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THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

LIVE PEACEABLY

“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). Anyone who has watched the news of late knows just how relevant these two passages are to our present generation. If properly applied they would eliminate the rioting, looting, burning of buildings and attacks against both civilians and law enforcement officers such as those that have impacted communities across our nation. Lawlessness is always a detriment to any society. There is no legitimate justification for breaking the civil laws of the land unless they conflict with the law of God (Acts 5:29).

There has always been conflict between good and evil. That is why the Bible uses the qualifying phrase, “as much as depends on you.” As a Christian I must do my part to live peaceably with others while recognizing that those who walk in the darkness of sin may not agree to live peaceably with me. Yet, when conflict arises the faithful Christian does not retaliate or seek personal vengeance knowing that “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay says the Lord” (Romans 12:19). Instead, the Christian follows the direction of God to feed his hungry enemy and, if he is thirsty, give him drink. The Christian must not allow himself to be overcome by evil but to overcome evil by doing good (Romans 12:20-21). As long as good people seek peace there will be evil people who seek to destroy peace. Those who desire to see the Lord will pursue peace with all people and live holy lives regardless of the actions of others.

The greatest form of peace is peace with God. No person can be at peace with God without receiving the forgiveness of sin. Those who choose sin over God choose constant conflict resulting in separation from Him (Isaiah 59:1-2). Only through the blood of Jesus may one be forgiven of sin and reconciled to God. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ...” (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). The process of achieving peace with God is to heed the good news of salvation, believe Jesus is the Son of God, repent of sins, confess faith in Christ and be baptized into Christ where reconciliation is found. No one will be at peace with God without obedience to His will (Hebrews 5:8-9). As much as depends on us, let us live peaceably with God and with all people.