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Living With Evil in the End Times



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #218 ~

We live in an evil age with evil people, and this makes life extremely difficult for Christians. But this is God's sovereign plan, and the way it's going to be until Jesus, His Son, returns to earth and takes us home to heaven. In fact, it will keep getting worse up until that day when we are raptured and gathered to Jesus. But how does God want us to live with sinners? What are we to say and do? In His word, God has told us everything we need to know about how we are to relate and respond to sinners at this critical time in history, the closing years of this increasingly evil age.

1. Remember, the unsaved are sinners and will do what is sinful, even terribly wicked things. They don't have God's Spirit in them. They are children of the devil (1 John 3:10), and their minds are blinded by him (2 Cor. 4:4). There is no fear of God before their eyes (Rom. 3:18).

They are proud, selfish, angry, covetous, immoral, unholy, and unloving. And they curse, swear, and slander, and they hate you, hurt you, and get mad at you. (Rom. 1:28-32, 2 Tim. 3:1-5). Never be surprised by the evil and devilish things that sinners say and do.

2. Love the lost, the unsaved sinners, for this is what Jesus commands you to do. *"I say to you, 'love your enemies'"* (Matt. 5:44). This is not a feel-good love, but an agape love, a spiritual and supernatural love – it's being compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, patient, forbearing, and forgiving (Col. 3:12-13). Unbelievers need to know what God is really like, and loving them is one way they find out. Remember Jesus' example – *"Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd"* (Matt. 9:36). Might we love like Jesus loved. Eph. 5:1

3. Pray for the unsaved, even those who persecute you (Matt. 5:44). Ask God to have mercy on their souls, to forgive them, *"for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34). Pray that God would break through their sin-hardened hearts and open their devil-blinded minds, that they would see their need for a Savior, one who can rescue them from sin and death. Pray, for only God can do this amazing, soul-saving work in their lives. Psalm 107:10-16

4. Overcome evil with good. Sinners may say bad things to you, slander you, revile you, or do something worse. Oftentimes, our usual reaction is to get angry, and to want to get even and retaliate, but you are *"not to be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good"* (Rom. 12:21). Be forgiving, gentle, and kind – this is true Christian love – and this may cause sinners to wonder why you are different, and can open a door for the good news of Christ.

5. Don’t fret, don’t worry, don’t get mad when sinners do evil things. It’s easy to get upset at sinners when they are just plain evil, when they are callously and blatantly sinful, but you are to keep trusting the Lord and keep doing what is good and right. My favorite chapter about how we are to live with sinners is Psalm 37 – it gives God’s perspective, it shows that He is in control, it tells you what to do, and it promises that He will protect you and bless you. *“The humble will inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”* Psalm 37:11

6. You may be persecuted, you may suffer, and even greatly so. Jesus has told you – *“if they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you”* (John 15:20). Consider it a badge of honor if God wants you to suffer for Him (1 Pet. 4:19). Be thankful when you are persecuted, knowing that God will use it for His purposes and your good. Remember Paul, that his circumstances *“turned out for the greater progress of the gospel”* (Phil. 1:12-14). And if you are here during great tribulation times and are turned in to evil authorities, then love your persecutors, and maybe *“it will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.”* Luke 21:12-17

7. Share the gospel with the lost, with those who are walking on that road leading to hell. Remember what Jesus said, *“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come”* (Matt. 24:14). Is not sharing the gospel with the helpless and hopeless one of the main reasons God left you on earth? As you see the day of Christ drawing near, be bold, and tell the unsaved the good news so they can be saved from their sin, from hell on earth and hell in hell, and so they can be with Jesus, and be blessed forever in a new heaven and on a new earth. Heb. 10:25, 12:22-24

8. Know the future of unsaved sinners. Do you ever think about unbelievers who seem to be successful, who seem to get away with evil, or even with murder? Do you know what God says about those who stay unsaved, who never repent and turn to Christ? *"They will wither quickly… evildoers will be cut off… a little while and the wicked will be no more… his day is coming… their sword will enter their own heart… the wicked will perish… like smoke they vanish away… he passed away, and lo, he was no more… transgressors will be altogether destroyed"* (Psalm 37:2, 9, 10, 13, 15, 20, 20, 36, 38). Be assured, for God is perfectly just, and he will make sure that unrepentant sinners get what they deserve, for sooner or later you will see them no more – they will leave this world, and be punished forever in hell. Matt. 25:40, 46; John 3:16

9. You must have hope. An essential key to living in an evil age with sinners who hate God and who hate you is having hope. It's knowing that living for God on earth will be worth it in heaven, for then you will be greatly rewarded, then you will be wonderfully glorified, then you will see and be with Jesus your Savior and King, and after that, you will reign with Him during the millennial kingdom, which is a good age, not an evil one like now. Be excited and encouraged by the fact that the best days of your life are in the future. Rom. 8:18-25

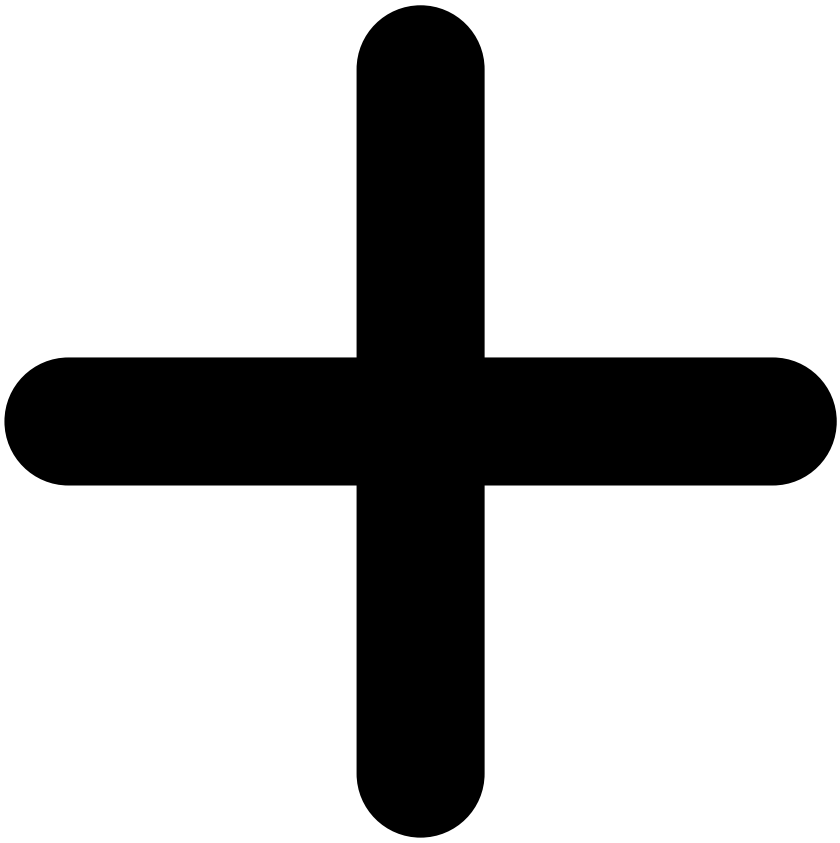
10. Most importantly, have a good relationship with Jesus. To successfully live with sinners in a sinful world, you must know Jesus as your Lord and Shepherd and stay close to Him (Ps. 23:1-4). The way to have a close relationship with Jesus is to love God's word (Ps. 119:105), trust Him (Jer. 17:7), pray to Him (Matt. 7:7), obey Him (John 14:21, 23), be Spirit-filled (Eph. 5:18), live a holy life (1 Pet. 1:15-16), be in a good church (Acts 2:42), and not be friends with sinners. 1 Cor. 15:33

I don't think we realize how evil it will be in the last years of

this evil age. Yes, it is bad now, for sinners are unrestrained and sin is rampant, but the Antichrist isn't even here yet. When this most evil man, this man of lawlessness, this son of destruction, is ruling the world, then sinners will be unbelievably ungodly and wicked. (2 Thess. 2:1-12). They *"will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived"* (2 Tim 3:12). *"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name."* Matt. 24:9

As you apply these truths today, tomorrow, and in the years ahead, you will see God making you into the man or woman He wants you to be, one who is loving, strong, trained, and ready for whatever assignment He has planned for you. *"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will distress, or tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?… in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."* Rom. 8:35-39

P. S. We live in a sinful world, and I am sure you know it's getting worse and worse. And so don't be sinful and worldly – be holy, and know that God is training you to be a special service soldier for these days and the future He has in store for you. *"Your Spiritual Service: A Member of the Special Forces"* is an important article about how God is raising you up so you can be a strong-and-courageous fighter for Him, especially in the end-times, these last years of this evil age.



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