

# 22.

## *Repay no one evil for evil*

Romans 12:17a

For most of us, whenever we are confronted by evil, our most natural response is to strike back. This simple injunction, '*Repay no one evil for evil*', is one of the hallmarks of Christianity. Christ followers serve a Saviour who exemplified this injunction. When confronted with the greatest of all evils, Christ did not respond in kind.

1. Note First Peter 2:23. How does Peter say that Christ responded to evil?

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2. Does Christ's example mean that we should never resist evil? Consider Matthew 5:39 along with Ephesians 5:11 and discuss.

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3. What reason does Proverbs 20:22 give for not repaying evil for evil?

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The Bible's use of the word "evil" encompasses the idea of *wrong doing which profoundly injures*. The Bible introduces *evil* almost immediately. God strategically placed two sacramental trees in the Garden of Eden. The first one was *The Tree of Life*. The second was *The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil* (Gen. 2:9).

4. Based on Genesis 3:5, what did Satan predict would happen if Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil?

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5. When Eve looked at the forbidden fruit, what two reasons led her to eat of it according to Genesis 3:6? (What does this tell us about the nature of temptation to sin?)
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When the two original humans destined all subsequent people to be born sinners, there was still a capacity to resist evil.

6. How does Genesis 4:5-7 illustrate this possibility?
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But mankind did not resist the temptation to do evil. After Cain murdered his brother, evil in the hearts of mankind only grew unabated.

7. How does Genesis 6:5 illustrate this, and what would God's eventual remedy be?
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The New Testament warns believers that people will treat them badly and speak 'evil' of them (Matt. 5:11). But this doesn't mean that Christians should be passive when it comes to evil.

8. How did Christ teach His disciples to pray in Matthew 6:13?
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The power of the Christian life is found in being filled with the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) helps to empower the believer to resist evil and the temptation to respond to evil *with* evil. If you are struggling with anger and the temptation to respond to evil *with evil*, then you need a fresh filling with the Holy Spirit and His fruit.

*Amen.*