

# DOING RIGHT WHEN WRONGED

Romans 12:17-21

*Believers are never more like Christ than when we respond to personal offenses like Christ.*

## Introduction

In times of **international aggression** (e.g., sieges, invasions, captivities, atrocities, etc.), God's people were to seek divine guidance through their national security council (prophets, priests, and kings).

In times of **criminal activity** (e.g., thefts, kidnappings, rapes, murders, etc.), God's people were to seek justice through their established legal system (laws and judges).

In times of **personal offense** (e.g., slights, insults, disputes, insensitivities, etc.), God's people were to seek relief through their own reconciliation efforts (beginning with personal forgiveness).

## When PERSONALLY WRONGED, do not try to settle the score yourself (17a, 19a, 21a).

*17a Do not repay anyone evil for evil.*

*19a Do not take revenge, my friends.*

*21a Do not be overcome by evil.*

The OT foundation for this NT instruction: "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD" (Lev 19:18).

## When PERSONALLY WRONGED, find ways to be kind to your offender (17b, 18, 20a, 21b).

*17b Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.*

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

*20a "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink."*

*21b ...overcome evil with good.*

The OT foundation for this NT instruction: "If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him. If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help him with it" (Exod 23:4-5).

## When PERSONALLY WRONGED, trust God to make things right in the end (19b, 20b).

*19b ...leave room for God's wrath.*

*20b "In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

The OT foundation for this NT instruction: " 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay' (Deut 32:35), says the Lord" (Rom 12:19b).