**The Real God Series October 23, 2022**

**Why Doesn’t God Punish Evil Doers? – Romans 12:17-21**

Ultimate Justice is **Not for Humankind** Romans 12:17a

* “Never pay back evil for evil” (v. 17a)
  + This is the responsibility of government / court system to enact justice in our culture (see Romans 13 for details)
  + Matthew 5:44–45   
    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 causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.”
  + 1 Peter 3:8–9   
    8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

Live to be an **Example to Others** Romans 12:17b

* “Respect what is right in the sight of all men” (17b)
  + Respect is an on-going action: not just one time and means to give careful consideration to
  + Christians set the example of purity and rightness in words, deeds, and thoughts

Live to Be a **Peacemaker** Romans 12:18

* “Be at peace with all men” (18b)
  + Peace means lack of conflict
  + It also means to create an environment that is conducive to working together and so that others will see the peace of God that rests upon you
    - The world knows how to react in anger, frustration, and humiliation
    - Christians model the stark contrast to that in being at peace

God Will **Avenge all Evil** Romans 12:19-20

* He will one day repay all the evil of the world, as His full wrath and fury is unleashed upon those who fail to repent and turn to Christ
* There are two options
  + Individual’s bear God’s wrath for sin (Rev. 20:11-15)
  + Transfer God’s wrath to His Son where He bore the payment for sin (1 John 2:2)
  + See Romans 2:4, Ezekiel 33:11, 1 Thessalonians 1:4-9

Rather than Retaliate for Evil, Christians Respond   
**as God Does** Romans 12:21

* Christians show God’s love for others when responding to hatred, anger, hurt, and wrong with love and good works
  + Ephesians 2:10a  
    We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.
  + There is no limit given by God when we are to cease doing the good works or to cease loving

**What does this mean for me?**

* Never seek to pay back someone who has hurt you in any way
  + It may be necessary to distance yourself from the person to keep from abuse
* Ask the Lord to draw the person who has hurt you to Himself for salvation, if they are not Christians
  + You cannot save anyone from their sins, but your love can point them to the love of Christ who died for them
* Trust in the Lord to bring about perfect justice in His way, in His time, for all evil in the world
  + Personal attacks, of all kinds, will be made right by God who is perfectly just
* If / when you are tempted to believe God is not just or fair, consider what Christ has done for you on the cross when He died as your substitute
  + Was that act, by God, just and fair, for Jesus?

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**What does this mean for me?**

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