

LOVE

Without Hypocrisy

(in the book of Romans)

66 – Last verse!

★ **LAST VERSE** ★

in our study of:

Sincere,
unhypocritical
LOVE

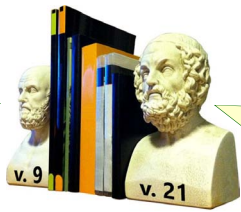
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Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:21 (NIV)

At the beginning, we saw that v. 21 was like one of the "bookends" to the whole passage.

"Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."



"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

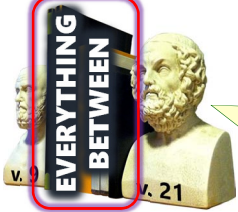
THE FIRST & LAST VERSES:

– focus on the issue of **EVIL vs. GOOD**.

Everything in-between (= the "books") taught and guided us in the pursuit of what was good.

"Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."

EVERYTHING BETWEEN




"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

EVERYTHING BETWEEN:

– teaches us and guides us to the right "attitude" and "actions."

Doing the GOOD of vs. 9 and 21 becomes increasingly difficult as we progress through the passage.

HATE EVIL, CLING TO GOOD



OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD

★ THIS REPRESENTS A GENERAL TENDENCY. ★

(People are not always consistent.)

DOING GOOD

INCREASING DIFFICULTY

v. 10-13 – In the Family of Believers.

LEAST DIFFICULT:

When among genuine Christians, at least they're trying to do these things!

v. 14-16 – With All People.

MORE DIFFICULT,

because this includes fake "Christians" and unsaved people who aren't too concerned about these issues.

v. 17-20 – With Enemies.

MOST DIFFICULT

– these people are actually opposing you.

(v. 19-20)

EXTREMELY DIFFICULT

– when justice itself seems to fail.

DOING GOOD
INCREASING DIFFICULTY

v. 9

v. 21

v. 10-13 – In the family believe... Least difficult. When are genuine Christians least trying to do these things?

BUT SOME OF MY BIGGEST PROBLEMS ARE CAUSED BY CHURCH-GOERS!!!

20 rely

ail.

PROBLEMS INSIDE THE CHURCH? HOW CAN THIS BE?

- ✓ It may be due to "newborns" – who are just beginning to learn what it means to "follow Jesus."
- ✓ But there may be more serious issues...

WE LIVE IN A DAY IN WHICH MOST PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH IGNORE WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT:

- **THE DIFFERENCE:** between genuine followers of Jesus and fakes.
- **THE FACT:** that those who follow Jesus will not continue in a life of sin.

TO SAY THEY ARE "UNSAVED" WOULD HURT THEIR FEELINGS.

BESIDES, I WANT TO BELIEVE THEY ARE SAVED!

I KNOW I DON'T LIVE LIKE A CHRISTIAN... BUT I AM A CHRISTIAN!

★ **WORSE YET...** ★

WE LIVE IN A DAY IN WHICH MOST LEADERS IN THE CHURCH IGNORE WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT:

IT'S NOT JUST THE PEOPLE SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE! ☹️

- **THE DIFFERENCE:** between genuine followers of Jesus and fakes.
- **THE FACT:** that those who follow Jesus will not continue in a life of sin.

IF I HURT THEIR FEELINGS, THEY MIGHT STOP COMING TO CHURCH.

THERE WOULD BE LESS MONEY IN THE OFFERING PLATE!

I KNOW THEY DON'T LIVE LIKE CHRISTIANS ... BUT I DON'T WANT THEM TO ACCUSE ME OF "JUDGING"!

In many churches, the situation is similar to Old Testament Israel:

The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way.

Jeremiah 5:31a (NIV)

.....

But what will you do in the end?

Jeremiah 5:31b (NIV)

Few people seem concerned about the last part of the verse...

DOING GOOD
INCREASING DIFFICULTY

v. 9

v. 21

v. 10-13 – In the family of believe... Least difficult. genuine Christians, at least they're trying to do these things!

What we said here applies ONLY when people:

- ✓ take seriously God's Word and
- ✓ admit their need to do what it says.

SUCH PEOPLE WILL DO THESE THINGS, EVEN WHEN THOSE AROUND THEM DON'T.

"Newborns" in God's family don't always know how to live...

These two women needed to learn what we've been studying:

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.
Philip. 4:2 (NASB)

The difference between fakes and genuine followers of Jesus is this:

✓ **Those who are following Jesus are willing to learn these things and do them.** (The fakes aren't.)

ARE YOU WILLING TO FOLLOW JESUS?

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.
Philip. 4:2 (NASB)

**IF THIS WERE YOU...
Would you be like THIS?**

IF THIS IS A PART OF WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW JESUS...

... THEN WE HAD BETTER LEARN TO GET ALONG TOGETHER!

ARE YOU WILLING TO FOLLOW JESUS?

Or would you be like THIS?

SHE STARTED IT... SO UNTIL SHE SAYS SHE'S SORRY, I WON'T TALK TO HER.

SHE'S JUST A STUPID JERK. I CAN BE SAVED WITHOUT GETTING ALONG WITH STUPID JERKS!

I DON'T NEED TO CHANGE... SHE DOES!

ARE YOU WILLING TO FOLLOW JESUS?

Sometimes the disagreement ISN'T caused by sin.

✓ **The issue may be how you respond to it – in a righteous way or a sinful way.**

RESULT? BOTH ACCOMPLISHED GOOD!

They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left ... [for] ... Syria and Cilicia...
Acts 15:39-41 (NIV)

**DO YOU CLAIM TO BE FOLLOWING JESUS...
BUT CAN'T GET ALONG WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS?**

If so, then you need to STOP being overcome by evil ...

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
Romans 12:21 (NIV)

... and START overcoming evil with good.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THEM? DON'T THEY ALSO NEED TO CHANGE?

You will be judged only for your own conduct.

- ✓ Your obedience is not to be based on whether or not they obey.

BESIDES...

- ✓ You need to overcome the evil in YOUR own heart.
- ✓ Then when you've done that, maybe your good may overcome some of THEIR evil.

AS WE SAW

LAST WEEK

↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓

GOD CALLS US TO BE DIFFERENT

(It's part of what it means to "follow" Jesus.)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN

TO BE "DIFFERENT"?

↓↓↓↓↓ ↓↓↓↓↓↓

THIS **NOT THIS**

SCRIPTURE SAYS I NEED TO CHANGE. THEREFORE, I WILL WORK ON DOING SO!

I'M SAVED, WHETHER I CHANGE OR NOT. THEREFORE I DO NOT NEED TO WORK ON CHANGING!

[SOMEONE WHO FOLLOWS JESUS] [A FAKE "CHRISTIAN"]

YOU

Can learn to follow JESUS ...

↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓

Even if **THEY*** don't.

* (The others in the church who claim to be "Christians.")

So if your "church" is a mess...

- Don't add to the problem.
- Clean up your own part of the mess (whether or not anyone else cleans up theirs).
- THEN encourage others to do well.

=====

- If the situation remains a confusing mess, God will sort things out on the "day of wrath."

... leave room for God's wrath, ...

Romans 12:19b (NIV)

Your Mission...

BE DIFFERENT!

FOLLOW JESUS **AND** OVERCOME EVIL!

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:21 (NIV)

Credits

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Your Mission...

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

WHEN THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU MAKE OBEYING THIS VERSE A CHALLENGE

It's easy to expect *unsaved* people to make obeying this verse difficult.
But what about people *in the church*?

"BROTHERS IN UNITY" ... OR NOT

- It's wonderful when harmony and unity exist within the church; it's terrible when conflict and discord are present.
- David wrote a Psalm that expresses how pleasant unity and harmony are (Psalm 133); Jesus prayed that his people would have perfect unity (John 17:22-23).
- Sadly, this unity is not always present. Perhaps most distressing is when a friend turns into an enemy - such as David experienced (Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14, 20-21).
- Jesus experienced the *worst* example of being turned against by a friend. Judas, one of his twelve closest friends (Luke 6:13), who was trusted with the group's money (John 13:29a), who was among those chosen to proclaim the good news about the God's kingdom and to perform miracles (Mark 6:7; Luke 9:2) ... for a small amount of money, he was willing to hand Jesus over to those who would kill him (Mark 14).

THE ISSUE

There are a number of reasons that disunity may occur within the church. (Two main reasons are described below.) But when people are actually *following* Jesus (which *all* saved people will attempt to do), the disunity will be temporary. If it is just a matter of disagreement, they will work together for a solution. If it involves sin, there will be repentance. Even if, for some reason, reconciliation does not seem possible, there will at least be an attempt by those who are saved to resolve issues.

"Newborn" Christians.

- People who have just become saved will often *not* understand all that it means to "follow" Jesus. Much of the New Testament is directed toward them. (Example: 1 Corinthians.) They need to *learn*, and will be *willing* to do so. As they learn, and put to practice what they learn, issues of disunity and conflict will diminish.
- Even the apostles had to learn! Example: While Jesus was still training them, they had arguments (Mark 9:33-34)!
- Scripture tells us that we must *grow* to spiritual maturity. Remaining a "newborn" is *not* an option (Hebrews 5:11-6:3; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18).
- Once we are mature, we must be patient and encourage those who have further to grow (Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:14). Growing is not always easy (James 1:2-8)!

Fake "Christians."

- These are the ones who cause disharmony and divisions, and do *not* repent. Scripture describes them as divisive people, false brothers, wandering from the faith, people who persecute God's people, etc. We are to warn them (Titus 3:10-11); remove them from the church (1 Corinthians 5:13b); keep away from them (Romans 16:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6); etc.