



The Book of Romans Lesson 12 4Q 2017 Overcoming Evil with Good

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

January 10,11, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be conducting a two day seminar at Fort Leonard Wood, MO for military mental health professionals and law enforcement.

January 19,20, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Tacoma Central SDA Church, Tacoma, Washington.

March 24, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at the California Baptist University in San Bernadino CA, in conjunction with the AACC

May 4-5, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at Grace Fellowship, York PA, in conjunction with the AACC

July 27-28, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentationat New Life Church, Colorado Springs CO, in conjunction with the AACC

September 27-29, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Mega National Conference of the American Association of Christian Counselors in Dallas, TX

SABBATH

What is evil? How do you describe or define it?

Common definitions include:

- depravity
- immorality
- the opposite of that which is good
- malevolence

I have heard it reported that in every society of the world, ever culture, evil is defined as exploiting or hurting others.

Do you agree?

If exploiting or hurting another person is evil—then from where does this idea that exploiting another is evil come? If there is no higher power, if we evolved from lower life forms, if it is a virtue and desirable to survive by killing those who would compete with us for food, water, shelter, reproductive outlets—then why does every culture in the world recognize that to exploit or harm others is evil?



Because the evolutionary origin of life theory is a lie—and survival of the fittest is an infection to God’s design which is driven by fear and selfishness—which is the root of evil.

So, how do we overcome evil with good?

Where must the warfare with evil start? In our own hearts and minds.

Do you agree that every human, including you and me, are infected with desires and drives that are evil—fear and selfishness.

How do we overcome evil with good in our own lives?

Read memory text: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Rom 12:2 NIV84)

Let’s break the memory verse down:

- Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world
 - What is the pattern of this world?
 - Survival of the fittest? Me first?
 - Power, greed, exploitation?
 - What law system is the pattern of this world?
 - Would this admonition, to not be like the world, include for us to not teach that God’s law and government function like the governments of the world—imposed law with imposed punishments?
 - What happens if we continue to pattern ourselves like the world?
 - Can our minds be renewed if we teach that God’s methods are like the methods of the world? Why or why not?
 - Romans 1—exchanging the truth of God for a lie causes the mind to become depraved, futile and darkened—this is what has happened wherever the truth about God has been replaced by a lie—including the penal substitution lie!
- Be transformed by the renewing of your mind
 - How is our mind renewed?
 - By beholding we are changed (law of worship—design law)
 - Fix our eyes on Christ the author and finisher of our faith
 - Can our minds be renewed by our own strength, ability, knowledge and effort separate from Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
 - Can we be renewed if we claim we trust Jesus but then don’t apply his directions to our lives?
 - Can our minds be renewed if we believe God functions like a human dictator?
- Then able to test and approve of God’s will



- Are we to test and approve of God's will?
- Is it not blasphemous to question God? No! Abraham, Moses—God wants us to question and understand so we can differentiate the true God from the false gods
- What does it mean to approve of God's will?
- It mean "to be fully persuaded in our own minds" Rom 14:5 of the rightness, goodness, reliability, worthiness of God and His designs and principles for running His universe—so that we can differentiate where God is working from where the counterfeit is working
- What happens to us when we approve? We are changed in that process.
- The mature are those who have developed by practice the ability to discern the right from the wrong (Heb 5:14)
- Why must we have a mind capable of approving of God's will?
- Rom 3:4 "God must be true, even though every human being is a liar. As the scripture says, "You must be shown to be right when you speak; you must win your case when you are being tried." GNT
- One of Satan's traps for Christians is to get them to pursue a righteous goal—but by using Satan's methods. We must approve of God's will—i.e. approve that truth, love, freedom are God's methods and it is His will to leave people free to choose so that we never coerce.

Can you have your mind renewed if you refuse to reason and think? Can you have your mind renewed if you accept what others have told you without understanding for yourself?

So, with renewed minds that know and trust God, how do we overcome evil with good?

Here is a quote from one of the founders of the SDA church, what do you think of this?

All sin is selfishness. Satan's first sin was a manifestation of selfishness. He sought to grasp power, to exalt self. **A species of insanity led him to seek to supersede God.** And the temptation that led Adam to sin was Satan's declaration that it was possible for man to attain to something more than he already enjoyed, possible for him to be as God Himself. **The sowing of seeds of selfishness in the human heart** was the first result of the entrance of sin into the world. God desires every one to understand **the evil of selfishness**, and to co operate with Him in guarding the human family against its terrible, deceptive powers. **The design of the gospel is to confront this evil by means of remedial missionary work, and to destroy its destructive power by establishing enterprises of benevolence.** {WB, September 9, 1902 par. 3}

How is evil—selfishness, the fear drive to protect self at the expense of others overcome? By love! Why does love overcome selfishness?

Do people want to destroy that which they experience as doing them good? Or, do people want to protect it and promote its health and wellbeing?



How is this different from selfishness if it is for our own good?

Because when we love, when required, we will sacrifice ourselves for the good of another, but when we simply value the benefits of the other, then we will sacrifice them for ourselves.

In romantic relationships this can often be difficult to discern—a person can value their partner for all the partner does for them, not for the sake of the individual partner themselves—thus a person can do many things for the good of the partner, always designed to keep the partner serving them well. These relationships can look like love, but they are not.

The analogy I use with my patients to expose this is a cowboy and his horse:

- The cowboy values his horse
- He provides it the best food
- Buys the best saddle and shoes
- After a long ride gets the horse a rub down
- Will violently protect his horse if someone tries to take it from him
- He does all this because he loves the horse, or loves all the benefits the horse provides?
- Does the cowboy really care where the horse wants to go?
- Will the cowboy sacrifice himself for the horse?
- Or, when the horse gets sick, broken leg, will put it down and get another?
- Many relationships function like this—this is not love

This type of functioning will not eradicate evil, but will perpetuate it. Why? Because the motive in the heart of the cowboy is serving self! Many people do this in how they relate to others.

So, truth overcomes lies, love overcomes selfishness.

SUNDAY

Read second paragraph, “For starters, faith is *not* a substitute for obedience..” What does this mean?

Why is faith not a substitute for obedience?

What does it mean the moral precepts are still in force?

What law lens do you hear this through? If through a human law construct—the lie—it means God’s rules have not been changed and God will still enforce His rules and breaking them will result in criminal guilt punishable by God, unless you take legal action and get the penalty paid by Jesus.

This is all pagan—it is not Christian.



The true view is what Jesus was trying to teach in Matthew 5, when He said not one jot or tittle will pass from the law—from *The Remedy*:

"And don't think that I have come to destroy what the Old Testament—Torah and Prophets—taught about God and his methods; I have not come to destroy but to fulfill them.¹⁸ Here is the simple truth: Heaven and earth would disappear if even the slightest change were made to God's design protocol for life—what you call his Law. I am not here to destroy the Law, but to accomplish everything it requires.

God's law cannot be changed and have life, as God built it, continue to exist. All life in God's universe is built to operate on certain design laws—changing those design laws would destroy God's creation!

The fundamental physical constants of the universe are exquisitely balanced, as though on a knife's edge, to sustain life. Things like the force of gravity, the strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force, the electromagnetic force, the ratio of the mass of the proton and the electron, and many other factors have just the right value needed to make life possible. If any of these critical numbers were changed even slightly, the universe could not sustain any form of life. For example, **if the strength of gravity were smaller or larger than its current value by only one part in 10^{60} (1 followed by 60 zeroes), the universe would be uninhabitable.** (Percy, N., *Finding Truth*, p 25)

God's moral laws are also design laws, protocols upon which life is designed to function, deviation from them also destroy life:

- Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary **it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven**; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. {DA 19.2}
- But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. **In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, **the law of life**. {DA 21.2}



- The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man. **The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds.** Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same--**a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin.** {Ed 99.2}

How do you understand law? Can we free our minds, our hearts, our institutions, our churches, our Bible Study Guides from the infection—the lie, that God’s law functions like human law?

Can we overcome evil if we continue to promote the lie of the evil one as godly?

How do we overcome evil? By coming back to the truth about God, which dispels lies and wins to trust, in trust we open the heart and receive the indwelling Spirit who provides new desires, motives, longings, then we choose to apply to our lives the truths of God’s designs, His laws, His methods. We choose to say no to selfishness, fear-based decision making and instead start thinking: What is the loving choice, what is the righteous action, what is in harmony with God’s design and methods. We get rid of things that reinforce the world’s methods in our hearts and minds and fill our hearts and minds with Godly resources.

So, why is faith not a substitute for obedience? It would be like being sick with a serious illness and having faith in your doctor and in the medicine he prescribes—you trust he only wants to help and you believe the medicine will work, but you don’t follow his instructions and don’t take the medicine. Will your faith get you well? If you follow the instructions and take the medicine, have you produced the remedy, have you saved yourself by your works?

At the end of the paragraph the lesson states, “we are not cast away but have a High Priest who intercedes in our behalf.”

What does this mean?

With whom is our High Priest interceding?

What law lens do you hear these words through?

If we have the human law lens, then what does intercession mean? That Jesus is our legal advocate pleading His legal payment to the Father to protect us from the heavenly judge—this is paganism in Christian garb.



It is not Biblical and it is a lie.

Design law—God intercedes in three places:

- Gen 3, intercedes in our hearts to break up the unity sinful humans would have with Satan and fallen angels. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman...”
- He intercedes with the principalities and powers of darkness, protective hedge (Elisha, Job etc.)
- He interceded in the natural course of what sin would do to humanity, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2Cor 5:21

Then what do we do with statements like this one, because those who prefer the human imposed law view and falsely believe Jesus must plead to his Father for us, will throw statements like this at you:

In the sacrificial offering on every altar was seen a Redeemer. With the cloud of incense arose from every contrite heart the prayer that God would accept their offerings as showing faith in the coming Saviour. **Our Saviour has come and shed his blood as a sacrifice, and now he pleads that blood before his Father in the sanctuary in heaven. It is now, as anciently, only through the merits of that blood that the transgressor of God's law can find pardon.** It is by exercising repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. {RH, March 2, 1886 par. 11}

How would you answer those who would use a statement like this to advocate that Jesus does plead to the Father for us—that without Jesus presenting His blood to the Father the Father would strike out and kill us? That Jesus’ blood is the legal payment which enables the Father to pardon us?

First, if the Holy Spirit leads a person to promote a message, will that message disagree with Jesus and what Jesus taught?

So, what did Jesus teach?

In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.
²⁷No, the Father himself loves you... John 16:26,27

Do we believe Jesus? Are there more texts to support what Jesus said here?

- Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. Jn 14:9
- I and the Father are one.” John 10:30
- For God so loved the world...John 3:16

Does Jesus need to plead with the Father? Does the Father need some convincing in order to save us?



Who needs to be convinced? We do!

Jesus said:

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. **He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears**, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by **taking from what is mine and making it known to you.** Jn 16:12-14

What is being described?

To whom is the Holy Spirit listening? If the Holy Spirit is not speaking on His own, then for whom is He speaking? Jesus!

Then, if Jesus is in heaven before God pleading—to whom is He pleading? To you and me! The Holy Spirit takes the pleas of Christ and brings them to your heart and mind—Jesus, via the Holy Spirit, knocks on the door to your heart, pleading to you for you to let Him in to heal and restore you to righteousness.

Biblical evidence?

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”

3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.”

Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.”

5 Then I said, “Put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by. Zech 3:1-5

What does this mean? Notice, Satan accuses—to whom is Satan accusing?

Does God listen to what Satan says? Does God get confused by Satan’s arguments and need Jesus there to present the truth in order to get it right? Does God say to Jesus, “Wow thank you Son, I almost believed what Satan was saying, if you hadn’t been here to present the truth I wouldn’t have been able to know it?”

Who does get confused by Satan’s arguments, allegations, lies? Who listens to the devil and gets discouraged, guilt ridden, overcome with shame such that they think they are beyond salvation,



beyond healing, too sinful, too awful for God to love and for God to save? Human beings! We are the ones to whom Satan makes allegations—then to whom is Christ pleading the power of His blood, the power of His grace, the power of His goodness, the power of the gospel? To you and to me!

So, one of the founders of the SDA church:

Through the plan of salvation, **Jesus is breaking Satan's hold upon the human family and rescuing souls from his power.** All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ's supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning he works to wrest from Him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted His salvation. {LHU 234.2}

He leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from His love; he tempts them to break His law, and then he claims them as his captives and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will obtain it; **therefore he presents their sins before them to discourage them.** He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. **By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation.** [by whom? Whom does Satan seek to get us condemned? Is it not in our own minds, that we conclude we are beyond salvation, too sinful to be loved?] Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. **But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him. He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary.** [To whom is Jesus pleading? Who needs to have the allegations of Satan refuted? Who needs to believe that God loves them and Jesus' righteousness is sufficient for them? Does God need to be persuaded that Jesus' righteousness is sufficient to save a sinner? Who doubts? It is you and me that need to hear Jesus' plea!] His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth, and He claims of His Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man. [notice now to whom Jesus speaks] **To the accuser of His people He declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' These are the purchase of My blood, brands plucked from the burning."** Those who rely upon Him in faith receive the comforting assurance: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." [to whom is Jesus pleading? He rebukes the accuser and pleads for us not to listen to his lies and to trust in Him!] All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. . . . **We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own** (Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 470-472). [To whom does Christ's plea need to effect? you and me!]

While Jesus, our Intercessor, pleads for us in heaven, the Holy Spirit works in us, to will



and to do of His good pleasure... {2MR 37.1}

Jesus pleads before the Father, carrying out the Father's purpose to save sinners, the Holy Spirit listens to Christ and works in you and me communicating the love, grace and pleas of Christ to you and me to win us back to trust, so we will open the door to our hearts and let Him save us from fear and selfishness!

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, "Yet it's easy..." What is the difference between the letter of the law and actually living in harmony with the law? Any examples of keeping the letter of the law in such a way that violates the actual law of God?

- Refusing to help someone in need on Sabbath because one is keeping the Sabbath law not to work
- Disfellowshipping a woman from church membership for divorcing a physically abusive husband because he did not commit sexual adultery
- A letter was in the Review recently in which a reader took issue with a recent article describing various health benefits of drinking milk in the diet—failing to realize that in many places of the world people do not have access to a well balanced vegetarian diet and thus milk is the best option for many. Yet the person who wrote the letter condemned the consumption of milk and promoted a worse physical health just to keep a rule.
- A visitor comes to church wearing jeans and jewelry and is criticized by a church member for coming to God's house in inappropriate dress

other examples?

How about examples of love overcoming rules?

- Pulled over for speeding and given a warning rather than a ticket?
- Forgiving someone who has done you wrong—despite the rule or law requiring punishment
- David taking the showbread to feed his men
- Jesus healing on Sabbath
- *Les Miserable* Jean Valjean, convict who spent 19 years in prison, five for stealing bread for starving family, and 14 more for escape attempts, can't find any place to stay so a Bishop gives him shelter. Jean steals his silverware. The police catch him with it, but the Bishop purports the silverware was given to Jean and presses two silver candlesticks into his hands in addition.

TUESDAY

What is a healthy attitude for Christians to have in relationship to the State?

The lesson describes how in Paul's day the Roman government was in many ways corrupt, abusive, intolerant, and pagan—and then writes; "Yet despite all this, Paul was advocating that Christians be



good citizens. Even under a government like that?"

Read second paragraph, "Yes. And that's because..." While the principle of government is God ordained, does that mean the method of human government is God ordained?

No! In fact, Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Jesus stated that God's government does not operate like human governments. God's government is different. Human governments are coercive, use imposed rules with imposed punishments. God's government is design law, with life and health only for those who live in harmony with God and His designs.

I read the following from the book *Maranatha* what do you think?

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, **the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of.** In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons.... Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." {Mar 79.7}

What do you think of this idea that in heaven the idea that God had laws was something unthought of? Why and what would it mean?

What do you think of Isaac Newton writing down the law of gravity and then telling people in his day: There is a law of gravity—do you think the people might have said, "Really, I never thought of that—a law of gravity—really, wow, never occurred to me. We just live like we do because its so healthy and reasonable."

This only way a statement that the law was unthought of can be true is if the law is design law. Such a statement cannot be true if it is imposed rules—why?

It would be like people playing baseball and saying, "there are rules to baseball—like three strikes and your out instead of two, or four, wow something like that never occurred to us."

If God's law were imposed rules, then it would require that all intelligent beings be informed of the rules, lest they have no idea how to live—what is the speed limit? If it isn't posted we don't know? What is your property tax, if it isn't posted, you don't know.

If we accept, that in heaven the angels never consider God had laws, that is further proof that God's laws are design laws and that the entire penal substitution view is a lie.



WEDNESDAY

Read top dark section, “Owe no man...” What does the second question reveal? “Does it mean that if we love, we have no obligation, then, to obey the law of God?”

What did James mean when he wrote: “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.” James 2:10

Why?

God’s design for life, as we discussed above, is the law of love. One cannot break God’s law in any point without breaking the law of love. Or, saying it another way, all breaks to God’s law are breaks to love.

Therefore, it is not possible to love and break God’s law.

Second paragraph states, “Yet, Paul is not substituting some vague standard of love for the precisely detailed precepts of the law, as some Christians claim. The moral law is still binding, because, again, it is what points out sin—and who is going to deny the reality of sin? However, the law truly can be kept only in the context of love. Remember, some of those who brought Christ to the cross then ran home to keep the law.”

THURSDAY

The lesson in the first paragraph states, “The issue was salvation and how a sinner is deemed righteous and holy before the Lord.”

What is your answer to this question—how is one deemed righteous and holy before the Lord?

As a species the race human was *made* righteous in the person of Jesus Christ.

As individuals, we are made righteous by trust in Jesus and in that trust the Spirit takes the perfection of Christ and renews our hearts, minds and characters to be like His. We actively choose to surrender to Christ, to identify with Christ, to love and long to be one with Christ, to follow and apply as we comprehend the principles of Christ and in such a relationship the Spirit enlightens, empowers and renews so that we become like Christ.

Then, as Paul wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Gal 2:20