

The Man of God Part 2; Romans 12:14-21

I. Directions

- A. Before I ever get in the van, I already know the route to my destination
- B. Mapquest, Google Maps, Yahoo! maps, Rand McNally, Maps.com, Bing Maps
 - 1. So many people want to know how to get where they want to go that all the major companies have developed websites that show you not only the fastest way, but also without highways, without tolls, find scenic places on the way, etc.
 - 2. I haven't covered companies like Travelocity, Expedia, Orbitz, Priceline, Kayak (these are pay websites)
 - 3. These companies are competing to show you the best way to get where you are trying to go
- C. It is your task to determine which site has the best information for you
- D. There is no question that the best "driving directions" for Christians are the scriptures
 - 1. 2 Timothy 3:16; All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
- E. So when searching for the Christian "road map" Romans 12:9-21 is a great beginning
 - 1. We covered verses 9-13 last week
 - 2. Holy, loving, diligent, hopeful, gracious
 - 3. This week we will complete the study with verses 14-21

II. Blessing

- A. Romans 12:14; Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- B. Bless - where we get the English word "eulogy"
 - 1. To eulogize someone is to say good things, to honor them
 - 2. Honor those who persecute you
 - 3. Matthew 5:43-48; ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- C. Curse - it is not simply an insult
 - 1. It is a wish that God consign them to unmitigated wrath and punishment for ever in hell - *The Gospel of God: Romans*, R.C. Sproul
 - 2. Who are we to desire that someone be damned when we have escaped God's wrath; not through anything that we have done, but only through God's grace
- D. We must be very careful with what and how we say things
- E. James reminds us of the power of the tongue
 - 1. James 3:2; For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.

2. James 3:8–10; ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

F. The Man of God is one who uses his tongue to honor others regardless of the circumstances

III. Compassion

A. Romans 12:15; Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

B. Empathy and sympathy

1. Sympathy means pity or sorrow for someone else's misfortune
2. Empathy means to feel with another person
3. It takes real sensitivity, real grace and discipline to listen and watch for the moods of other people, and to express empathy
4. Compassion - "moved in the inwards parts"

C. The best example of compassion comes from our savior

1. Matthew 9:35–36; ³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

2. Matthew 20:29–34; ²⁹ And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰ And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³¹ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" ³² And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³³ They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." ³⁴ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

3. Luke 7:11–13; ¹¹ Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep."

D. The man of God is compassionate, feeling the joys and ills, moved in his inward parts to provide help

IV. Humble

A. Romans 12:16; Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

B. Live in Harmony

1. There is a difference between an argument and an argumentative spirit
2. An argument is an attempt to get at the truth through the exchange of ideas, through criticism of false ideas and so on.
3. It is arrogance that produces an argumentative spirit.
4. Pride is seen where we are not interested in anybody else's opinion, and where we just assume that anybody that disagrees with us must be wrong.

5. What Paul is saying is that we need to be teachable.

6. We are to have convictions, but those convictions have to be established on a sound basis and received with a humble heart and a humble attitude.

7. It is difficult to be firm in our convictions and yet, at the same time, to hold those convictions with humility.

C. Haughty - conceited, to think highly of yourself and your opinions

D. Humble - To make low, get along

1. Matthew 23:12; **Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**

2. Philippians 2:5–8; ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

E. Jesus (God), while in human form, did not consider himself equal to... himself.

F. The man of God is humble, considering others above himself

V. Non-Retaliatory

A. Romans 12:17–20; 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.”

1. I never have the right to do wrong

2. I always have the obligation to do what is right

B. Live at peace

1. ‘It is one thing if I give offence to somebody; it is another thing if a person takes offence at what I do.’ John Murray

2. Living peaceably with all does not mean we sacrifice truth and morals

3. Many will take offense at a Christian's actions, especially if they disagree with His teachings

4. If we have legitimately offended someone, then we must become the peacemaker

5. Matthew 5:9; **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”**

6.

C. Leave it to God

D. Kindness verses retaliation

1. Paul almost directly quotes Proverbs 25:21-22

2. There are a few ways to look at this

a) A cultural idiom which meant that kindness is the best way to turn an enemy into a friend

b) “burning coals” seem to represent shame at one's improper actions which are so clearly revealed in light of another's love and forgiveness (cf.

Ambrosiaster, Augustine and Jerome)

3.However you look at it, kindness is still the Christian response to entrenched evil

E.Matthew 5:44; **But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,**

F.The man of God repays kindness for evil

VI.Overcoming

A.Romans 12:21; Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

B.It is so easy to abandon our Christian principles in light of opposition and persecution

C.It is so easy to let our tempers get excited at offenses given to us (real or perceived)

D.“Maintain your Christian principles amidst all opposition, and thus show the power of the Gospel.” Barnes

E.“Our response to unfair treatment will determine and reflect the level of our own inner peace and joy. Bitterness is a spiritual cancer. Believers must give it to God.”
Bob Utley

F.God, in response to our evil, has poured out goodness upon us.

G.We are to be imitators of God and of Christ.

H.We are to show in our relationships with our fellow human beings, the same attitude and behavioral pattern that God has shown to us.

I. 1 John 5:4–5; For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

VII.The Man of God

A.Holy, loving, diligent, hopeful, gracious

B.Blessing, compassionate, humble, non-retaliatory, overcoming