

By Pastor Ronald E. Krause

Zion Lutheran Church, Grant

In Romans chapter 12, Paul describes to us what the Christian's attitude should be toward others—both fellow believers and those outside of the faith. And we all know that what he says is good and true and pleasing to our God.

Paul talks about loving others, about being humble and joyful and patient. He says that we are not to seek revenge and that we are even to show love and concern for our enemies.

As Christians we know that this is how we should be—but boy is it hard to follow through with this at times.

How true it is that God's ways are not always our ways. Indeed, the world around us seems consistently to compel us to do just the opposite of what our Lord says to us.

Think of most of the movies and television shows that we watch where the entire plot is built upon revenge and anger and greed and hatred. When there is even a hint of Christian virtue shown, it is usually depicted as weakness or foolishness. And we take it all in—after all, it's just entertainment. But, there are real dangers involved in immersing ourselves in our godless culture.

Our Lord says that we are to avoid evil, and although we convince ourselves that we are not personally taking part in it—just viewing it from a distance—we cannot help but be influenced by the constant displays of violence and perversion and immorality that we invite into our homes on a daily basis.

So what am I suggesting, that we all throw our televisions out the window? Well, maybe that wouldn't be such a bad idea; but there is nothing inherently evil about a television set—or any of the technological advances that we enjoy, all of which can be seen as gifts from our God. But, it does seem that we could use a little more discretion at times—and I'm preaching to myself first here—when it comes to using these things in ways that are pleasing to our Lord.

Paul writes, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

The evil in our own lives has been overcome by God's grace through our Savior who willingly suffered and died in our place so that we might be the holy, redeemed children of our Heavenly Father.

Through faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we have the unfailing promise of forgiveness and eternal life—and in this we greatly rejoice; but, let us not forget that our gracious Lord has also promised us the strength and the ability to forsake that which is evil around us and walk according to His will and ways; for our own benefit and to the glory of His holy name.