

After God's Heart

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of not being overcome by evil, but rather overcoming evil with good, and shows how this can be done by responding to evil with kindness, compassion, and mercy.

Duration: 1:14:25

Scripture: 2 Samuel 9:1, Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:53-54, Luke 9:56, Luke 9:61, Romans 12:21

Topics: "Doing Good"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not despising or turning away from the preaching of the word of God. He warns that those who do so are the biggest fools in the world and will regret it for eternity. The preacher also highlights the need to make room for Jesus in our lives and not reject him when he comes to us. He uses biblical examples, such as Noah and King David, to illustrate the consequences of not responding to God's call and the importance of showing kindness and grace to others, even in the face of evil.

Transcript

Today we read a text from Romans 12, verse 21. Last night as I lay on my bed, not sleeping, I prayed and said, Lord, give me a text that I can share with your people tomorrow. And this is the verse I received, Romans 12, verse 21.

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Then I found two places that explain this particular text. Now we are surrounded by evil in this world.

Yes, the world is evil, it is not good. Daily one meets up with evil. But the Lord says here, do not be overcome by that, rather overcome evil with good.

It is a sad, tragic thing, if the evil that you come across conquers you, it's like death. But it's wonderful if you come across evil and conquer. Let me use the first example, the first illustration from Luke 9. The ninth chapter of Luke, verse 54.

Now, you'll have to excuse me not being able to amply prepare, but you can go and read the context, the chapter for yourself. Luke 9, verse 54. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did? But he turned and rebuked them and said, you do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them, and they went to another village. Now, this first text with which we illustrate the point, happened as Jesus was set on his way to Jerusalem. They had recently been on the Mount of Transfiguration, where Jesus had been accompanied by Moses and Elijah.

Now, they were passing by, they were going to enter into the village of the Samaritans. And he sent two messengers ahead to go and prepare the way. But these two messengers were rejected by the village of Samaria, and they said, no, we do not accept you and your Lord, your master.

Now we know that with the birth of Jesus, there was also no room in Bethlehem. Now, the Lord Jesus had been on that Mount of Transfiguration at the same place where Peter had said, let's build three cubicles, three places where you can stay. But they went down from there, and now they were rejected a place to stay in Samaria.

That was the common experience of our Lord Jesus, that when you get to a place, people would reject him and not give him a place. I don't know when he comes to us, do we open for him, or do we lock him outside? That is a tragic thing. We need to be on our guard and be prayerful and say, Lord, in any way which you approach me, however you come to me, let me always be receptive.

Let me never be one who says no, away with him. You know that song which says, you've got time for everything, but you've got no time for Jesus. Jesus can come in many various forms and appearances to us.

We may not recognize him. The Lord also speaks of the time when there will be those who will say, but where did we see you? Where were we with you? Pray and say, Lord, when you come to me, let me see you. Let me never forbid you and stop you from coming in.

Now, when they returned these messengers and they came with the news, they said, Lord, they don't want us and they don't want you. Two of the disciples, James and John, having recently seen Elijah and Moses on the mount, having seen Elijah, that prophet of fire who had once called down fire from heaven, Maybe it was the freshness of that experience and the reality of seeing Elijah, the one who had called down fire from heaven, which prompted them to then ask the Lord, shall we call down fire from heaven and consume and destroy these unkind people? Jesus rebuked them and said, you do not know what spirit you are of. Do you not know that the Son of Man has come to save men's lives, not to destroy them? And then they proceeded to another village.

The intention of these two disciples was to revenge evil with evil. Jesus said no. He said no.

And he sternly rebuked them and said, don't you understand what manner of spirit you are of? It is not for us to judge the enemies of God. In 1 Corinthians 5 it says, deal with and judge the one who is within, but the one who is without, leave that person over to God. Now also in that same letter to the Romans from which we have read, from verse 19, it says, beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath.

For it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. Don't deal with things angrily. Don't reward evil with evil.

Don't speak badly because someone else speaks badly. And think because they've done something bad to you that you must respond with a bad deed. The Lord is saying, whatever evil comes in your direction,

overcome that evil.

Don't be overcome by it. For vengeance is with God. He will revenge in His own way, in His own time.

But Paul writes here, inspired by the Holy Spirit, Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him, and if he thirsts, give him a drink, for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Brethren, we've been called to conquer evil, not to be overcome by it. Neither should we be discouraged and downhearted in such circumstances, but rather be in prayer and say, Lord, in this circumstance, what should I be doing? If you come across evil, with joy say, Lord, You've allowed this to happen.

Therefore give me the strength, give me Your victory, that I will conquer this evil circumstance with Your good. But if you're conquered by evil, what is the first thing that takes place? A grudge springs up. A bitter root, as it refers to it in Hebrews, springs up.

And then you begin to handle things carnally, with anger, with fierceness, and you try and resist and fight the circumstance. Remember, in so doing you lose your spiritual dignity and integrity, whereas you should be busy overcoming those evil circumstances with good. And you'll miss out on blessings, and you will regret it.

You'll say, why was I overcome by these things, instead of conquering and being victorious with good over this evil? Yesterday at the funeral, I was reminded of the story of Billy Graham and his colleague. A close friend and co-worker through whom God had worked in their lives mightily through them. They parted, for Billy Graham had made a decision of faith, that I will accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, the whole of it.

And Billy Graham testifies that when he made that conscious decision, he was empowered with a new strength, so that when he spoke, when he preached, it was evident. But his friend and colleague said, no, I cannot accept the scripture as entirely true, as completely infallible, because there are those who will argue about things like the creation, and the six day creation, they say, no, I cannot accept that that could ever be true. And some then add their particular spin, their own interpretation on this.

And so their ways parted. And that man, Dr. Templeton, recently died. Billy Graham is also very old now.

And Dr. Templeton died recently. But he, Dr. Templeton, said in his last days, he said, oh, I've missed it, I've missed him, I've gone off on my own track. I've missed him, I've gone off on my own track.

Pray earnestly, with all your heart, that you would not go astray and end up in tragedy like him. Where you come to the end of your life and you say, well, I've missed it, I've gone astray. If you haven't prayed like that before, start praying today that the Lord would help you.

Do you hear and feel the weightiness of these words, the seriousness of it? If you don't, maybe only on your dying day will you realize how awfully serious it is. Therefore, I urge you, young person, while it is still time, I urge you strongly to repent now, make the decision, say even if it is difficult, even if I don't feel like it, but make the decision to repent. Broad is the way.

Broad is the way to destruction, narrow is the way to life. Sometimes it is so narrow it's like tightrope walking, one foot in front of the other. For if you fall there, it could be your end.

Speaking regarding somebody, this is in another country where the obvious problem was that the person is double, is two people, not one, not single. You seek to be on the way of the Lord. Seek the reality of this text, do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Ask yourself, have I been overcome and conquered by evil? Jesus said, be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. In Matthew 5 we read that. Matthew 5 at the end.

From verse 43, you've heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you and do good to those who hate you. Your enemy may curse you, you bless him and treat well those who hate you.

The person who hates you, you treat him well. And those who hate you, pray for them. And those who spitefully abuse you and persecute you.

Those who speak evil of you, speak well of them. That is victory. Do you know such victory? A few weeks ago we spoke about the victory as in the proclamation of the gospel.

Last Sunday we were in Mpumalanga province. The tent was full of people. And we praised God for His working.

If you want to see the gospel prosper and being victoriously proclaimed, this is how you ought to live, overcoming evil. Without that, you will never succeed. And things will never work out for you.

If you want to see the gospel prosper and being victoriously proclaimed, this is how you ought to live, overcoming evil. If you want to see the gospel prosper and being victoriously proclaimed, Do not fight as people in this world. Our weapons are not worldly weapons but spiritual ones.

And even if we still walk in the flesh, our weapons are not carnal but spiritual, that we may conquer evil with good. That was the first point in that text, conquer evil with good. Secondly, the second illustration we find in the book of Samuel.

Second Samuel, and we find it in chapter 9, verse 3. Then the king said, Is there not still someone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God? Oh, I see it so clearly when God says that David was a man after his own heart. Saul had been full of spite and malice and hatred towards David and he became his worst enemy. After the saga with David and Goliath, when they came back from battle, the praise singers sang that Saul has killed his thousands but David his tens of thousands.

And Saul was angry and jealous and said, What, is he praised more than I am? For Saul's heart was not completely upon the Lord. His position was of more importance to him. He had thought that after he was dead, his son would be the heir in his position, Jonathan.

But Jonathan wasn't of such a spirit. The Bible says that Jonathan loved David with all his heart. He loved him more than the love of a woman towards a man.

That is the love of God. Do you know such love? Or is it just that you know of the affairs where a boy says, I like this girl or a girl says, I love that boy. The love of God exceeds that and overpowers that.

Some with perverted... Some with a perverted and hellish interpretation, they put their spin on this by saying, well, he must have been a homosexual. Well, to the filthy and to the vile, all things are vile. And to the unclean, everything is unclean.

You can't think straight. And you will remain perverted unless the Lord sanctifies you. Like that drunkard of whom we spoke earlier on.

Now, as it said, to the unclean, all things are unclean. You might buy yourself a bottle of Aquila, have it wrapped in paper as you come out the shop. But to the drunkard, he will interpret it that you must have bought liquor.

David and Jonathan loved each other with the love of God. Jonathan wasn't even deterred by the knowledge that he was to be the heir and David was a potential competition. No, the love of God superseded that.

And he stood by him. He said, I stick to that and I bless that which is blessed of God. Even above my parents, that which is blessed of God, I hold to.

As is the proverb, blood is thicker than water. You'll find a person forsakes the Lord and then it goes according to the family. They all just fall into the same ditch.

They don't know the Holy Spirit off their head. They have long since quenched Him. You will stand by the Lord.

You will stay on His side, come what may. It doesn't matter what family member, even your own children. You will stick to the Lord.

Otherwise you develop a political spirit. Jonathan was born to David. Jonathan stood by David, knowing that his father hated him and was his enemy.

But he recognized that in David there was no enmity. David was without malice. Even when he had the opportunity to do injury to Saul, he refrained.

Even when he had the opportunity to injure Saul and to stab him with a sword, no, he said, let not the Lord's anointed be touched. Even though David had himself been anointed of the Lord to be king, but he refused to push his way through. He refused to grab that position.

That's why David was full of the love of God. But so too with Jonathan. And there was nothing that could come in between them.

When Saul was dead and Jonathan, David then asked, is there someone of the house of Saul left to whom I can show the kindness of God? I want to show him the mercy of God. He remembered his friend, Jonathan. versus And David asked is there no one in Saul's household to whom I can show compassion.

And remember Saul was the arch-enemy, as you get in church hierarchy, archbishops. Now, Saul had been the arch-leader, the main leader of hatred towards David, but David just wanted to respond in kindness. And then they said, there is someone who had been a servant of Saul, Ziba.

Ziba said, and when they asked about him, they said, he doesn't say the truth. He'll tell us the truth. And David asked Ziba, is there someone left in the household of Saul to whom I can show the kindness of God? And Ziba said, there is someone left in the household of Saul to whom I can show the kindness of God.

I was tempted this morning just to leave aside the Romans text and only preach on this from Samuel. Is there anyone left in the household of Saul to whom I can show kindness? The kindness of God. The great grace of God.

When you meet up with evil, what is your reaction? How do you react? The person gives you hatred? Evil? What do you give him? And David said, I want to give them the grace of God. The kindness of God. I want to show them what God is like.

Reveal to them the character of God. I want to show them God's kindness, His grace. When you meet up with evil, what is your reaction? How do you react? The person gives you hatred? Evil? What do you give them? I want to show them the character of God.

I want to show them the character of God. You husband, take for example if you are about to put salt on your food and your wife hasn't properly closed the lid and as you put the salt on, it all comes out. What comes out of you at that time? Is it the compassion and love of God? Would you shout at her and treat her unkindly and say, what are you doing to this food? But what's up with you? Whether it's your brother, child, friend, whoever it is, what do they, what response do they get from you? Is it the mercy and kindness and compassion of God? David said, if there is still a son of Saul left, bring him to me that I might show him the compassion of God.

He refused to have a vengeful spirit. He refused to say, well, it serves them right. Just see what has happened to the house of Saul.

He revealed God to them. Brother, sister, is that what you do? Is that what your life is? Are you showing forth the splendor of God? God's attributes, God's life, the way God is that they say, Oh, is God like this? I say so easily, be like Jesus, that they see Jesus, that they hear Jesus. David says, bring a son of my archenemy.

I want to show him how tender, how loving, how kind, how merciful God is. I want him to experience God's mercy. David says, if there is still a son of Saul left, bring him to me that I might show him the compassion of God.

That is God's standard for you and for me. We shall show friends and enemies how God is. His grace, his kindness, his goodness.

By doing evil to us, we overcome them with good. God's grace, his kindness, his goodness. By doing evil to us, we overcome them with good.

God's grace, his kindness, his goodness. But if you still have a place in your life, with your wife and children. Look, you are not a Christian, you are a Malman.

Go to the mall, that is where you belong. Or come, let people pray for you, pay all your sins. Ziba, is there still one of Saul's people that lives? Ziba is... My great enemy.

But I do not say that he is my great enemy. Because he respected and honored him. And he said, this is the glory of the Lord.

I will not do anything to him. Not your compassion, not your goodness. I want to re-show him the grace of God.

I want him to experience the grace of God. Every time a person does something evil to you, Thank God for that golden opportunity. You can reveal the grace of God to him.

You can show him now and bring him into contact with the grace of God. And that will be as burning coals upon his head. One day, maybe the Lord will allow us to expound on that as well.

What does that mean? Fiery coals on his head? That cannot but have an effect upon him. That's close to his brains, if he's got any. I want to show forth to him the grace of God.

The compassion of God. What a wonderful meaning it has, an explanation. And what a wonderful challenge.

So as you meet up with evil, you can spread the beauty of God. And the nature of God. And the character of God.

And then Ziba answered and said Indeed O King, there is a son of Jonathan but he is crippled. God has not forsaken you as you are a son of David. But he wasn't born like that.

When they had all fled, he had been carried and dropped and was a cripple from that day on. Lame from the waist down. Probably his backbone was broken.

And David said, bring him. And when they placed him before him, And Mephibosheth bowed down to him. In verse 6, Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, bowed prostrate before him.

He knew. He knew the history of his grandfather and how he had mistreated David. But David said, Mephibosheth, fear not.

I'm not going to show you any evil. I want to show you good. And he said to him, from today onwards, you will always sit at my table.

You will eat with me, with my food. And he said, Mephibosheth, you will always sit at my table. And he said, Mephibosheth, fear not.

Even though David was to receive kings and ambassadors to the palace and to the table, he was not embarrassed to have Mephibosheth right there, even though he was a cripple. And along with being disabled and crippled in that way, might have been that he was incontinent and all the problems with it. But David was not embarrassed to have him right there.

God did a mighty work in David. Even though David was now exalted and high up, he was lowly enough to take Mephibosheth, a cripple, a disabled person, to be right there. If you want to be blessed, go and read this chapter for yourself.

You could have said, he spoils my appetite. I can't eat in his presence. And when my friends come and other dignitaries, I'll be ashamed.

What a spirit! Yesterday I forgot something. But the sun was going down and one of the visitors said, Hey, we'll come and be buried in the dark. I thought we could even put some lights there, that we really can bury them in the dark.

Very often, you can see what a child will be like when it's grown up, while it's still small. Carmen and them went small when revival broke out. And blacks would come, sometimes many.

We would stay with some coworkers, black coworkers. And you know what she would do? As a child, she'd run into their house, go into the pantry, go to the kitchen, and take some food and bring it to the blacks and say, I know you are hungry. My father doesn't want you to go hungry.

That's why I bring you this food. She did it in secret. I was often amused about it.

And I laughed. I said, you're a good girl. I'm not a good girl.

I'm not a good girl. She had compassion and pity on the black people. That's how she was.

David also commanded Ziba to see to the properties of King Saul, all that was left over, any properties that might have been since inhabited by others, to have them removed, to till the land, and to use all the profits and whatever treasures there were of the household of Saul. David didn't say he's the son of Jonathan, he said the son of Saul. And he said, make sure that you give it all to Mephibosheth.

And then, interestingly, David didn't use this in an evil way and say, now I can get rid of him. He's got enough money, he's got all the inheritance of the King Saul, everything is in, he can live for himself now on his own. He says, everything that belonged to Saul, let it come to his son.

And you work it, that he can live by it. And he, Mephibosheth, will stay and remain eating with me at my table. We Christians, very often, are very, very, very evil.

We've got our tricks, pious tricks, and we do this. Wouldn't it ever be a good reason? Mrs. David Kutcher had said, oh dear husband, oh my king. But she most probably just called him by his name.

But I don't think so, nowadays they do that. Some women. David said, he's going to stay here.

But he's got his own house now. He's got his own palaces. He can eat there.

David said, I want him to eat with me. What a man. And what a spirit in that man.

That's God's grace, visible. David Kutcher. David Kutcher.

Men and women, girls and boys, don't be subtle and cunning in your ways. Speak the truth. Do the truth as it is.

By which you will show the character, the attributes of God, his love, his compassion, the kindness of God, not hatred. Why said he? Then replied. Bowing down before him, he said, what is your servant that you should look upon such a dead dog as I? Do you hear Mephibosheth? Mephibosheth.

Had this answer, I as a dead dog. This was his own opinion of himself. Not like the one who walks struts around in their pride, which God will say, out, you are a living dog, but out of my kingdom.

Now I've been speaking about this in a simple way. For the first years. Now, if we would go on and be second years, plus two, then I'd say David symbolizes Christ.

Mephibosheth symbolizes you and me. And what David did to this lame dead dog. Christ has done to us.

And we can sit with him in this world and in the world to come. By his side, at his table, with him on the throne. What a Lord, what a God.

And what grace he has shown to us. Don't despise it. Don't turn your back on it.

You're the biggest fool in this world. You'll regret it for time and eternity. Jesus is coming to you this morning.

Will he find place? Will he have room in your inn or not? Let's stand. We've been sitting for a long time. You've shown us, oh God, to what you've called us.

You've called us to conquer evil in this world with good. Lord, you know whether in the past we were faithful to that. You know whether we went astray from it and entered into other things.

But even so, Lord, forgive us by your grace. Wash us in your blood. That in the time to come we would not go astray.

But that we would be faithful and upright in the Lord. Lord, you showed James and John of what manner of spirit they were. And you rebuked them and told them not to be of that spirit.

And maybe, Lord, you are rebuking some in our midst today as well. But Lord, you also show us King David, how he conquered evil with doing good. And Lord, you've shown us through him that great secret of showing love and compassion to your enemies.

So that we might be victorious. So that we would be conquerors. For, Lord, you've said those who are victorious to the end will be with you in the kingdom of heaven, will reign with you.

Amen.

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