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## Deepening Our Connections

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**Romans 12:14-21** <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but enjoy the company of the lowly. Do not be conceited. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Carefully consider what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible on your part, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup>On the contrary, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (BSB)

I. Here are the details of this passage.

- A. We are to **bless** even the undeserving. V. 14
- B. We are to **empathize** with others. V. 15
- C. We must do our part to get along with **everyone**. V. 16, 17b, 18
- D. We must try our best to make friends with all **types**. V. 16
- E. We must not seek **revenge**, even on the deserving. V. 17, 19
- F. We must **overcome** evil with good. V. 20

II. How can we apply this to our lives?

- A. Our **language** matters. We must seek to use edifying words to even the worst people that we know.
- B. We need to find ways to **connect** with the lost. This should include everyone that comes within your realm of influence.
- C. We need to have two **standards** for acceptance. Believers and unbelievers should have different standards. Too many American Christians have this backwards!

**I Corinthians 5:9-13** <sup>9</sup>I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. <sup>10</sup>I was not including the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. <sup>11</sup>But now I am writing you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a verbal abuser, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. <sup>12</sup>What business of mine is it to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? <sup>13</sup>God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you." (BSB)

- D. We need to make connections with **unbelievers**. Too many American Christians only associate with fellow believers.