



[1 Peter 2:21-23](#)

(21) For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

(22) *"Who committed no sin,*

Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; (23) who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;

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In these verses, the apostle shows Christ's example, even when He had the love, wisdom and discernment to judge righteous judgment and correctly put His enemies in their place. So strong was Jesus' commitment to these principles that, even when His life was on the line, and His enemies reviled Him intensely, He did not respond in kind. He set us an example to do likewise.

Perhaps the key statement is He "committed Himself to Him who judges rightly." His response was an act of [faith](#) in God's awareness of His situation and God's perfect ability not merely to act but to act in exactly the right way for the good of all. The reality of God's sovereignty over His creation led to Jesus' minute-by-minute faithful submission.

If vengeance belongs to [God](#), then men, especially those who have pledged their lives to be subject to His government, have no right to take it to themselves. Very frequently, it takes real strength of character, bolstered by faith, to help and serve someone who has directly tried to harm us. God's instructions to us are clear: "'Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" ([Romans 12:20-21](#)).

"Enemy" does not mean one we hate, but one who is bitter toward us. If we hate others, we are right back in the spirit of murder. Paul is stating a critical universal principle: Over time, [kindness](#) removes enmity, but seeking revenge increases it. Booker T. Washington said, "The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend."

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Sixth Commandment \(Part One\) \(1997\)](#)

Related Topics:

[Loving Enemies](#)

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[Revenge](#)

[Righteous Judgment](#)

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[Vengeance](#)

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