



## [John 17:14](#)

(14) I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

*New International Version*

[Jesus](#) addresses the source of the more personal persecutions that threaten our [peace](#). The carnal mind is enmity against [God](#) ([Romans 8:7](#)), and we can feel this hatred to a potentially terrifying degree when it is aimed directly at us. Throughout history, this sort of peace-shattering disturbance has produced job losses, divided families, uprooted lives in fleeing, imprisonment for those caught ([Acts 9:1-2](#); [12:3-4](#)), and for some martyrdom ([Acts 7:54-60](#); [12:1-2](#)).

Jesus says we can have peace through these kinds of experiences because He can give it to us. When He said this, He was not introducing a new idea. As part of the "blessings and curses chapter," [Leviticus 26:6](#) shows that God is the ultimate source of peace, and He will give it upon our meeting the condition of obeying His commandments:

I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land.

Here, peace is a quality of life He can give even as he gives rain in due season. Leviticus 26 emphasizes material prosperity as God's blessing to Israel. Peace is necessary for the material prosperity of a nation. War may be the ultimate distraction from accomplishing anything positive; it is catastrophically debilitating to every area of life. Not only can it break a nation economically, but also warp its people psychologically and destroy its social structure, infrastructure, and spirit.

Should we think that peace is no less necessary to spiritual prosperity? Is it possible for us to grow into the [image of God](#) when distracted by conflict and the anxieties and

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troubles it produces? Even if the conflict is not directly ours, it adversely affects our ability to live God's way of life. This is why the apostle Paul counsels us as he does in [1 Timothy 2:1-2](#):

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

Conflict promotes self-centeredness, virtually forcing us to flee, defend ourselves or attack the other to maintain or establish a measure of control. It can also cause us to detour permanently from what we were trying to accomplish.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**  
[The Fruit of the Spirit: Peace](#)

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