



F. Y. C.

For Your Consideration

❖ AUGUST 2018 ❖

The Two Are Not to Be Confused

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

Romans 12:19

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For it [civil government] is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.

Romans 13:4

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The first passage of Scripture is addressing personal vengeance (*your own revenge*). Individual Christians should yield to Lord in this matter. He can do a much better and thorough job at repaying evil.

The second passage of Scripture addresses God-appointed authority vested in civil governments. They are duly authorized by God to avenge evil doers. (*a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.*)

The first prohibits personal revenge, the second authorizes civil avenging of evil doers. Here is the full text in Romans 13:1-4:

¹ Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. ² Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. ³ For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; ⁴ for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.

This does not say that only certain forms of government are ordained of God. God established and upholds the principle of civil government even though some governments do not fulfill His desires or are evil.

REVENGE: To inflict punishment in return for injury or insult is bittersweet. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

Romans 12:17

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

There is no better place to see unconditional love than in the Bible. In the Old Testament God's unconditional love is evident. His people were disobedient and were chastised by Him, yet His love remained constant. The last book, Malachi begins with *"I have loved you," says the LORD.*

In the New Testament God's unconditional love is clearly demonstrated. John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."* God gave His Son to redeem sinful man. *But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).* Ephesians 2:4-5 John personified God when he wrote, *God IS love.* 1 John 4:16.

While His love is unconditional, His acceptance is conditional. God refusing to accept sinful behavior does not in any way diminish His unconditional love.

'LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY, ACCEPT UNCONDITIONALLY'

Today unconditional love is said by some to include "unconditional acceptance." This is a flawed definition made to garner acceptance for immoral and sexual perversions. It's an attempt to make the term mean what they choose it to mean. This reminds me of a quote in Alice in Wonderland: *"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."*

Unconditional love does not include unconditional acceptance. Refusing to accept or condone unacceptable behavior does not diminish one's love for others. God makes a distinction and so should we.

ACCEPTANCE IS CONDITIONAL

There are conditions for acceptance by the living God. The familiar passage in John 3:16 speaks of God's universal, unconditional love: *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"*— yet there are conditions for acceptance — *"that **whoever believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life."* Later in verse 36 it is made very clear: *"**He who believes in the Son** has eternal life; but **he who does not obey** the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."*

*And **without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God **must believe** that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* Hebrews 11:6

THE GOOD NEWS

God's love is unconditional. It's freely given to all mankind. God's acceptance is available to all. God's invitation is extended to all. *"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* Matthew 11:28-30

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.

Isaiah 5:20-21

SOUL

The use of the word “soul” is determined by the context. Below are different uses of the word in the New Testament. By noting the context misunderstandings can be avoided.

REFERENCES

Greek: *psucheô* translated SOUL or LIFE in various places.

IMMATERIAL, INVISIBLE PART OF MAN

MATTHEW 10:28 “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the **soul**; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both **soul** and body in hell.”

MARK 8:36 “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his **soul**?

ACTS 2:27 Because Thou wilt not abandon my **soul** to hades, nor allow thy Holy One to undergo decay.

INWARD MAN, SEAT OF NEW LIFE

LUKE 21:19 “By your endurance you will gain your **lives**. (with) **MATTHEW 10:39** “He who has found his **life** shall lose it, and he who has lost his **life** for My sake shall find it.”

1 PETER 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the **soul**.

3 JOHN 1:2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your **soul** prospers.

DISEMBODED MAN

REVELATION 6:9 And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the **souls** of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained.

NATURAL LIFE OF BODY

ACTS 20:10 But Paul went down and fell upon him and after embracing him, he said, “Do not be troubled, for his **life** is in him.”

MATTHEW 2:20 “Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child’s **life** are dead.”

ANIMATE CREATURE (HUMAN OR OTHER)

1 CORINTHIANS 15:45 So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living **soul**.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

EQUIVALENT OF PERSONAL PRONOUN

HEBREWS 10:38 but my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, my **soul** has no pleasure in him.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:15 And I will most gladly spend and be expended for your **souls**. If I love you the more, am I to be loved the less?

1 PETER 4:19 Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their **souls** to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

2 PETER 2:8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous **soul** tormented day after day with their lawless deeds),

Seat of personality, sentiment, will, purpose, appetite.

– Vines Expository Dictionary of the New Testament



Ponder This

GRATITUDE

Luke 17:11-19

Ten leprous men asked Jesus for help, and He used his miraculous power to heal them. Only one turned back to thank Him. Nine had enough faith to be healed, but not enough gratitude to express thanks. Jesus didn't demand that they thanked Him, but it was justly due. Their actions demonstrated their ungratefulness. They had great appreciation for being healed, but none for their Healer.

What shows a lack of gratitude? When response is: "It really wasn't that much." Or, "You only did what any Christian should do!" Or, "You owed it to me." Or, "I deserved it." Or (the most flagrant of all), Silence!

What are some ways of showing gratitude? First and foremost, express it, don't just think it. (Others can't read your mind.) A sincere, kind word of appreciation. A card containing words of heart-felt gratitude (make it hand-written). A phone call saying "Thank you! It meant a lot to me."

Expressions of gratitude benefit both the one helped and the helper.

What are some ways of showing gratitude to the Lord? There are many, here are a few: Cherish the Word of God – read it often, meditate on it frequently. Acknowledge Christ's sacrifice in weekly communion with other Christians. Show appreciation for His church by being an active member of a local congregation. Show gratitude for your salvation by sharing the Good News with others. Living for Jesus each and every day: Doing His will.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Colossians 3:15

Singing with the Understanding ...



1 Corinthians 14:15

TRUST AND OBEY

OUR DAILY WALK

When we walk with the Lord
in the light of His Word
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

OUR DIFFICULT TIMES

Not a shadow can rise,
not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt nor a fear,
not a sigh nor a tear,
Can abide while we trust and obey.

OUR TOTAL SUBMISSION

But we never can prove
the delights of His love
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor He shows and
the joy He bestows,
Are for them who will trust and obey.

OUR WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW

Then in fellowship sweet
we will sit at His feet,
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
What He says we will do,
where He sends we will go
Never fear, only trust and obey.

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