

To the Contrary

(Heb. 12:14, Rom. 12:14-21) Listen@JohnLongwell.com

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- Two types of people: those perishing & those being saved

1 Corinthians 1:18 (ESV) For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

- Both perishing & being saved are active & ongoing
 - I’m saved, but I’m still being healed & transformed
 - The unsaved are perishing but are not yet utterly unredeemable

- How then do we fulfill the great commission?

1 Cor. 9:22 (ESV) I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save (win) some.

Hebrews 12:14 (ESV) Strive (struggle to master) for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

- We learn how to war wisely (by being contrary: opposite, contradictory, different)

Romans 12:14-21 (ESV) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

- Don’t react in kind or curse them (work toward their destruction)
- Instead persevere to pray for them & genuinely wish them well

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

- (Remember these are enemies, persecutors) Be happy when good things come to them
- Comfort them when bad things happen (prisoner crying on phone when his mom died)

16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

- Live (form community with) & get along in spite of our differences harmoniously
- Don’t let social or economic differences make you proud or stop you from being in community
- Don’t rely on your opinion, let God’s Word be final

17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

- Reaffirms, don’t be respond in kind
 - Instead, step back, take a moment and purpose your actions to be honorable
 - To safeguard your enemy’s integrity and bring no shame to your character or name

18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (sister peace verse Heb. 12:14)

- Whatever it takes, making every effort (sacrifice & investment)
 - Maintain your side of peace
 - If peace breaks, let it be on the other side

19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

- A warning of where we’ll end up if we don’t heed his previous instructions
 - A reminder that this role is solely reserved for God
 - Only He can precisely apply the appropriate response for evil actions

20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head

- War is won to the contrary, not responding according to how we think or feel
- Go beyond, seek out and attend to your enemies needs
- (not just one to rebuild his fire, but so many he can cook his food right away).”
- Learn to love on a legendary level!

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Responsively reverse it!)

- Evangelistic efforts are built into living at peace with all men
- If it works on our enemies, how much more on those we lovingly are pursuing?
- People don’t connect with God until they connect with God’s people
- The enemy uses the sinners struggles & vulnerability to solidify their hate against God
 - No loving God would allow such suffering & injustice.
- God uses believers to show his love on a legendary level to those who are suffering.
 - Sinners say “No God would ever love someone so undeserving as me!”