

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Sometimes, Burning Coals.

Paul talks about the difference between giving from the heart and giving out of fairness by telling us that there is a difference between inviting your friends over to eat, when you know that they will invite you over to eat with them the next time. This reciprocation is simply taking turns in feeding each other. Now, in and of itself, such action is not a bad thing. The problem is when we think we are being generous when we are really only trading with each other. Paul suggests that true giving in this sense is to invite those to eat whom you know will not be able to invite you back in order to repay you for your kindness.

Wise King Solomon, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, takes this idea one step further. He suggests, “If you enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you” (Proverbs 25:21-22). The first lesson we learn is the way to rid yourself of your enemies, by making them your friends. Not only are we to make them our friends, but we are to feed them as well.

The second lesson we learn is how to be truly mean to those who are mean to us. We spoke before about speaking a kind word to those who have spoken rudely to us. Here we are told that the best way to “get back” at someone who has hurt you and is your enemy is by being kind to him/her, even treating him/her to a meal. The result is that you will indeed inflict great amounts of shameful pain on them, and your reward will be a Godly reward given in heaven.

There is much truth in Solomon’s Word (of course, you say, he is speaking God’s Word); therefore, if you have never tried overwhelming your enemies with kindness, I would encourage you to do so. Being mean by being so nice is the best way to witness the love that Jesus Christ has taught us. It is also a most excellent way of doing something which will make you “feel” good and know that your reward is in heaven. Here again, we might paraphrase this lesson in *Lifestyle Evangelism* as, “Kill them with kindness.”