

R.O.E.**I. Slide#1blank Announce:**

- A. Hey, join us Wed nights at 7pm for 2 Cor.
- B. Share about Baptism up at Calv Youth Camp Thurs - 5 baptized (then, a new Chinese student Tiffany. Rachael, 9 months ago) - **Class** this Wed. - **Baptism** next Sun.
- C. **Slide#2** FPU/Financial Peace University - Steve & Kristinea Cotteen.

II. Intro:

- A. **Prayer:** for those **smiling** on the outside & yet **bleeding** on the inside.
- B. **Slide#3 R.O.E.?**
 - 1. **Not...Jane Roe**, the pseudonym that was used for **Norma McCorvey** as the lead plaintiff in the case that legalized abortion in the United States.
 - 2. **Not...Return On Equity**, which measures the **rate of return** on the ownership interest (shareholders' equity) of the common stock owners.
 - 3. **Not...Roe**, the fully ripened egg mass in female fish, which we enjoy on our sushi, which is also a wonderful source of omega3 fatty acids.
 - 4. **Slide#4 But...Rules Of Engagement**, which refers to those **responses that are permitted** in the employment of military personnel during operations or in the course of their duties.
 - a) I read about some of these **R.O.E.'s** from the vantage point of 3 SEAL Team snipers: **Christ Kyle** most lethal sniper in US history; **Howard Wasdin** *SEAL Team 6*; & **Adam Brown's** great book...**Fearless**.

C. Two things before we start:

- 1. **Slide#5a** Paul is speaking **Personal** not **National**. [How an **individual** Christian should act not a **nation** against a Hitler]
- 2. **Slide#5b** Paul is speaking **Attainable** not **Idealistic**. [These are not just **words to aspire to** but as **something to really live by**. i.e. w/Spirits help!]
- 3. Like when Paul told Timothy **Be diligent to present yourself approved to God**. 2Tim2:15

D. Also, be honest, we all have enemies!

- 1. When Paul said, **our struggles are not against flesh & blood**, he **didn't** mean we wouldn't have enemies here on earth.
- 2. He was trying to help us keep a **proper perspective**, **that** whenever enemies confront us there are **spiritual forces** at their root.
- 3. You may have a **coworker** trying to sabotage you. A **boss** that hates your Christianity because you wont fudge on numbers. **Or, Slide#6** A **neighbor** that thinks the best place for his dog's **potty spot...is your front lawn!**

4. Enemies are a fact of life. But praise God...**He gave us a set of R.O.E.'s**

III. Slide#7 1ST RULE OF ENGAGEMENT! (14) *Bless those who persecute you; bless & do not curse*

A. Now, I would have liked a little *warm up command* here Paul.

1. Like, "Pray once in awhile" or, "smile on occasion" would have been nice.

B. Bless don't curse. (i.e. don't hope the worse upon them!)

1. This is the same attitude expressed by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount.

2. Instead of hoping for the worst to happen to our enemies, we're to willfully hope that the best will come upon them.

3. Instead of speaking words of hatred, we are to choose to speak words of truthful good towards those intending to hurt us.

4. Slide#8 It's learning to Pray for those who are preying on us!

C. Context here is *persecuted for Christ's name sake*.

1. This has nothing to do with self-defense, or being bullied for the sake of being bullied!

IV. Slide#9 2ND RULE OF ENGAGEMENT! (15) *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*

A. "Make his case your own & allow what has happened to him to affect you also." (Boice)

1. Heb.13:3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the body also.

B. Example: Jesus was at a wedding in Cana & added to the joy of the occasion; but He also went to be with the sisters of Lazarus & wept at the grave of His friend.

1. We can measure our likeness to Christ by the range of our sensitiveness to the sorrow & pain of others. (Daily Bread, DeHaan, June 1st)

2. So, Engage in people's lives. Connect with them. Not only in happy times, but in sad times too.

C. Don't be bugged at God when grief comes your way – because how are you going to weep w/ those who weep...unless you are acquainted with grief?

D. Slide#10 In Ps.84:5,6 talks about a Valley of Weeping, it says Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca^(weeping), They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools.

a) Slide#11 As they went through, they left behind a blessing for someone else.

b) The pilgrims anticipation of the Temple experience transforms the desert for them into a place of springs.

- c) Do you **leave behind a blessing** for someone else? Or expect others to give you a blessing?

V. **Slide#12 3RD RULE OF ENGAGEMENT!** (16) *Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate w/the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.*

- A. NLT Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!
- B. **Associate w/the humble** – Lit. “to be carried along w/, as by a flood which sweeps everything along w/it & then to give one's self up to it.” (LKGNT)
1. **Slide#13** When you come to the river of humility *strap on your life-vest, jump in, & be swept away by it.*
 - a) Too often we're content with...*dipping ours toes in humility!*

VI. **Slide#14 4TH RULE OF ENGAGEMENT!** (17) *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.*

- A. This reflects Paul's concern about the *impressions Christians make* upon unbelievers.
1. 1 Thes.4:12 **walk properly toward those who are outside,**
 2. 1 Cor.6:1 **When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers.**
- B. To repay evil for evil makes us **participants in evil**. And, it's an evil that **always escalates** with **each exchange**.
1. **Slide#15** “*Payback time*” is a **bankrupt form of spiritual economics** that Paul would have us never **pay into** in the first place. (Charles Swindoll)
- C. **Slide#16** 17b can literally be read this way *Respect what is right in the sight of all men.*
1. **Respect** = think beforehand, take thought for, have regard for.
 2. **Right** = beautiful, good, noble, honorable.
 - a) **Slide#16b** Eugene Peterson supplies a different nuance rendering it, “*Discover beauty in everyone.*”
 - b) **Slide#16c** Or we could say, “Always be on the lookout for what is good in all people.”
 - (1) I love the day I was enlightened, by God, on this truth, *Brian quit trying to find something bad thing in others, but look for what can be redeemed in them to form a bridge & not a wall!* [i.e. Other ministries; & other religions] My focus shifted from where we disagree, to 1st where we agree, so as to set up common ground.
 - (2) And I recognize the fact that I will often be misunderstood or accused of **compromise**, or being a **liberal**. (the Call from CCCM)

- (a) I love *being on the lookout for what is good in all people*, rather than finding that one area I disagree & making that an issue. I swear I'll never go back!

VII. Slide#17 5TH RULE OF ENGAGEMENT! (18) *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

- A. *As much as depends on you* - Paul was a realist.
1. We can't always *make everything ok*. We can't control *other people*. Some don't want to be at peace with us. So he advises us *fulfill our responsibility!*
- B. **Slide#18 Live peaceably** – Don't be a *Christian Crusader* always looking for a fight to pick or hunting down Christ's enemies! [some Christians make their crusade against Catholics. Some against Islam]
1. **Slide#19** "We are to **love & win** people, **not root them out to beat them senseless!**"
J.M.Boice
- C. Jesus pronounced a blessing upon the peacemaker, **Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.** Mt.5:9.
- D. The author of Hebrews wrote *Pursue peace with all people*(12:14)
1. This kind of peace is to be **pursued!** – It requires effort; it is not something that just happens. It is a product of mental & spiritual toil & sweat!
 2. Former Israeli Prime Minister **Yitzhak Rabin**, quoted in Newsweek said, "Peace is not made with **friends**. Peace is made with **enemies**."¹
 3. **Conflict** in our church brings glory to Satan & disgraces our God!
 - a) How many *disgraceful public displays of church disagreements* could be prevented if this one admonition were heeded? - *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*
- E. **Illustration:** A boy once asked his father, "Dad, how do wars begin?" "Well, take the First World War," said his father. "That got started when Germany invaded Belgium." Immediately his wife interrupted him, "Tell the boy the truth! It began because somebody was murdered!" The husband drew himself up with an air of superiority and snapped back, "Are you answering the question or am I?" Turning her back upon him in a huff, the wife stormed out the room and slammed the door as hard as she could! When the dishes stopped rattling in the cupboard an uneasy silence followed, broken at length by the boy: "Daddy, you don't have to tell me how wars begin; **I know now!**" **Slide#20**
- F. *He who cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass.*

VIII. Slide#21 6TH RULE OF ENGAGEMENT! (19) *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.*

- A. *NIV leave room for the wrath of God.*

¹ (Sept. 13, 1993) Christianity Today, Vol. 37, no. 12.

1. I heard this the loudest from our friend David Eubank w/the Free Burma Rangers. A Ranger himself in the mid 1980's. Who has all the "skills" & even desires sometimes to "take out the enemy" in Burma, because of the atrocities he's seen. But he strongly declares, "That is not our mission. Sometimes I wish it was. But that's not why God has us there. That is not our calling."

B. Let **God** repay them for the evil done to you.

1. Paul is advocating **non-retaliation** in the light of the future **retribution** of God!
2. It's His promise to do so:
 - a) Deut.32:35 **I will take revenge; I will pay them back. In due time their feet will slip. Their day of disaster will arrive, and their destiny will overtake them.**
 - b) Heb.10:31 adds, "The Lord will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
3. It's the example of **David's** refusal to kill **Saul** on two occasions when it seemed that God had delivered Saul into his hands.

C. We learn 2 things here:

1. **Slide#22a** Evil is **wrong** & evil rightly **deserves punishment**.
2. **Slide#22b** Retribution **will** indeed be meted out to the guilty party.

D. **Slide#23** There are times when **doing nothing** demands *much greater strength* than **taking action**²

1. **Maintaining composure** is often the best evidence of **power**.
2. Even to the vilest and deadliest of charges, **Jesus** responded with deep, unbroken silence. A silence so profound, it caused His accusers & spectators to wonder in awe.
3. Those who are unjustly accused, and mistreated without cause, know the tremendous strength that is necessary to **keep silent** and to **leave revenge to God**.

IX. Slide#24 7TH RULE OF ENGAGEMENT! (20) *Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."*

A. **Slide#25** This doesn't teach "**passive non-resistance**" but instead "**active benevolence**"!

1. Overcoming evil with good with **direct & obvious** acts of kindness.
2. If someone does you wrong it says **don't only forgive it, but also avenge it...by doing him/her a favor!**

B. **Coals of fire on his head?**

1. **Slide#26** Light on this passage *may come from an Egyptian expiation ritual*, in which a person guilty of some wrongdoing would *carry a pan of burning coals on his head* as a sign of his repentance. Thus *treating one's enemy kindly may cause him to repent*.

² Springs in the Desert, Cowman, February 10.

2. **Slide#27** Or, sometimes a person's fire went out and he needed to borrow some live coals to restart his fire. Giving a person coals in a pan to carry home "on his head" was a neighborly, kind act; it made friends, not enemies. [Haiti carry everything on their heads. *Purse*]
 - a) **Compassion, not revenge**, should characterize believers.
3. Paul said earlier(2:4) *the kindness of God leads one to repentance*.

X. Slide#28 8TH RULE OF ENGAGEMENT!(21)*Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil w/good*

1. NLT **Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.**
 2. **Don't overcome verbal slam for verbal slam, punch for punch, but letting **grace & goodness** have the last word!** (Swindoll)
- B. **Slide#29** Only 2 choices! – You will be overcome by evil, **or** you must yourself overcome it!
1. You **can't let evil alone**. **And**, evil will never let you alone!
 2. **You must fight**. **And**, you must **conquer...or be conquered!**
 3. **To respond to evil is not to overcome it but to add to it.**
 4. **Our most powerful weapon against evil is GOOD!**
- C. **Slide#30** Return evil for good is **devil-like!**
Slide#31 Return evil for evil is **beast-like!**
Slide#32 Return good for good is **man-like!**
Slide#33-35_{auto} Return good for evil is **God-like!** [Let's rise to this point]
- D. **Now**, there's no guarantee that our kindness will change their feelings & actions toward us; they may continue to try to hurt us.
1. But though enemies are a fact of life, **Praise God...He gave us a set of Rules of Engagement**. Let's Engage!
- E. **Prayer:** God is our refuge and strength, *An abundantly available help* in times of trouble. Therefore we will not fear.