

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH

Part VI: God's Righteousness Applied To Practical Living, Romans 12:1-15:13

C. God's Righteousness Applied To Proper Social Relationships

(Romans 12:9-21)

I. Introduction

- A. After a believer applies God's righteousness in his position in Christ to a right relation to himself (Romans 12:1-2) and a right relation to the Church (Romans 12:3-8), Romans 12:9-21 calls him to apply that righteousness to proper social relationships, be they with fellow Christians or with the unsaved.
- B. We thus view Romans 12:9-21 for insight on proper social relationships as based on our position in Christ:

II. God's Righteousness Applied To Proper Social Relationships, Romans 12:9-21.

- A. Believers need to apply God's positional righteousness by loving other people with a genuine love, v. 9-10:
 - 1. Paul directed that believers relate to one another with an unhypocritical (*anyrokritos*) love (Romans 12:9a), the word "love" translating *agape*, the absolute kind of love God has for the world (John 3:16) as opposed to an emotionally-laced, subjective feeling of endearment as in *phileo*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 564; 330; Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the N. T., 1973, p. 41-44.
 - 2. Paul then explained how such a genuine, absolute kind of love is to be expressed, Romans 12:9b-10:
 - a. This is a love that hates evil and cleaves to what is good, Romans 12:9b; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 488-489. It is thus a love that objectively obeys God (1 John 5:3) versus emotional attraction alone.
 - b. Toward believers, such a genuine, absolute love is to be expressed as devotion to a family member, the Greek term *philostorgoi* being used (Ibid., p. 489; Romans 12:10a) and explained in Romans 12:10b as brotherly love toward one another, humbly honoring one another, Romans 12:10c.
- B. Believers then need to apply God's positional righteousness to exhibiting winsome attitudes, Rom. 12:11-12:
 - 1. They should have a servant attitude toward other people, Romans 12:11d, described in v. 11a,b,c:
 - a. Believers need to have a servant attitude toward others that never lacks in diligence, v. 11a; Ibid.
 - b. Believers need to have a servant attitude toward others that is fervent in motivation, v. 11b; Ibid.
 - c. Believers need to have a servant attitude that always focuses on their accountability to God, v. 11c; Ibid.
 - 2. They should be joyful in the hope that they have in Christ, Romans 12:12a.
 - 3. They should be patient in affliction they face in life and in relationships, Romans 12:12b; Ibid.
 - 4. They should be steadfastly exercising prayer to God "for wisdom, guidance, and strength," v. 12c; Ibid.
- C. Believers need to share their of material wealth with others in need, Romans 12:13a.
- D. Believers need to pursue "friendliness to strangers," being hospitable toward others, Romans 12:13b; Ibid.
- E. Toward believers or unbelievers, a believer needs to apply God's positional righteousness as follows, v. 14-16:
 - 1. He must bless those who persecute him and not curse them, Romans 12:14.
 - 2. He must exhibit genuine sympathy toward others, rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn, Romans 12:15; Ibid.
 - 3. He must live in harmony with other believers (Romans 12:16a) detailed in Romans 12:16b,c,d:
 - a. The believer should not be proud in relating to other people, Romans 12:16b.
 - b. Rather, he should be willing to associate with believers of low estate in this life, Romans 12:16c.
 - c. In summary, then, he should not be conceited in his relationships with other people, Romans 12:16d.
- F. In relationship to wrongdoers, Paul directed that the believer function with true wisdom, Romans 12:17-21:
 - 1. Believers must not repay evil for evil, but do what is right before all men, Romans 12:17; Ibid., p. 490.
 - 2. Believers must thus do all they can to live at peace with all men, saved and unsaved, Romans 12:18.
 - 3. In cases of suffering wrong, the believer is not to avenge himself, but leave room for God's wrath to be expressed toward the wrongdoers, for God has promised to take righteous vengeance, Romans 12:19.
 - 4. In addition, the believer should treat wrongdoers with kindness possibly to bring them to repentance, thus overcoming evil with good versus being overcome by evil, Romans 12:20-21; Ibid.

Lesson: *The believer is to apply His positional righteousness in relating to other people so as to love others with a genuine love, to exhibit winsome attitudes, to share of his material goods with others in need, to pursue friendliness with strangers, to humbly bless, sympathize and live in harmony with others while overcoming evil with good in relating to those who wrong him.*

Application: *May we apply our positional righteousness in Christ to relate socially to others as God wills.*