

Scripture: Romans 12:14-21.

Text: Romans 12:21--"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Theme: Overcoming evil with good.

Proposition: One gains much by overcoming evil with good.

Date written: Jan 20 -22, 1955.

Dates and places preached:

Wheatland, Wyo, Jan 23, 1955  
 Grace ch, Cheyenne, Jan 24, 1955  
 8:15 & 11:00 a.m.  
 May 18, 1960, Parked NWYO,  
 Sheridan, Wyo.

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NAME Mrs. W. D. Perry

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Introduction:

1. Guideposts story of policeman, full of hate toward killer of his father, catching young thug who was very possibly his father's killer, ~~where~~ he could have avenged the death. Did not do it, and experienced relief of long pent-up hatred and tension.

2. Above a true and modern illustration of teachings Paul gave to both Gentile and Jew in Scripture.

3. Paul's 13 books of N.T. testify that Christians of early church and through the ages find in Paul's writings excellent explanation of Christ's will and teachings. In present passage both O.T. and Christ's sayings are quoted by Paul to emphasize idea of overcoming evil with good.

4. To study this Scripture passage and everyday life to determine intelligence of trying to overcome evil with good, to see what

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is to be gained by such an approach to life, is our problem.

I. Scripture summary:

1. v. 14 sets the theme.
2. v.15-16 are 2 sayings unrelated, admonitions flowing from the same Paul which brought the chief message of the passage, and which show Paul's humanity: his tendency to digress as extraneous thoughts strike, then to return to the main theme.
3. v. 17-21 returns to main theme of passage and of this sermon.

II. One gains the respect of others by returning good for evil(v.17)

1. Policeman Milton Cohen said "I feel free, for the first time in a long while." In the eyes of his wife he gained new respect and stature: "You are. Free to be the kind of father your father was."
2. "Joe," assistant Scoutmaster who insisted on some order in meet-

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in meetings, over resistance of some of us rowdies when we acted especially disrespectfully to him and played a mean trick upon him, reacted by taking 2 ringleaders aside and talking privately and personally with them, discussing his goals in the troop. Instead of using physical force, as he could have, and exerting his authority to put the recalcitrants in line or put them out, he used friendly persuasion. He won 2 friends and the respect of the whole troop.

III. It is safer to live peaceably in this manner returning good for evil. (v.18)

1. As Scripture states in a way sometimes it is impossible to live peacefully. But when you do have a choice, peaceful living is safer

2. Reader's Digest story of fellow who in bar ~~was~~ got in argument with stranger, and invited stranger into back room to settle matter with fists. Stranger

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proved to be professional boxer, who knocked him with one blow so that he fell into the basement, breaking some bones. He would have been safer had he been of a more peaceful disposition (or~~x~~ stayed out of bars), and had he not started a fight.

3. In international matters, France, England, Holland and others have colonies which are among sores spots of world in regard to danger of Communism taking over. China was long exploited (Hongkong is still~~x~~ held~~x~~ by the British). India, toward which we should feel a bond of brotherhood in sympathy with her recent gaining of independence from Britain, tends toward Communism, we are told. Most of the world's trouble spots, where war is most likely to break out, are those places where France, Holland, England and other nations have used force in the past or present to take and hold and exploit those countries. Truly, peace is safer than the danger of communism

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which we now face. Yet the peace was originally broken, and wrong done, by man of those nations we now call allies and support. So far as it depends on us, we would be smarter to spend billions showing our peaceful intentions through missions, economic and social help, etc., than to spend greater and greater billions on a never-ending, never-satisfied arms and military-training race and program. Those who would cut foreign aid in favor of the much more expensive military programs had best look to their reasoning.

IV. One exercises faith in God when he leaves vengeance in God's hands. (v. 19).

1. Policeman Cohen's article was in Guideposts, which is published that people might testify in print of their faith in God and in prayer. He was testifying that he found God, and personal peace, when he left his personal quest for

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vengeance in the hands of God.

2. In wars in past years the defeated aggressor has, in vengeance been looted unmercifully, and made to pay tribute, today called reparations, for years. Yet several of the World War II victors, including our own nation, have not taken vengeance on Germany or Japan but, instead, have helped rebuild and revitalize nations which attacked them. I believe that the upswing in public religious faith which has been so evident in recent years is a direct result of or de-emphasis on vengeance, and of leaving it to the Lord.

V. A satisfying sort of vengeance is to be had by returning good for evil (v.20).

1. If you must "get even," or repay for a wrong done, there's no better way than to do good to the one who wronged you. It leaves him with a sort of helpless feeling.

2. Chaplain noticed sergeant

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come to chapel night after night, sit, and just look at the cross or the altar or his Bible, and seem to pray. Came into chaplain's office one night and told his story, with a purged but radiant look on his face. His wife, an English girl, during the temporary separation caused by his army placement, conceived by someone else. Shocked him almost to the breaking point. Thought of going AWOL, after nearly 15 years of highly commendable service, and of killing her and the guilty man. Came to chapel night after night to get help to combat this bitter feeling which demanded vengeance. One night sobbed and cried, the first night the chaplain really took a good look at him. Through Bible reading and prayer there in the chapel came to decision to try to forgive, ~~to forgive~~, to try to win his wife back, to try to give the guiltless child from his wife's affair a home, just as he was to his own children. Through

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both her and his family he arranged for her to return to England so her folks could care for her. Then with the chaplain's help he was able to get transferred to English post where his family could be together again. The rival for the wife's affections never was abused nor reproached, always treated at least civilly. The wife was won back by love and forgiveness. Overcoming evil with good in this case preserved a family and made a more christian person of at least one, the sergeant. It also "heaped burning coals on the head of" the rival, in that he found his attentions and gifts were no longer acceptable or attractive.

Conclusion:

1. One gains the respect of others by returning good for evil.
2. It is safer to live peaceably in this manner of returning good for evil.

3. On

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Romans 12:14-21.....10

3. One exercises faith in God when he leaves vengeance in God's hands.

4. A satisfying sort of vengeance is to be had by returning good for evil.

5. One gains much by overcoming ~~good~~ evil with good.

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Charlotte L. Spivey

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