

ROMANS TWELVE



LIVE AT PEACE WITH EVERYONE

VERSES 17–18 | PAGE 1616

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

ROMANS 12:17–18 NIV

Jesus is THE Peacemaker

Colossians 1:20–23

- 20 To **reconcile to himself all things** ... by **making peace through his blood**, shed on the cross.
- 21 Once you were **alienated from God** and were **enemies in your minds** because of your evil behavior.
- 22 But now he has **reconciled you** by Christ's physical body through death ... **free from accusation**.
- 23 **...This is the Gospel...**that has been proclaimed everywhere...

“Blessed are the
peacemakers, for they will be
called sons of God.”

MATTHEW 5:9

Should we do **anything** to end conflict?
(Is Christ weak?)

ROMANS 15:1 Bear with the failings of the weak.

PROVERBS 19:11 It is to his glory to overlook an offense.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 Become all things to all men.

PROVERBS 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath.

Quarrelsomeness is a sin,
but is conflict itself contentiousness?

Peacemaking and Its Counterfeit

Both end the conflict for now, but they aren't the same...at all.

PEACEMAKING	APPEASEMENT
Moved by love for God's honor and the other's good	Moved by fear of conflict, of being disliked, of losing standing
Pays the cost I'll take the loss if you change your ways.	Third party billing Buying peace with something that isn't yours.
Seeks stability through justice Concord can only be stable when it <i>and</i> we are just.	Seeks immediate safety and gain The quick fix brings peace...but it's unstable, and the aggressors are emboldened
Is principled "first pure, then peaceable." James 3:17	Is expedient and pragmatic Morality is a luxury of the privileged.

Real peacemakers will get called appeasers and contentious

AS CHRIST

- He did not shut up—he kept telling the truth, openly and publicly.
- He was not quarrelsome, pugnacious, or contentious—temperate even on the cross.
- He did not pay back evil for evil.
- **He appeased no one.** Not even his judges or accusers.

Yet, he made all-possible peace.

THE GOOD NEWS

He did everything he could
possibly do to live
at peace with us.

God calls us to what he did for us:

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

ROMANS 12:18

TWO DIFFICULTIES

(But NOT IMPOSSIBILITIES)

Those who harm us

They are the aggressor—it's their fault we can't live at peace.

Those who vilify us

They misunderstand and distrust us and will judge us no matter what.

**It's not our job to quit
it's our job to prove if peace was possible.**

Concerning those who harm us



DO NOT REPAY EVIL
FOR EVIL



A KEY THEME OF DEVOTION TO JESUS

- 1 THESS. 5:15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.
- 1 COR. 13:5 [Love] ... keeps no record of wrongs.
- MATT. 5:39 Do not **resist** an evil person. “stand your ground” (Eph 6:10) “Stand up against” (Acts 6:10) i.e. “try to defeat”
- 1 PETER 2:23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate ... Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.
- 2 Cor. 4:12b-13a ...when reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat...

REFUSE RETALIATION (Not Justice.)

It is manly, not beastly* — retaliation is reaction: instinctual and fleshly. Not disciplined and provident.

It keeps our appeal to justice — evil for evil puts us out of position to be vindicated.

It is rational — we are incompetent judges in our own case.

It is honorable — evidence of nobility and strength.

It is right faith — trusting judgment to God in patience.

“The world
calls it
manhood;
it is rather,
doghood.”



JOHN TRAPP
(1640-160ish non-conformist)

WHY REFUSE RETALIATION

It is human, not beastly — retaliation is reaction: instinctual and fleshly.

It keeps our appeal to justice⁺ — evil for evil puts us out of position to be vindicated.

It is rational* — we are incompetent judges in our own case.

It is honorable — evidence of nobility and strength.

It is right faith — trusting judgment to God in patience.

"Revenge...is rightly
forbidden, for it is presumed
that we are incompetent*
judges in our own case."

Matthew Henry

*incompetent to administer retaliation

WHY REFUSE RETALIATION

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It is rational — we are incompetent judges in our own case.

It is honorable* — evidence of nobility and strength.

It is right faith — trusting judgment to God in patience.

“A mans wisdom gives him **patience**; It is to his **glory** to overlook an offense.”

— Proverbs 19:11



“The thornbush tears. The oak and cedar are more peaceable.”



THOMAS WATSON
(EDITED)

WHY REFUSE RETALIATION

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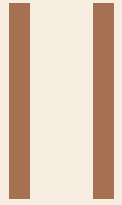
It is rational — we are incompetent judges in our own case.

It is honorable — evidence of nobility and strength.

It is right faith* — trusting judgment to God in patience.

“How can we say we believe he is the Judge if we do not leave to him also the work of Avenger?”

TERTULLIAN, ON PATIENCE (EDITED)



Concerning those who vilify us

BE CAREFUL TO DO
WHAT IS RIGHT IN THE
EYES OF EVERYONE



Lit: “Provide for what’s honorable
in the sight of all people.”

Careful

Thoughtful,
provident,
premeditated—
not spontaneous
or reactionary.

Right

Good, seemly,
praiseworthy—good
recognized in front of
people.

Before all

In the eyes of
everyone—where all
people can plainly see it.

CONSISTENT TEACHING

1 COR. 10:33 For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

2 COR. 8:21 We are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.

PROV. 3:4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

Either won over or proven wrong

“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

1 PETER 2:12

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

I Do not repay evil for evil.

II Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

Do it.

- **Is peace closed off on your side** with anyone? Is the door unlocked from your side? Do they know?
- **Accept that peace is not always possible** — but stay open to it. Situations and people change.
- **Repay evil with NO evil** — not **LESS** evil.

Gossip, detraction, silent treatment, cold distance, subversion, contempt—all are repaying evil for evil.

Do it.

- **Premeditate not to “beat”** those who do you evil (Matt 5:39).
- **Overlooking offenses is oak-like strength**, not thornbush weakness.
- **Children:** stop retaliating against your siblings—entrust judgment to your parents.
- **Premeditate what is praiseworthy** in the eyes of everyone.
- **See yourself as a commissioned peacemaker**—everywhere.
Do not quit.

God does not command us to
do what he has not done.

Jesus never paid back evil for evil and was careful to do what is
right in the eyes of everyone. And he was still killed.

XII

“Peacemakers who sow in peace
raise a harvest of righteousness.”

JAMES 3:18