

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them...¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

¹⁹ Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD. ²⁰ Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."

²¹ Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.



Every day we are handed a set of boxing gloves and are invited into the ring of hatred and _____. We have to decide whether or not to accept the invitation.

Three reasons not to "get in the ring" (*take revenge*)

1. Vengeance does not belong to us but to _____ alone.
2. To treat a person with kindness rather than getting even is the way to shine the light of Christ upon them.
 - a. THE DIFFERENCE: When "*our lid is knocked off*" a beautiful life flows out (the character of Christ is revealed.)

You are the _____ of the earth... You are the light of the world...

Matthew 5:13-14

"*heap coals of fire on their heads.*" vs.20b ~ This is referring to a healthy sense of _____ that comes upon them (shame that burns with guilt and conviction) and perhaps will lead to humble repentance.

Stay Out of the Ring!

October 25, 2009

3. We do not conquer evil by doing evil, but by doing _____.

"I will not allow any man to degrade my soul by making me hate him."

Booker T. Washington

Anger eats a person up and spits them out in the exact shape of the thing they were angry at. Given enough time, we become exactly like the people we cannot _____.

How to Stay Out of the Ring!

✓ Bless your enemy

- By not punishing them in your _____.
- By not slandering them with your mouth
- By not taking revenge
 - Responding to evil with evil
- By remembering that God is _____.

Until we understand and trust that God is sovereign (*in control of all things*), we will not release our enemies to God's discipline. We will take matters into our own hands.

- By seeing _____ their behavior and into their troubled heart.
- By _____ for them with regularity.
- By reaching out to them and meeting their _____ needs.