

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia
Bible Class Instructor: *Dr. Geof W. Jackson, Board Member*

ROMANS LESSON 84 PART ONE: “DIVINE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION”

ROM 12:15-21 *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.*

LIVE LIKE THIS...

In our previous Sessions, we began the study of ROMANS 12:9-21. These verses contain Paul’s instruction on some very practical principles for Believers to apply to their daily life. Paul's Godly "advice" does NOT miss much when it comes to interpersonal issues. Our common cultural values must be set aside and replaced by Divinely Inspired attitudes and actions. It may not be the way we learned, or what is observed in society... *but it IS God's Will.*

BE REAL WITH ONE ANOTHER

Vs15-16a Rejoice *with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn.* ^{16a} Live in harmony *with one another.*

Rejoice... Mourn... – In a way to reinforce some of the principles he has already used, Paul calls upon the Believers to be “real” in their relationships with one another

– *We are to “rejoice” with others whether or not we have a reason to rejoice...* in other words don’t be envious or jealous just because it has not happened for you...

– *When others are suffering or at loss, JOIN them with sympathy... The word is NOT just to “weep” but joining in their feelings of loss / devastation –*

➤ *Best described by the word “Sumpatheo” - let their hurt become your hurt – don’t be callous or stoic*

- THIS is the word used often of Jesus, and is specifically used in HEB 4:15
For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize [Sumpatheo] with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
- Paul speaks similarly about this “Sumpatheo” in 2 COR 11:28-29
And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the Churches.
Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?
- In 1 COR 9:22 Paul includes this as one of the ways he was able to bring unbelievers to Christ:

To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

Live in harmony with one another. – “Phroneo” – To think the same / have the same mindset / To let your decisions be the same so as to “act as one” / To “speak with one voice” – The activity represented by this word involves the will, affections, and conscience.

This is NOT easy for any “group” – It doesn’t mean we have exactly the same opinions on EVERYTHING...but our overall actions reflect a group that is “undivided” [Father & Mother to child]

ROMANS LESSON 84 PART TWO: “DIVINE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION”

This thought is also expressed in Paul’s Letter to the Philippians:

PHIL 3:15-16 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have attained. (Righteousness)

DO AWAY WITH SUPERIORITY

Vs16b Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

Haughty... – 2 words: “Hupsela Phroneo” – Not just a “elevated mind set” BUT one that stands arrogantly above “with an upraised arm” to force others into subjection” – “Hubris” – “Roman Dictator Statues”

- This 2nd reference to “arrogance / pride” is to be seen in connection to the previous admonitions regarding relationship to those who are suffering
- “Don’t stand arrogantly aloof to the needs of others with an attitude of superiority / isolationism – “Well, that’s THEIR problem... What did they expect? ... I’m sorry about what they’re facing... Maybe they’re only getting what they deserve...”
- Much of our culture is “geared” this way...

Instead: “Associate with the lowly”... – “To be led to join those of lower estate / those who are bowed low by circumstances...” – DON’T stand “above them” BUT “join them where they are...” THAT you may be able to “lift them to a better place...” – NOT the world’s way... BUT God’s way...

EPH 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1 COR 11:1 Be imitators of me, as I of [imitate] Christ.

PHIL 2:3-5 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus...

➤ Paul does NOT say that others ARE more significant: but “to seek to serve THEIR needs”

- “Hegeomai” – to be influenced by / “to lead the mind” – this mindset comes BEFORE actions
- “Huperecho” – to place “above” – NOT “they ARE above” but you have placed them there ...

- The “perfect” example of this is presented in PHIL 2:6-8 –
“Have THIS mind” [PresImpAct] in you which was also in Christ Jesus...”

Never be wise... – Wisdom is always good: a result of following the Word of God and Leading of the Holy Spirit... – However: THIS “wisdom” is qualified by what follows... And the Verb Form means to take this action FOR the sake of & UPON yourself

Your own sight... – Lit: “in yourself...” – Meaning that what you call “wisdom” is nothing more than your own thinking and opinions – unsubstantiated by SCRIPTURE / Not in agreement with the SPIRIT...

YOU are your own Authority & Backing... “I don’t care what anybody else says, THIS is my opinion...”

STOP THE CYCLE OF REVENGE

- Vs17-21 *Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.* – Also repeated in 1 PETER 3:9
Let the “vengeance” STOP... with you! – The “World Culture” LIVES by the idea of “an eye for and eye...” Today, to be “disrespected” by someone is enough of a reason to escalate a response to social rejection... familial separation... or even physical violence... >> Going as far as Murder – ALL in the name of “honor” – WE have no right to carry-out a “death sentence” [Next Section...]
- THIS type of vengeance is often glorified in books, TV, and movies...
WHERE is the “honor” in that??? – That is NOT true “honor” {NOT talking about self-defense}
Do what is Honorable... Kalon – Good as to what is valuable, appealing, noble, excellent”
- THIS is a definite way in which we “stop being conformed to the image of THIS World Age ...” and “BE transformed by the renewal of our minds...”
- ONLY through the work of the Holy Spirit... coming from within the inner man... can this quality be established as a guiding principle in the life of the Believer...
This is NOT the world’s way... or the normal “reaction” of our fallen humanity...

¹⁸ *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* – Do YOUR part... you cannot control their part in the issue... However, ... - by applying the following you MAY be able to restore Peace...

Live Peaceably... – Eireneuo – “live in such a manner that causes peace to come to the parties concerned and to prevail over turmoil...” – NOT “peacefully...” - This is not just having peace while others are at “war” BUT letting the “peace” that is IN you have a quieting effect on their situation -

¹⁹ *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written:*

Avenge... – “Ekdikeo” – to issue judgment for a wrong that has been done – This is NOT just having a judgmental opinion... BUT actually taking the place OF the Judge and issuing sentence...

Wrath of God – “Orge” – Settled Judgment / “Pending doom” ... God KNOWS... and He will keep their judgment “in reserve” until HIS time... Repentance WILL remove the “Divine Judgment”

“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” [DEUT 32:35 / PS 94:1]

- Well-illustrated in PSALM 55 when ABIATHAR abandoned / betrayed DAVID to join ABSALOM

- JESUS: *"Forgive them"* – Forgiveness has been made available to ALL humanity... but can ONLY be applied to those who *"repent and believe"* that JESUS IS the CHRIST ...

- Sometimes we get concerned that people are *"getting away with it..."*

1 TIM 5:24 [Passion] *The sins of some people stand out and are well known. Yet there are others whose sins are not as obvious, but the truth of who they really are will eventually be seen and will bring them judgment.*

²⁰ To the *contrary...*

"if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing so you will heap burning coals on his head." [PROV 25:21]

GOD... MOSES... DAVID... SOLOMON... PAUL... PETER... – ALL knew that *this principle is NOT easy...* there is nothing HERE that is a natural fruit of the Fallen Nature of Humanity...

BUT: as New Creations... Those who have the "righteousness of God" in the inner man... Who have been "in-dwelt BY the very Holy Spirit of God" ... to them... THIS IS POSSIBLE!

²¹ Do not *BE overcome BY evil, but overcome evil WITH good.*

Overcome... – *"Nikao"* – *"to conquer... involves "active" struggle / conflict...* NOT a passive attitude

BY... – The Present Passive Verb means an attitude of *"allowing"* this to happen...

WITH... – The Present Active Verb *"demands a continual engagement"* in this effort...

- *Evil...* – *"Kakos"* – *wicked, vicious, bad in heart, conduct, and character –that which is polluting and affecting others* – intentions that are for the harm / destruction of others
This, of course, rises up from the "sin nature / the flesh" the believers –

- IT must be ruled-over / resisted... – ROM 6:12-14
- IT is to be *"Put to death..."* at every manifestation – COL 3:5-10
- Believers are to *"Put-off [from themselves]"* ... – EPH 4:22

- *Good...* – *"Agathos"* – *"Divine Good"* – *always the word used in reference to God...* – That which is *"beneficial at the root"* / inherent goodness – adding to the best interest / needs of others

This arises from the "New Creation" within the Believer...

- You were: *"Created righteous and holy"* – EPH 4:23-24
- This "NC" must be *"Put-on..."* – COL 3:10; 12-17
- These qualities must be Encouraged & Developed... – GAL 5:22-25 / 2 PETER 1:5-8
- We are to *"Walk by [the leading of] the Spirit..."* – GAL 5:16; 18

This IS the WILL OF GOD!