

Embrace
Holy
Living

RE- FLECTING GOD

06/21/21 - No Paybacks

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1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

A group of boys surrounded a child on the playground. Each boy took a turn roughing up the child and then quickly said, "No paybacks!" No matter what the child did to escape, the group around him continued to hurt him and insisted that he wasn't allowed to do anything to defend himself. It wasn't until an adult realized what was going on and intervened that the situation ended. He was hurt, confused, and felt powerless against the other boys. In his pain, he wanted to hurt them, like they had hurt him.

The situation in Thessalonica had been a rough one. Paul's letter to them addressed persecution, suffering, and distress. The believers had suffered, and no doubt some may have felt the desire to fight back in their hurt and frustration. Paul, however, encouraged them not to pay back wrong for wrong, but to strive to do good, not only for each other, but for everyone else. Paul did not dismiss their pain and struggle; he encouraged them to move forward in faith by being patient with each other and to live in peace with one another.

Author: Karolyn Parsons