

That's a (Christian) Burn!

August 30, 2026

Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



Romans 12:9-21

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is

possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' ²⁰ No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Paul seems intimately familiar with Jesus's famous Sermon on the Mount. What similarities do you see between Romans 12 and the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5-7? For reference, consider Matthew 5:1-11, 38-42, 43-48, 6:1-2.
3. "Let love be genuine" can be translated "let love be un-hypocritical" or even "un-pretentious." What do you think Paul is getting at here?
4. How do you love someone who you disagree with? What about someone who is hostile or mean toward you?

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 southelkhorncc.org

5. Have you ever had an experience of showing hospitality to strangers, or being a stranger that received surprising hospitality? What happened, and what did it mean to you?
6. What do you think it means to “weep with those who weep”?
7. What do you think it means that enemies experience “burning coals” when feed them or meet a need?
8. Have you heard the phrase “killing them with kindness”? What does that phrase mean, and do you think this is what Paul was trying to encourage in Romans 12? What else could he be getting at?
9. Can you think of people or moments in your life where you experienced someone using good to overcome evil? What happened?
10. How might the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus illuminate God’s commitment to overcome evil with good?
11. Some think Paul’s teaching on the non-retaliatory love ethic in Romans 12 is *only* toward those in the church community (ie, only for Christians in their treatment of other Christians). What do you think, and why?