

WALKING IN WISDOM (**Colossians 4:5**) Number #30

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All Scripture quotations from the Editor are from the New King James Version
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Celebrate Very Carefully By John T. Polk II

"Do not lie in wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not plunder his resting place; For a righteous *man* may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity. Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Lest the LORD see it, and *it* displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him" (**Proverbs 24:15-18**). The following are reasons why Christians should *celebrate very carefully*:

1. The "righteous" are those who are trying to follow God's Word:

"Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous" (**1 John 3:7**). And, despite the wickedness of the wicked, God will bring them down, and see that the "righteous" "rise again."

2. The victory is the Lord's. David prayed: "O my God, I trust in You; Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies triumph over me. (**Psalms 25:2**). A psalmist replied: "For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands" (**Psalms 92:4**).

And, under Jesus Christ, reassures Christians: "Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing" (**2 Corinthians 2:14-15**). Christians are a "fragrance" because they are to be filled with Jesus Christ: "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma"

(**Ephesians 5:2**). The more we show God's great love for us, then "those who are perishing" are better enabled to find their way to Him who is the sweetest aroma of all! Therefore, since, "we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord" (**Hebrews 10:30**), Christians will not show an attitude including "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth" (**Colossians 3:8**).

3. Rejoice not that our enemy has suffered loss, rather REJOICE THAT GOD HAS SHOWN HIS POWER OVER EVIL YET AGAIN! After hurling every invective (a.k.a. blasphemous/hurtful labels), every corruptive "legal" maneuver, and even attempting assassinations at Donald J. Trump, **God spared Trump to be elected.** (a) So Gamaliel was wisely right: "And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God" (**Acts 5:38-39**). God made an idolatrous king learn who God is, but first, allowed the king victory over God's own disobedient people. (b) God, through Jeremiah, proclaimed: "**Nebuchadnezzar** the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations" (**Jeremiah 25:9**). Though Nebuchadnezzar captured God's temple vessels and people, four Jews remained faithful to God: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (**Daniel 1:6-7, 8-20**). By God's gift, Daniel interpreted the king's dreams (**Daniel 2:1-45; 4:1-27**), Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were spared in the fiery furnace (**Daniel 3:1-30**), Daniel was spared from the lions in the den (**Daniel 6:1-28**). Nebuchadnezzar promoted Daniel as "ruler over the province of Babylon" (**Daniel 2:48**), decreed that everyone everywhere was forbidden to speak against Daniel's God "because there is no other God who can deliver like this" (**Daniel 3:29**), and after being taken down from his throne but restored after 7 years, Nebuchadnezzar wrote to all they should "know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (**Daniel 4:32**). NEBUCHADNEZZAR LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE THAT NO AUTHORITY ON EARTH CAN OVERCOME GOD'S AUTHORITY AND POWER! (c) **Jesus Christ** stood His ground with politician Pilate who "said to Him, 'Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?' Jesus answered, 'You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin'" (**John 19:10-11**). Surely,

now in 2024, no one can challenge the conclusions of Gamaliel and Nebuchadnezzar or Jesus Christ.

4. Jesus' Claim and Challenge Still Stands: "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.' Amen." (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

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Salted Speech Colossians 4:6

~ "I had rather be on my farm than be emperor of the world."

~~GEORGE WASHINGTON

~ "I have come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians."

~~Charles de Gaulle, French General & politician



"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, **in everything give thanks**; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near" (**Psalms 75:1**).



By Robert Lupo

God Will Avenge...Not You!

You've seen it a thousand times in the movies. The villain looks up to the sky after suffering a monumental blow to his ego and shouts, "I'll have my revenge!" In an instant, we understand the motivations of the antagonist and are convinced to root against him for the rest of the film.

On one hand, this cliché is so overplayed that you will hardly see it in a cartoon anymore. On the other hand, it became so common because the temptation for revenge is as understandable as it is unjustifiable.

When we are wronged, we want that evil to be answered. That is called justice. But, when we take justice into our own hands, it is called revenge. The Bible tells us, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). So, what do we do with the desire for justice?

The desire for justice is not a bad thing. Justice is a reflection of God's nature. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He" (Deut. 32:4). When evil is done in the world, God promises that it will be answered with justice. "For the Lord loves justice, and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the descendants of the

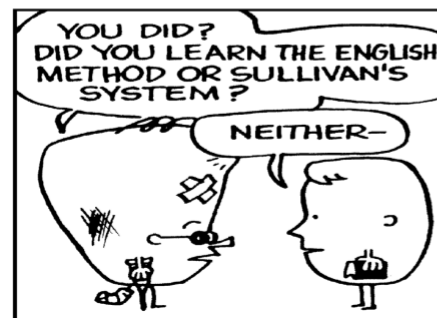
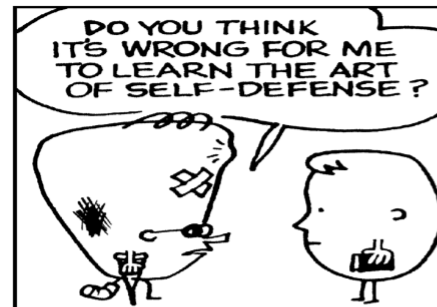
wicked shall be cut off" (Psa. 37:28). We are even commanded to desire justice. Isaiah 1:17 tells us, "Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow." So, how is justice carried out if we cannot take revenge?

God created institutions to enact His justice in this life. In the church, He gave us the eldership (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1-3; Heb. 13:17). By their counsel and judgment, brethren are held accountable. In the world, He gave us government. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil...But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Rom. 13:3-4).

When you are hurt, it is right for you to want justice. But, we must seek the Lord's justice and not our own. First, we need to be merciful. "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment" (Jas. 2:13). We must always extend forgiveness when asked. Second, we must be advocates for those being wronged. We must bear witness against injustices. When the laws of God are broken, we bring the guilty before the church. When the laws of man are broken, we bring the guilty before the court, and any injustice left unserved God assures us will be carried out in eternity (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10).

Justice is a reflection of God's nature.

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