



Christianity Is Good **Romans 12:18-21**

The Hebrew writer warned Christians, “Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we _____ away from it” (Hebrews 2:1). God knows that humans have the tendency to lose _____ of what they’ve learned and slowly move away from it. Nobody intends to drift; drifting usually comes about when people become complacent and take things for _____. One generation might be committed to the _____, while the next generation hardly _____ of the truth. Judges 2 tells of the generation that _____ God and Joshua all the days of their lives and they were righteous; but “there arose another generation after them who did not know the work of the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel (Judges 2:10). This _____ generation began to become like the nations that were around them; they worshiped other _____. At times they were nothing _____ the generation before them.

As the New Testament arrives, we _____ of different sects of Jews, some called Pharisees, some called Sadducees. One can read the entire Old Testament and never _____ of the Pharisees or even the Sadducees. These sects arose during the 400-year _____ between the Old and the New Testaments. The Lord Jesus spent a considerable amount of time _____ Israel away from the human traditions of the Pharisees and the errors of the Sadducees back to _____ religion, true faith in God.

The Lord said of the Pharisees, “Every plant that my heavenly _____ has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are _____ guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will _____ into a pit” (Matthew 15:13-14). The Lord Jesus distinguished what they taught and practiced with what the Father taught; and what they taught wouldn’t _____; their traditions and practices will be uprooted.

In the same way, much of what people _____ Christianity is quite different from the Christianity of the New Testament. It is a constant amazement how many things have _____ their way into modern Christian religion that have nothing to do with what Jesus taught or what He intended for His people to _____. For instance, where do you _____ in the New Testament about denominations, human creeds, archbishops, holy water, lent, purgatory, or a special priesthood, or a pope? Not _____ of these things is mentioned in the New Testament. Each of them arose when Christians _____ away from the Word and began adapting to the culture that was around them.

Things like the Crusades, witch trials, and the Inquisition came not from the Christianity of the New Testament but from a corrupted _____ of Christianity. To say that all Christians are mean-spirited or that Christianity leads people to be terrorists is _____ unjustified. What then does the _____ teach? How are Christians to _____ and react to those who are not Christians? We are going to look at several Scriptures that show God’s _____ for us as Christians.

Read Matthew 5:43-48. Christ expects His people to _____ the Father in Heaven. They are to be sons of their Father, who causes His _____ to rise on the evil and the good and sends _____ on the righteous and the unrighteous. They are to bless and love others even when others don’t _____ it or won’t return it. One of the distinguishing characteristics of _____ Christianity is in how they treat their enemies. Christians _____ for their enemies and those who persecute them. Romans 12:14 says, “_____ those who persecute you; bless and do not _____.” The New Testament gets even _____ specific in Romans 12:17-21. Christians are not to _____ with swords but to overcome with _____.



The Lord Jesus taught and practiced _____ toward others. He wanted people to stop and think about how they _____ other people. The Golden Rule expects people to rise above selfishness and to be a _____ to others around them (Matthew 7:12). In the story of the Good Samaritan Jesus broke down racial and religious barriers, when it came to _____ other people. Jews regarded Samaritans as corrupted Israelites who married into other nations and compromised their _____ in God. But Jesus used the good heart and the example of a Samaritan to _____ the selfish and bigoted hearts of his fellow Jews, who would not help a stranger. Read Galatians 6:9-10.

Jesus Christ _____ down the barriers between Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:13-16). Through loving everyone, Jesus brings _____ to this world. There is no passage in the New Testament where the Lord counsels His followers to start a _____ in His name. Christians do not win _____ through violence. They _____ the gospel, the good news of the love of God and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for people's sins. Biblical Christianity _____ people out of violence, and selfishness, and hatred and puts them into a _____ of love, and peace, and kindness.

The New Testament does tell when a _____ drew a sword and used it to hurt someone, but Jesus rebuked him (Matthew 26:51-54). Jesus has, and He had, the _____ to conquer anyone anywhere at any time, but the Lord is not out to conquer through the sword. The Lord Jesus is _____, and no one has ever loved us like He has. He wants to _____ our hearts so that we will love Him the way that He loves us, not to do us harm but to _____ us.

Just because people _____ to act as Christians doesn't mean that they're following the will of the Lord Jesus. Many people through the ages have acted on their own _____ and have tried to justify their actions by claiming to act in the _____ of Christ. Jesus distinguished a _____ disciple from one who claims to be a Christian (John 8:31-32). True Christians follow the _____ of Jesus; false Christians don't.

God gives government the authority to _____ evildoers, so that righteous people may live in _____ (Romans 13:1-7). When the Jews threatened the _____ of the apostle Paul, Paul as a Roman citizen appealed to Caesar in Rome for protection and his _____. He didn't organize a group of vigilantes to _____ his Jewish enemies. God doesn't allow Christians to take the law into their own hands with _____. It's certainly right for Christians to call upon _____ authorities for protection and for justice. Paul urges Christians to _____ for civil authorities (1 Timothy 2:1-2). It's one thing to pray for protection from evildoers; it's another thing to _____ violent and to take vengeance on your own.

Those who are enemies of the _____ can be very cruel to Christians. Evil people don't mind persecuting and accusing Christians of things that are simply not _____ (2 Timothy 3:12). The devil has been a liar from the beginning (John 8:44) and doesn't hesitate to _____ about Christianity and falsely accuse Christians.

Are Christians _____? No! They have _____ weaknesses. They realize they're _____ saved by the grace of God (1 Peter 2:21-24). Some accusations about Christians are unfortunately _____.

If you want to live in peace, then start with your relationship with _____. Find peace of heart and soul by being _____ to the will of God. Peace with God comes to us through the _____ of Jesus Christ on the cross. When we're baptized in water, we're baptized into His _____ (Romans 6:3). The blood that He shed in His death graciously _____ away our sins when we are baptized according to Acts 22:16.