

Summary of the Royal Family Honor Code: Be Grace Oriented, Respect What Is Honorable; Have Harmonious Rapport: "Peace": Refers to People not Nations

10. Honor Code Principle #10: Two wrongs do not make a right. Respect those who represent the foundational institutions of an orderly society.

Romans 12:17 - Never [dative of disadvantage of μηδεῖς, *mēdeis*] pay back [present active imperative of ἀποδίδωμι, *apodidōmi*: connotes revenge] evil with evil [do not retaliate by entering the cosmic system with your adversary, but rather remain grace oriented]. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all mankind [refers to those things which reflect the principles or institutions of biblical integrity].

11. Honor Code Principle #11: Use biblical problem-solving devices to live in harmony with all men.

Romans 12:18 - If it is possible, and it is, as much as it depends on you, live in harmony with all men.

- 1) This verse is used erroneously by Progressives posing as theologians to justify pacifism. It does not teach this, but it does establish the principle by which the believer is to deal with his adversaries.
- 2) The word that offers difficulty is the verb εἰρηνεύω, *eirēneuō* which is translated "peaceably" (KJV & NET), "at peace" (NASB & NIV). These translations are fine but pacifists seize on the word "peace" to justify their antiwar position as if "be at peace with all men" (NASB) refers to international relations.
- 3) The context is the royal family honor code that presents principles which believers are to utilize in their relationship with others.
- 4) It is true that in the Classical Greek the *eirēneuō* word group does refer to the state of a nation that is not at war:

Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 1:425:

εἰρηνεύω, *eirēneuō*. Peace is not only the elimination of war, but an organization of the future, because it guarantees tranquility (Plato), wealth (Homer), the cessation of banditry (Epictetus 'ep-ik-tēt-as'), an opportunity for all sorts of happiness and prosperity.

If peace is the situation of a nation that is not at war, it also defines the public order, relations between citizens, and social peace, as opposed to discord, trouble, and sedition.

- 5) The peace addressed in the Koine of most New Testament passages has to do with tranquility of soul and harmony between believers:

Ibid., 434:

Spiritual peace resides in hearts and thus points to the Holy Spirit, who infuses it in the form of mutual love, harmony, and brotherly unity: "To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6); "the reign of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22). "Be zealous to maintain the unity of the Spirit by this bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). So we understand not only that "the peace of God passes all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), but that the apostles ceaselessly exhort believers to seek and find peace between themselves, because peace is a distinguishing mark of their religion. "Be at peace with all people" (Rom. 12:18). "We pursue that which contributes to peace and mutual edification" (Rom. 14:19).

This is what gives the *eirēnē* of the apostolic salutations its density of meaning, it includes peace with God, the benefits of salvation, harmony with all people, calm in the soul which is purified from its sins; an interior well-being that follows justification by faith and is the work of the Holy Spirit.

- 6) The honor code principle found in Romans 12:18 concerns interpersonal relationships between individuals. As much as it depends on you, you are to live harmoniously with your fellow man.
- 7) Others may do things that irritate you or cause you to question their motives and priorities, but they have a right to be left alone.
- 8) Those who operate on a cosmic honor code are not satisfied to leave others alone. Frustrated because they cannot run the lives of others to the degree they desire, they lobby in favor of laws that grant them the power.
- 9) The lust to manipulate the lives and behavior of others is a violation of this eleventh honor code principle – utilize biblical problem-solving devices to live in harmony with others.
- 10) When this solution fails to produce the harmony expected then believers have the following options: (1) mental separation, (2) physical separation, (3) legal action if the antagonist is in violation of criminal laws, or (4) violence in the execution of self-defense, protection of loved ones, or defense of private property.
- 11) Verses 18-20 summarize for us how we are to handle conflicts with our fellow man, where to draw the line between harmony and violence, and the mental attitude required for both.
- 12) Romans 12:18 begins with the protasis, the supposition of a first class condition: "If it is possible and it is."
- 13) The conclusion reached by the apodosis is that based on the fact that it is possible, you are to live in harmony with all men.
- 14) But in between the protasis and the apodosis is a prepositional phrase: τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν, *to ex humōn*, an idiom translated "as much as it depends on you."