

## **ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH**

### **X. Righteousness Applied To Life And Service, Romans 12:1-15:13**

#### **C. Righteousness Applied To Relationships**

**(Romans 12:9-21)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. The theme of the epistle to the Romans is that God's righteousness is available to man by faith from start to finish (Romans 1:16-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 441).
- B. This belief is often not accepted in Christendom: Some claim that one must have faith plus works to be justified, and others say that though we are justified by faith, we cannot righteously live a godly life by faith.
- C. Having explained the theology of God's righteousness applied to justifying believers in Christ, Paul showed how that righteousness applies to one's life and service as a Christian in Romans 12:1-15:13.
- D. Romans 12:9-21 shows how God's righteousness is to be applied to relationships. We view it for our insight:

#### **II. Righteousness Applied To Relationships, Romans 12:9-21 ESV.**

- A. God's righteousness is to be applied to our relationship with ourselves, Romans 12:11, 12:
  - 1. We should not be slack in zeal, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, Romans 12:11.
  - 2. In attitude, we should rejoice in our hope of our eternal future of blessing with God, we should be patient when facing tribulations and be constantly in prayer, Romans 12:12.
- B. God's righteousness is to be applied to our relationships with fellow believers, Romans 12:10, 13, 15-21:
  - 1. We need to love one another with a brotherly affection and outdo one another in honoring others, v. 10.
  - 2. We should donate to meet the material needs of fellow believers and seek to show hospitality, Rom. 12:13.
  - 3. We need to be sensitive to the feelings of fellow believers, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep, Romans 12:15.
  - 4. We need to live in harmony with each other by not being haughty, but associating with the lowly, v. 16.
  - 5. In place of repaying evil for evil, we need to focus on what is the honorable thing to do before all, v. 17.
  - 6. As much as is possible in us, we should try to live peaceably with all other believers, Romans 12:18.
  - 7. When wronged, we should never avenge ourselves, but leave room for God's wrath to be expressed, for Deuteronomy 32:35 and Psalm 94:1 present God as claiming that vengeance is His, that He will repay, Romans 12:19. Accordingly, if our enemy is hungry, we should feed him, if thirsty, we should give him something to drink, for by doing so we will "heap burning coals on his head." (Romans 12:20) "The coals on the head may refer to a ritual in Egypt in which a person showed his repentance by carrying a pan of burning charcoal on his head" so that "(h)elping rather than cursing an enemy may cause him to be ashamed and penitent," Ibid., p. 490. In essence, then, when wronged, we should not ourselves be overcome by evil by reacting with vindictiveness, but overcome the wrong by doing what is good, v. 21.
- C. God's righteousness is to be applied to our relationships with people in the world, Romans 12:9, 14, 18-21:
  - 1. We should let our love be genuine toward others in the world, Romans 12:9a.
  - 2. We should also abhor what is evil but hold fast to what is good in relating to the world, Romans 12:9b.
  - 3. When persecuted, we should bless and not curse those who persecute us, Romans 12:14.
  - 4. As in "B,6" above, as much as is possible in us, we should try to live peaceably with the world, v. 18.
  - 5. When wronged by unsaved people in the world, as in the case of "B,7" above, we should never avenge ourselves, but leave room for God's wrath to be expressed. We should help instead of curse our enemies, hopefully causing them to be ashamed and penitent that we not be overcome with evil vindictiveness, but overcome our having been unjustly wronged by doing what is good, Romans 12:19-21.

***Lesson:*** *In applying God's righteousness in relationships by relying on the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:3-4), (1) with ourselves, we should not be slack in zeal, but fervent, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, constantly in prayer. (2) Toward fellow believers, we should love one another with a brotherly affection and honor each other, donating to meet the material needs of others, showing hospitality, being sensitive with the feelings of others, living in harmony not in pride, but in humility, not repaying evil for evil, but doing what is honorable before all, striving to live peaceably with other believers, leaving vengeance for God to handle while overcoming evil with good. (3) Toward the world, we should genuinely love others, abhorring evil and holding firmly to the good, blessing and not cursing when persecuted, leaving vengeance with the Lord as we overcome evil with good.*

***Application:*** *May we heed Paul's directives in relating to ourselves, to other believers and to others in the world.*