

Evil and Wickedness in Paul's Writings

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of June 11, 2022.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I gave a presentation titled "Evil and Wickedness—Part 5." The focus of this study was about evil and wickedness in Paul's writings.

Various categories

Notice some of the various categories where the subjects of evil and wickedness could be placed.

- The evil one—Ephesians 6:16 and 2 Thessalonians 3:3.
- Mentioning evil workers—Philippians 3:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 2 Timothy 3:13 and Titus 1:12.
- Mentioning that evil develops in people—Romans 9:10-12.
- Mentioning evil within believers—Romans 7:19, 21 and 1 Corinthians 5:13.
- Comments about civil leaders and evil—Romans 13:3-4.
- General comments about evil behavior—12 different sections of Scripture.
- Do not repay evil—see six verses below.
- Avoid evil—see seven verses below.

Do not repay evil

Romans 12:17—"Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men."

Romans 12:19—"Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."

Romans 12:21—"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

1 Thessalonians 5:15—"See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all."

2 Timothy 4:14—“Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works.”

2 Timothy 4:18—“And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom.”

Avoid evil

Romans 12:9—“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”

1 Corinthians 10:6—“Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.”

2 Corinthians 13:7—“Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable.”

Ephesians 4:31—“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.”

Ephesians 5:15-16—“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

1 Thessalonians 5:22—“Abstain from every form of evil.”

Hebrews 5:14—“But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

Compare translations

In conclusion, I want to spotlight the practice of comparing different translations as a valuable tool in enhancing the meaning of a verse in the Bible.

Romans 16:19—“For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.”

New American Standard Bible—“Wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil.”

Revised Standard Version—“Wise as to what is good, and guileless as to what is evil.”

James Moffatt Translation—“Experts in good and innocents in evil.”