This is one of the greatest things in the world. Last Sunday, I preached on 'Praying one HOur'. That's the amount of time Jes prayed in the garden of Gethsemene. The Bible says that we're not to just say little devotional prayers but we are to continue in a state of prayer and at times, we're just to isolate ourselves and pray. TEach ourselves to pray until there is peace and victory and there's joy in life. Paul knew there was no possibility of people living by this Xtn ethic except they continued instant in prayer. Not just an occasional prayer, but INSTANT; faithful, pursuing prayer.

Some translate this 'pursuing prayer at all times'.

V. 13 (read) you see the word 'distributing'? That is the verb 'koinonia' which is our word

'fellowship'. Sharing to the necessity of the saints. A very important part of life of the N. T. church was that church sharing its resources - one with another. The idea of the Government; the idea of the County, the State taking care of Xtns was foreign to the N. T. church. The church is a family. We're to take care of the necessity of the saints. Now you say, 'how about the saint that won't work?' Well, he needs to be lectured; he needs to be sat down and needs to be talked with and we do that all the time. I don't mean to say that if somebody comes to us and says 'now, we've got to have so and so money' that we just automatically give them a check. Oh, no. There are some people who are NOT to be given. I teach STRONGLY 11 The 3: 9 (read). But there are cases where people work and there are cases where people are very deserving.

Where there is a need. Have you ever had a need? Well, some of us may not have had to turn to our church, but some people do have to turn to their church and they ought to be able to turn to their church. In 1979, God led us to begin what we call 'Body Life'. If you don't know about it, I want you to know that you can pray. God may lead you to share in it. It is an effort on the part of this congregation to meet the needs of the saints. We take an offering on Wednesday. There's nothing more Biblical that we do - distributing and it's not just a mechanical thing. This word 'distributing' is the word 'fellowship' - showing fellowship (oneness) through the giving of our gifts, to one another.

But then he goes on to say 'given to hospitality' or pursuing hospitality. Now the word 'hospitality' is made up of two Greek words meaning 'love/strangers'. ^{of} *Phile* 'The lo zenius'(?). That's the word 'love' and 'stranger' in this word. But it literally means 'pursuing strangers to love them'. Now this is very interesting. When I read this, I immediately determined in my heart to sit down with our Administrator and share with him Rom. 12: 13 because I had never seen it in this light. We raised the question 'should we just give to those in the Body?' and basically, that's where we began. But this says that we are to pursue hospitality to the strangers.

We, of course, cannot be the welfare agency for Ft. Smith. But there are times that even a

stranger - we must meet their needs. Sometimes, for instance, we have people come through who tell me they're members of a church off yonder and that they're faithful to the Lord and they are children of God and give every evidence of being this and are down on their luck or something happened to them. This certainly extends it beyond the immediate fellowship. This is a beautiful, beautiful gift. This is a Spiritual Gift.

In 1 Pet. 4: 9 (read) Peter speaks of hospitality as a gift. As a gift. We see it close in our church. My secretary has this gift and anybody that comes to this church needs a place to stay, she may not have seen them; she immediately says 'they can share our home. They can stay with us'. Our associate pastor cannot move into his home; he'll be moving Tuesday, but for a month he could not move into his home. She said to him this week 'if you can stay in our home, if there's enough room, you're certainly welcome to it'. She took several Vietnamese she's had several Missionary's children. It's a beautiful gift, indeed.

While we have to be careful, still the Xtn love and Xtn charity goes beyond the immediate fellowship and he's saying that in V. 13. Actually, that last phrase should go into V. 14. That was not a good division when they divided this into verses in the 16th century. 'Given to hospitality' should be in V. 14 because when you get to V. 14, you've got the relationship of Gods people to unbelievers or to the world and even to their enemies. Now look what it says in

V. 14 (read) what does the word 'bless' mean? It means to say something good. It really means 'to eulogize' and it's a command that Gods people, rather than saying something bad about their persecutors, or those who would harm them, is to say something good. Suppose someone persecutes you and suppose you say something good and someone hears it and this person who hears it is with your persecutor and he tells your persecutor that he heard you say something good. You think that might have an effect? SM I remember some years ago, we had to take a little discipline against a member of the congregation. Nothing personal and it wasn't my action entirely; it was really the action of a committee. We had to do this and some years later, a staff member came and went to this person and asked them to serve in a certain

position and the person said 'oh, you wouldn't want me'. He says 'why'? He said 'why surely the pastor certainly has warned you against me'. He said 'well, the pastor hasn't said a word except he said a good word'. It just melted that man. He could not believe it. This is one of the most effective ways to show Xtnity - is not to criticize your enemies, especially publicly but to speak a positive word, a good word. Is to bless them. Bless them.

He says 'bless them who persecute you; bless and curse not'. Now when he says 'curse not', he is not talking about using vulgarity or what we would call 'curse words' or what we would call 'cursing out a man'. Actually here it means don't call down the curse of God on them. Don't ask God to curse them or don't seek vengeance'. Now actually this idea comes up again in V. 17 and it comes up in V. 20 because it's a very fundamental idea in human relationships. What are we gonna do with our enemies? Are we gonna curse them or are we going to bless them?

Are we going to ^{strike} ~~XXXXX~~ back at them or are we going to love them? In the next verse, he says

V. 15 (read) now this is contrary to the way of the world. The world says 'laugh and the world will laugh with you; weep and you weep alone' and there's a lot of truth in this. Certainly, the Bible does not teach that we're to be pitiers and that we're to be sob-sisters. God forbid! A Xtn is never to feel sorry for himself - NEVER! We just are not to do that at all! But there comes times that Xtns weep and they really weep. There's a lot of weeping today. Then there are times Xtns rejoice. Jes. applied this rule. He certainly did! He went to the marriage of Cana in Galilee and He rejoiced.

Should we rejoice at a wedding? Why, of course, we should. It's a solemn and serious time, but it's a rejoicing time. Jes. was the life of the party. As a matter of fact, if I were to preach on John 2, that's what I'd name it 'The Life Of The Party'. Jes. was. Jes. was! 11 Tim. 3: 7 (read) we live in this age today. People are more interested in pleasure and they love pleasure more than they love God. But does that verse say that Xtns are not to have any pleasure? Why, it certainly doesn't. Does it say that Xtns are not to go on a vacation?

It doesn't say that. Or to take a boat ride? NO, doesn't say that. But the tragedy is when people who call themselves Xtns, are more interested in the lake, and skiing and things like that, than they are in the things of God. Like people, when June comes, they abandon their church. That's a sad thing indeed. Abandoning. I was talking to a Minister of Education, who told me that we literally have to cut back to half of our organization in the summer because our teachers go to the lake or go somewhere on the weekends.

But I was making the point here that there is certainly a rejoicing for Xtns and there is also a weeping. Now, sometimes, it's easier to weep with Xtns than it is to rejoice. Because we have brothers sometimes that seems to get favors that we don't get. WE might have brothers, for instance, that might take a vacation in Europe in occasionally and we do well to get to Tahlequah! Can you rejoice with them? And we have all kinds of victories in the lives of those who are very close to us - can we rejoice with them? Yes, we are to rejoice with them. And we're also to weep with them. This is a Xtn principle, indeed. REjoicing with them and weeping with them.

V. 16 (read) well, that first part doesn't mean to be in total agreement. This means to be harmonious - to be peaceful in our relationship. 'Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate'. Mind not high things - that doesn't mean not to have high ideals and thoughts. What he's talking about there is don't be arrogant and prideful and put yourself on a pedestal but condescend (that's not a good word, at all. NOT today at all! That's not a Xtn word. A Xtn doesn't condescend) that means to look down. Don't be arrogant but associate with men of low estate.

Here is a real warning to Xtns. Don't just be with people who may have wealth and who can help you, but associate with all Xtns. With ALL Xtns. I surely had to learn this, as a pastor I've tried to do this. If I've failed, I certainly have done it, trying to do otherwise! Is to be -- associate with anybody in the world. I go into a lot of homes and people say 'preacher, I'm surprised you would have visited my home' and that disappoints me. I'm surprised they would say that. I go into rich homes; I go into poor homes. I go into middle class homes

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I remember in my first pastorate, a little lady wanted me so much to visit her and to have a meal with her. But the house was dirty and there were no screens and the flies were everywhere. But she loved me and I knew this and she wanted me to be in her home. Finally, one day came and I just couldn't say no. I remember as we were going to that home, I said to Doris 'this is one of the most dutiful(?) things I've ever done'. Because I was reared in decency, indeed, and my mother was just - she was an extreme almost. Especially with her food.

I never will forget what my wife said to me. She said 'Bill, Jesus would go to this home' and that taught me a lesson. This is what this is teaching and all of us who visit and minister to people, we are faced with this all the time and this is a great word for us. All right. Last part of this verse 'be not wise in your own conceit'. So easy to be wise in our own mind and knowledge and a person who is, hasn't been taught much of God and hasn't had much experience.

V. 17 (read) don't seek revenge. 'Provide things honest in the sight of all men' - that is, be careful to do what is right in the eyes of all men. We as Xtns, are being watched, whether we like it or not. We're being watched. ^{5M} I remember one day I caught a plane here in Ft. Smith when Braniff used to go out of here at 11 o'clock over to Memphis and one my way to Memphis, I drank some tomato juice. When I got back to my office the next day or so, somebody in this town called me and said 'were you on such and such a flight to Memphis?' I said 'yes'. This person said 'did you drink anything?' I said 'Yes, I had some tomato juice' and he said 'well, a business man in this town said that you were drinking a bloody Mary'.

I said 'well, that's a lie and I want you to get the business man and bring him down here' and he said 'we'll be down there within thirty minutes'. I never saw him. Well, you say, that's a little thing. Well, it may be, but I don't drink tomato juice on an airplane anymore! We have to be careful. 'Be careful' he says 'what you do in the sight of men'.

V. 19 (read) don't seek revengeance, but rather give place' - that is, give God the place to visit the wrath. Wrath is in HIS hands, not in our hands. 'For it is written (he's quoting

Deut. 32: 35 (read) 'vengeance is MINE; I will repay saith the Lord'. You see the old nature in us is to strick back if somebody does something against us. We cannot handle this. We're to leave this in the hands of God. God knows EXACTLY what the other person has done; He doesn't overlook a thing and He will bring vengeance where it's needed and He will do it in a redemptive way, whereas we would do it in a destructive way. I've seen God many times, bring vengeance. Somebody mistreats you, somebody mistreats me - I don't worry. I've seen God intervene too many times.

SM This man heard a speaker on the radio make ~~XX~~ unkind accusations against him and also untrue accusations. He went to a wise man and said 'what should I do about it?' He said 'should I go and confront him and take action against him?' He said 'no! No! Leave it in the hands of the Lord. If you try to defend yourself, the Lord won't defend you.' Listen, the Lord is the One who will defend you! Dr. BARNHOUSE said when he was preaching on the radio in Philadelphia, a wise man said to him 'Dr. BARNHOUSE, you'll have a lot of people attack you. They'll write letters against you. What are you gonna do?'

He says 'well, I've not decided.' ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 'Well' the man said 'I'd like to give you some advice. Do what Jes. did'. 'What's that?' 'Don't do a thing'. I've found one of the greatest things in the world - a person is a man of God, living right and trying to follow Jesus, listen, people will do him wrong - oh, yes - he doesn't have to defend himself. God will do that. My father never struck back at anybody and he taught us never to hold anything in our hearts - NEVER. He never went to court one time. He said 'don't go to court unless you HAVE to go'.

Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

V. 20 (read) just think about it now; your enemy is hungry, feed him. See, we're to take the initiative; we're to go out, even to our enemies. Now here is an expression that needs some explanation. He says if you'll take the offensive toward your enemies, you'll head coals of fire on their head. SM I read of this lady who went to talk to her pastor and she said 'my

husband mistreats me and I want you to counsel me what to do' and he said 'well, have you ever tried heaping coals of fire on his head'. She said 'no, but I did try a kettle of boiling water'. Many people do this. Many people do this. That doesn't work, but the coals of fire will work. Now what does this mean 'heaping coals of fire'? We need to know. This was a Roman custom. In Romans day, they didn't have matches. And if your fire gave out, you had to go to a neighbor to borrow a live coal.

So here is a man who is an enemy of a neighbor, who has the live coals. The enemy has no fire; he's cold, can't cook. So he goes over to this neighbor; the neighbor knows he's been his enemy; the man knows he's been his enemy and he says to him 'I don't have any fire. I'm freezing. We can't cook at our house; would you loan me a live coal?' And not only did the neighbor loan him a live coal but he piled them up in a jar. He didn't just give him one, but he gave him a bunch of them and in those days, they carried things on their heads, and he put that jar on his head and went back home. Can you imagine the burning shame that was in his heart that he had been an enemy of this man, who did this act of kindness to him?

SIDE TWO OF TAPE

SM I read a story of a boy in Boot Camp and he'd come in the barracks and he'd pray. He was the only one that prayed in the barracks and they made a lot of fun of him and one day they came in and he was kneeling and praying and when he did, one of the soldiers threw one of his muddy boots at him, struck him on the face. It was a pretty severe blow and he just took the boot, sat it down beside him and kept on praying. But during the night, he got these muddy boots and he cleaned them and polished them and presented them to his buddy. This man was so moved, until he led him to Christ. He said 'I want to know a Christ that gives a person a power to overcome evil with good'.

Can evil be overcome with good? Here's the way we really destroy our enemies. Just make them into friends, by taking the initiative by doing that which is good and so the final word of Paul is 'be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good'. Can evil be overcome with good

It can. This leads me to say 'How To Get Rid Of Your Enemies?' Look at the overhead: there are three approaches we might take. We might take the Approach of

#1. RETALIATION. This is the first thought 'we'll strike back!! We'll say something bad'. You ever heard someone say 'I'll kill him, if it kills me'? Well, it will. Retaliation will kill you. A person who has a vengeful spirit is killing himself. Killing himself! That is one of the worst things in this world - is to retaliate and have a revengeful spirit. Where do you see in the church? You see it in grudges people hold because someone did something they didn't like or something they think is wrong and they hold it. They keep talking about it. Are you guilty of that? That's retaliating; that's trying to 'get back' at them. Trying to make them pay off, you see.

That's very, very bad and yet, many, many people do that. MANY people do that. How about you? Retaliation. It will always hurt you and not the other fellow. In the next place

#2. REPRESSION. That would be the idea 'well, so and so did me wrong and I'm not going to strike back or do anything but I'm gonna hold it in my heart. I'll just repress it and when it comes up, I'll just press it down. I won't express it, but it's there'. Suppose that person is your bossman and he does something you don't like. You hate him and you'd like to kill him but you don't have the courage and after all, you need the job. Your family needs the money, so you'll keep on working and hold your job, but you just hate his guts. Just pressing it down. Can you do that? NO!

I see that all the time. It must come out. It MUST come out. So this man goes home and his dog comes out and he kicks his dog. He mistreats his wife and children. He takes it out on people who can't come back at him. This is an old trick of the mind. That's not the answer. How do we get rid of our enemies? By

#3. RECONCILIATION. It's by reaching out to them, praying for them, speaking well of them. Never going to their back and say anything. When the opportunity presents itself,

doing something that's good to them. Doing something that's a good act rather than something sad. I tell you this speaks - absolutely it speaks so loud til people hear that. They hear that. SM I heard of a man who - strange, but I read the story - of this family. They had one chicken and they were raising the chicken and the neighbor killed the chicken. They didn't do a thing. They didn't seek revenge. They just prayed and waited on the Lord and one day, the neighbor got ill and the wife of the house, she made some chicken soup and took it over to him. Does it work?

Listen, I've seen it work. I've seen it work many, many times. Don't be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let's stand and pray.