

The believer's response to an enemy who has harmed him or a loved one is to be one of love, not revenge. We are to love our enemies and do good to them, to overcome evil with good. We are promised "I will repay saith the Lord." And He does use the governments of the world to take vengeance. So we remain free from fruitless occupation with harm that we have suffered at the hands of others. Free from the grudges, bitterness, self pity, vengeful thoughts, that cripple the soul.

*Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled*

If we are to forgive our enemies and love our enemies how much more should we love our brothers and sisters in Christ. Owe no man anything. . . except to love them. We are no longer under the Law as Paul has demonstrated in chapters 6 - 8. We have died to the Law in Christ, ch. 7:5,6. So we are given the way to fulfill the righteous requirement of the Law, 8:1-4. The better way, Love! He reiterates what Jesus taught while He was here on earth before He was crucified, Matthew 22:39, 40; Gal. 5:14.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

How simple! How profound! How wise! How powerful! Simple to say but not so simple to do sometimes. This principle is repeated over and over again throughout scripture and especially in the New Testament. Watch for it. He recites the last five commandments, those relating to interactions with our neighbors, mentioning adultery first instead of murder. Is that because adultery is a greater peril in the close proximity and social intimacy of the believers in the local assembly? It certainly seems to be more prevalent than murder amongst professing Christians, not to mention this present evil age in which we live. *1 Timothy 5:2 With all purity.*

Now Paul issues a faithful warning. What is this he is saying? Are we enmeshed, immersed, absorbed, engaged, occupied with pleasures this world offers? Pleasures that our fleshly hearts (Adams nature) can easily come to enjoy and love. Habits we gradually slide into as we are gently lulled to sleep, forgetting the time. Like the ten virgins slept while awaiting the Bridegroom. Awake! Rouse ourselves! Our salvation is nearer now than it was when we first believed. Aren't we saved already? Yes, from eternal judgement. Soon, when the Lord returns for His Bride, we will be saved from the very presence of sin. From sin in us and in our surroundings. But now while still here on earth he warns against being lulled to sleep by its soothing charms. We are no longer slaves of sin. Though we can be tempted to return to it. He wrote this over nineteen centuries ago. The night is far spent. The morning star will indeed soon rise, Rev 22:16.

Therefore be ready! Get up! Get ready!

Throw off the works of darkness that have gradually

covered us like a warm "snuggly" blanket.

Put on the armor of light. – Really armaments, weapons and instruments for battle, defensive and offensive.

Up! Put on our armaments of light. Be a soldier, not a drowsy sleep-in. Not a carouser. Up! Busy! Exposing evil not sleeping amongst it, Ephesians 6:13; 1Thessalonians 5:8.

Let us walk honestly.

"Walk" – walk about with purpose, direction and resolve, not sauntering or idle drifting.

"Honestly" – decorously decently.

"As in the day" – a walk like Jesus walked, open for all to see Him in us.

Not in:

rioting – carousing, reveling, abandoned disorderly conduct, often resulting from drunkenness.

drunkenness – intoxication, by alcohol or drugs.

chambering – from the Greek "koite" (English coitus)

referring simply to a bed to lie down upon, but also to cohabiting. Same word as in Romans 9:10 and Hebrews 12:3 denoting the marriage bed, there honorable but here illicit.

wantonness – lack of self restraint, lasciviousness, filthy behavior – indecent body movements and unchaste handling of one another. Can believers stoop to this level of behavior? Apparently so or we would not be warned against it. Should bodily motions accompany "Christian" music? Dance? Is it chaste to dance touching bodily? To touch hands to body? Aren't gyrations just "touching with the eyes?" What indeed is chaste? – **With all purity**, even while speaking together, 1Tim. 5:2.

And there are other things, things tending toward violence rather than impurity:

strife – quarreling, wrangling, contentions, debates, arguments.

envying – Most translations have "jealousy" or emulation here. It is desiring something another has. The distinction is that "envy" desires to deprive another of what he has, "jealousy" desires to have the same or the same sort of thing for itself.

Put on – "have it put on," be dressed with Jesus Christ as our garment. Not putting on merely for show in hypocrisy but genuinely "wearing" Him everywhere.

Making no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. Avoiding things that will soil that Garment. In Romans 6 and 8 we learned we have power over the members of our bodies to use them for Christ. And to not give them over to fulfill the lusts that still arise from Adam's nature in us. We are exhorted as those who are now able to choose. Who will be in control, Adam or Christ?