

How to Overcome Evil...With Good (1 John 2:12-14, Romans 12:9-21)

Introduction: *The principle of exchange.*

Putting off the “old man” by putting on the “new”—stealing to be exchanged for giving, corrupt words for words of grace (See, for example, Eph 4:22-33, Col 3:1-17).



1. The exchange principle at work (*mortification & vivification*)

Exchange cursing for blessing enemies, conceit for humility, repay evil with good, do not avenge but rather bless your enemies in sincere love.

2. Do you repay evil with (a) *evil*, (b) *nothing*, or (c) *good*?

- “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing” (1Pe 3:8-9, see 2:20-23).
- “See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all” (1Thess 5:15).
- “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you” (Luke 6:27-36).
- “If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again” (Exod 23:4-5).
- “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Prov 15:1).
- “He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities” (Ps 103:10).
- “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:32).
- “When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly” (1Cor 4:12-13).

Objections

1. Doesn't this mean that Christians can't serve in the police or military? *No!* Compare Rom 13:1-5. So far are Christian military and policemen from *not* loving others, they are putting their own lives in danger in order to be “God's ministers to you for good.”

2. This isn't going to work. I'm still going to suffer. You better believe it!

“He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel” (Gen 3:15). “The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom 16:20). Your feet, your suffering, but your victory.

Conclusion: *Examples*

“My husband and our children have sacrificed their lives for this nation; India is my home. I hope to be here and continue to serve the needy. ... I have only one message for the people of India. I'm not bitter. Neither am I angry. But I have one great desire: that each citizen of this country should establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. ... Let us burn hatred and spread the flame of Christ's love” (Gladys Staines, widow of Graham Staines, murdered Jan, 1999). Compare the early Roman church, Wishart, Calvin and the reformers. “Many have learned how to offer the other cheek, but do not know how to love him by whom they were struck” (Augustine).

Jesus Christ. ... Let us burn hatred and spread the flame of Christ's love” (Gladys Staines, widow of Graham Staines, murdered Jan, 1999). Compare the early Roman church, Wishart, Calvin and the reformers. “Many have learned how to offer the other cheek, but do not know how to love him by whom they were struck” (Augustine).