

# How To Prove God's Will Is Best

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**Text: Romans 12:21 "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."**

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This message precedes: "Holy and acceptable unto God"

## **Proving God's will is perfect**

The importance of being a church family and members of covenant cannot be overstated. We must work together and coordinate together. We must rely on the strengths and skills of each other.

After elaborating on the Gospel message in his letter, talking about the need to be justified in God's eyes, how to be justified, the permanence of justification by grace, and the universal sameness of justification for Jews and Gentiles, Paul writes:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Romans 12:1).

In my previous message, I explained why it was reasonable to be a living sacrifice to God. And of course, this sacrifice means sacrificing the pursuits and inclinations of the flesh to sin so that we can conform our bodies to the born-again man within, which is made in the likeness of Christ. For this reason, Paul admonishes in Romans 12:2,

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Believers should conform themselves to the image of Christ. Christ has done the work within us, now it is up to us to do the work on the outside until He redeems our bodies. Making the body like Christ is no small matter and no easy feat. But He exhorts us to do so because it is possible.

But we must be convinced that it is possible, in order to make it happen.

## **How to prove God's will is best**

And so, Paul lists attributes of Christlikeness in Romans 12. Most of these qualities involve qualities that affect relationships. Consider the list and think about what a nice person such a person would be. Believers should be:

3-8, Humble team participants who encourage others to use their gifts to be their best in serving Christ.

9, Have sincere, sacrificial love for others for their benefit not for personal gain.

9, Abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good. In the context of loving sincerely, this would mean doing good for others rather than harming them.

10, Kind affection for one another. A family love for one another builds and strengthens the church.

11, Fervent not slothful in serving the Lord. This is referring quality and zeal in serving God. Colossians 3:23, Paul says, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Imagine changing the tire on a car like many people serve God. It would take weeks and maybe months to get anything done. Lazy people who do sloppy work are unreliable and fail in doing anything worthwhile. This is not saying they should be looked down on. Paul's command is to not be this way as well as to minister lovingly to those who are this way. Remember, this is a list of attributes that prove that God's will is good, acceptable, and perfect. If God is so good and worthy, and His work is so important, then believers should be showing a zeal and eagerness to serve Him.

12, Another set of qualities mentioned is that believers should be known for rejoicing in hope, being patient in tribulation, and continuing instant in prayer. There is hope in Christ because He is in control, He is trustworthy, and He has promised salvation and eternal blessings. This makes enduring tribulations possible and prayer necessary.

13, Believers should be known for their care for one another and for their hospitality to strangers. The purpose of such loving generosity is to show the goodness of God's generous and gracious gifts to us. It is becoming of Christians to be Christ-like in this way and to reach the world by freely giving to the needy and befriending strangers. Gracious giving is uncommon in a selfish and greedy world, so preaching the message of God's love and grace in action, with wisdom and humility, is a great testimony to the goodness of God.

14, says to "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not." This is "Generous grace." Demonstrating the generous grace of God to other believers and to strangers is a wonderful part of a believer's testimony, but the next step involves blessing those who persecute you. Jesus said in John 12:47 "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." Jesus blessed His persecutors with a ministry of wisdom, truth, and graciousness; so too His disciples should do likewise. The goal is to win souls and to make disciples.

15, says, Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. There is an appropriate quote attributed by some to an anonymous Swedish proverb says that joy shared is twice the joy, and sorrow shared is half the sorrow. This quality of encouragement and comfort is a testimony of God's goodness. The willingness of Christians to share in the success of others heightens the experience of joy and provokes a desire to be a blessing to others. Likewise, the willingness to help console those in sorrow is an expression of God's love for those hurting and grieving. God's love is shown through Christian lives as they express His will through them. That will is to serve and bless others, to be helpful, and to bring pleasure. God's will is truly good.

16, says As believers, we should have the same mind in Christ. Unity among believers comes with individual unity with Christ. As all members strive to have the mind of Christ, all will share the same values and vision as Christ. Paul wrote in First Corinthians 1:10 "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Humility is an important of achieving unity. Humility is a realistic perspective of yourself and of others. It is the ability to see yourself and others as Christ sees you. It is the willingness to acknowledge your own needs and inadequacies, and it is the acceptance to value others as Christ does. It is a desire to help others even as you appreciate help from others. It is a desire to minister to anyone for their benefit. And it allows an understanding that God gives a church gifts to be used. Arrogance blinds "glory hogs" from seeing the gifts and the recognizing the value of gifts that God gives to church.

17-21 Another Christian virtue that Paul lists in Romans 12 for us to manifest is the characteristic of overcoming evil with good. God's will is good, acceptable and perfect. It is the best way to live. It is the best way to find happiness. It is the best way to enjoy life even in a cruel and evil world ruled by Satan. Regardless of circumstances and choices made by others, Christians can choose to live for God and do right.

Choosing to do good in spite of evil, mistreatment, injustice, and tribulation is a victory for good triumphing over evil. This is how good overcomes evil. Resisting the temptation to succumb to evil impulses is a demonstration of unnatural self-control and discipline. But by God's grace, Christians have the power to do good regardless of the evil.

We are called to reconcile men with God and to make peace. With this in mind, we are not to live in the world with hatred and vigilantism in mind. We are not called to be participants in evil and hatred. We are called to demonstrate God's goodness ... a contrast to the world's evil.

And another more important lesson in overcoming evil with good is how to react to lesser evils, such as a bad look, a rude comment, or an irresponsible behavior that affects you. In spite of what others do, always show the love and control of Christ in your life. This is the daily exercise of overcoming evil with good.

## Conclusion/Application

1. Incorporating these characteristics into our lives is honoring to Christ. For all that He has done for us to make justification and righteousness possible in our lives, it is only reasonable that we should do our best to manifest His work outwardly in our lives.
2. Conforming to Christ is reasonable, it is possible, and it is expected.
3. Should we do anything less for Him?

Next message: Holy and acceptable unto God

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