

How to Get Along with Irritable People

Romans 12:9-21

Intro:

1. It's been said, "I could get to love the world real easy - it's the people I have trouble with!"
2. Our Daily Bread (Jan 01) quoted, "The more I get to know the human race, the more I love my dog!"
 - a. Stop & think about it. My dog is loyal, dependable (usually), eager to please & quick to forgive.
 - b. Don't you wish most people were like that?
3. **ILL: How I got along with the grouchy grocery checker at McCoy's Market.**
4. This passage will help you to get along with irritable people.

I. v9-17 - What to Do to Get Along with Irritable People

A. To those within the church.

1. **v9** - Love un hypocritically.
 - a. Satisfy real needs regardless of who they are or their ability to repay.
 - b. **Hypocrite** (αυσιπόκριτος) = a mask wearer, an actor; a person who plays a script without revealing their real self or feelings.
2. **v9** - But hate evil.
 - a. **Hate** (αποστύγέω) = to hate emphatically. Combat it wherever it exists!
(Appears only here in the New Testament)
 - b. You must hate evil itself, not just the consequences of it!
 - c. Our society doesn't hate fornication, we hate VD & AIDS.
 - d. You don't hate breaking the speed limit - you hate paying the fine.
 - e. The best way to combat evil is to repay evil with good! - **v14, 17, 19-21.**
3. **v9** - Cling to what is good.
 - a. **Cling** (κολλάω) = glue yourself to.
 - (1) **ILL: The prodigal glued himself to the hog pen (Lk 15:15).**
 - (2) **ILL: Some glued themselves to Paul at Mars Hill (Act 17:34).**
 - (3) **I Cor 6:16 - Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."**
 - b. You glue yourself to good by hating evil & having a genuine love.
 - c. Identify yourself with good to the degree that it seems glued to you!
4. **v10** - Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.
 - a. **Brotherly love** (φιλαδελφία) = family affection. The church is to be a family!
 - b. Love your brothers in the church as if they were blood kin.
5. **v11-12** - **Keep your spiritual fervor** (τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες) = lit. "keep your spirit at the boiling point".
 - a. What happens to water when you boil it? It bubbles.
 - b. If there's anything to get boiling about, it's the Lord & His salvation!
 - c. Lord Jesus said He would spit lukewarm Christians out of His mouth! (**Rev 3:15-16**).
 - d. **v12** - How do you maintain spiritual fervor? Be joyful in hope, patient in

afflictions & faithful in prayer!

6. v13 - Practice hospitality - share generously.

a. We are commanded to give to the homeless (Matt 5:42; Lk 3:11; I Tim 6:18).

b. **But the primary Bible focus:** reach out to the community in witness - reach out to the “household of faith” in benevolence.

B. To those outside the church.

1. v14 - Bless the irritable.

a. **Bless** (ευλογέω) = to speak well of or kindly to.

b. v15 - This can be done by showing empathy - really feeling with others. **ILL:** **Jesus weeping at the raising of Lazarus** (Jn 11:35-36).

2. v16 - Don't try to be a big shot!

II. v18-21 - What to Do When Irritable People Don't Want to Get Along with You

A. v17, 19-21 - Don't ever seek revenge!

1. **ILL: The Hatfields & the McCoys.**

2. Nothing good ever comes from seeking revenge.

3. v19 - The Lord, Himself, has promised to get even toward anyone who messes with one of His children.

4. **The godly response:**

a. Turn the other cheek. Matt 5:38-39 - “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

b. The result - you heap burning coals emotionally upon the head of the non-believer. Rom 12:20-21 - On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Proverbs 25:21-22)

B. v17 - Keep a good reputation.

1. I Thess 5:22 - Avoid every kind of evil. KJV - Abstain from all appearances of evil.

2. Everyone, believer & non-believer alike, admires Billy Graham. **ILL: Interview with Larry King.**

3. There's a respect for people who are genuine, even if you disagree with them.

C. v18 - Have a peacemaking spirit.

1. Matt 5:9 - Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

2. One of the qualifications of an elder is that he is to be a peacemaker (Tit 1:6).

3. Peacemaking is the result of the wisdom that comes from above. Jam 3:17 - But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

Do you want to get along with irritable people? Put these character traits into your life and see how the irritable people respond!

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