THE QUESTION

What does the Bible say about defending yourself with words?

Asked by a THF member on May 18, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 9 numbered quotations · the 24 early Christian passages and 212 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-does-the-bible-say-about-defending-yourself-with-words

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

Christians may answer false charges with the plain truth, but they must not trade insult for insult. Early writers point to Jesus, who stayed silent before false witnesses, and urge meekness, prayer and gentleness toward harsh critics. When believers did defend themselves, they spoke truthfully and trusted God to give them the words.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 7

Do not return insult for insult

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Polycarp lists evil speaking and false witness among the things believers must avoid. He echoes Peter's teaching that Christians do not pay back reviling with reviling or cursing with cursing. Whatever defense a Christian makes, it may not be a counterattack of abuse.

1 “keeping ourselves from all unrighteousness, covetousness, love of money, evil speaking, and false witness; "not returning evil for evil, or reviling for reviling," or blow for blow, or cursing for cursing”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Polycarp,** *Epistle to the Philippians* (c. 100–155 AD) **Source 10, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Answer harsh words with gentleness and prayer

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Ignatius tells believers how to respond to people who speak harshly against them. They are to be gentle and meek, to pray in reply to insults, and to stand firm in the faith rather than strike back.

2 “Be conciliatory against their harsh words, with meekness of mind and gentleness. Respond to their blasphemies with prayer, and arm yourself with faith against their errors.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle to the Ephesians* 10 (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 6, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

3 “Conquer their harsh temper with gentleness, their passion with meekness.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 5, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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POINT 3 OF 7

Jesus stayed silent before false witnesses

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen points out that Jesus gave no answer to the false charges at His trial. He saw Jesus' whole life as a better reply than any speech, which shows that silence can sometimes be the strongest defense.

4 “When false witnesses testified against our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, He remained silent. And when false charges were brought against Him, He gave no answer.”

later in the same passage

“He believed that His whole life and conduct among the Jews were a better reply than any answer to the false testimony, or any formal defense against the accusations.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 20, page 7** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Let a good life answer critics

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In both versions of his letter, Ignatius hopes that critics will learn from how Christians live. Good works are meant to speak where words fail or are not heard.

5 “Let them be instructed by your works especially.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle to the Ephesians* 10 (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 6, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

6 “See, then, that they are instructed by your works, if in no other way.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 7, page 6** Read it in the library ›

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POINT 5 OF 7

Christians may defend themselves against false charges

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Athenagoras wrote a formal defense of Christians to the rulers. He does not ask to escape punishment for real crimes, but he does ask that Christians not be condemned for their name alone. A calm, honest defense against false charges was fitting.

7

> "If anyone can prove that we have committed a crime, whether small or great, we do not ask to escape punishment."
>
> *later in the same passage*
>
> "But if the accusation is only about our name, then the matter is different."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Athenagoras,** *A Plea for the Christians* 2 (c. 170–190 AD) **Source 17, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Speak the truth when questioned

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin explains that when Christians are questioned, they do not deny their faith. He grounds this in the duty to speak the truth in all matters, which he says pleases God.

8

> "However, when we are questioned, we do not deny this, because we are not aware of any wrongdoing and believe it is wrong not to speak the truth in all matters, which we also know is pleasing to God, and because we strongly wish to free you from an unjust bias."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Second Apology* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 14, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

God gives words to those on trial

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian applies Jesus' promise to believers handed over for their faith. They need not plan a clever speech ahead of time, because the Lord promises to give them a mouth and wisdom.

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9 "Therefore settle it in your hearts not to think beforehand about what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which your adversaries will not be able to resist.""

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 23, page 7 **Read it in the library ›**

THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- These passages do not set out rules for everyday disagreements at home or at work.
- They show both silence and a spoken defense, but do not say exactly when each one is right.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 24 early Christian passages and 212 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–24, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 25–150, in Bible order), then 86 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *24 passages from 13 writers*

Didache, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

1 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 15 (1885 English) "reprove one another, not in anger, but in peace, as you have it in the Gospel… [continues online] **read ›**

Barnabas, *c. 70–132 AD · source 2*

2 *Epistle of Barnabas* (on point 2) You shall not speak the word of God with any impurity. You shall not show favoritism when you reprove someone for transgression. You shall be meek; you shall be peaceable… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · sources 3–4*

3 *Shepherd* (on point 1) "But if you listen, you will share in the sin of the one who speaks evil, if you believe the slander you hear. For if you believe it, you too… [continues online] **read ›**

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4 *Shepherd* (on point 1) haughtiness, insolence, lies, backbiting, hypocrisy, remembering wrongs, and every kind of slander. These are the deeds that are most wicked in human life. Therefore, the servant of God must restrain… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 5–9*

5 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* **Quote 3, page 2** "stand steadfast in the faith. Conquer their harsh temper with gentleness, their passion with meekness. For "blessed are the meek;" and Moses was meek above all men; and David was… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Epistle to the Ephesians* 10 **Quotes 2, 5, pages 2, 3** "Let them be instructed by your works especially. Be conciliatory against their harsh words, with meekness of mind and gentleness. Respond to their blasphemies with prayer, and arm yourself with… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 3** "ye meek in response to their wrath, humble in opposition to their boasting: to their blasphemies return your prayers… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Epistle to Polycarp* 2 (1885 English; on point 2) "rather subdue those that are evil by gentleness… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Epistle to the Philadelphians* (on point 3) nor through vainglory, but by the love of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; at whose meekness I am struck with admiration, and who by his silence is… [continues online] **read ›**

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · sources 10–11*

10 *Epistle to the Philippians* **Quote 1, page 2** "covetousness, love of money, evil speaking, and false witness; "not returning evil for evil, or reviling for reviling," or blow for blow, or cursing for cursing, but remembering what the… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Epistle to the Philippians* (on point 2) is the Son of God, and our everlasting High Priest, build you up in faith and truth, and in all meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, forbearance, and purity; and may… [continues online] **read ›**

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 12–15*

12 *Second Apology* (1885 English; on point 5) "she presented a paper to thee, the Emperor, requesting that first she be permitted to arrange her affairs, and afterwards to make her defence against the accusation, when her affairs… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 6) although you act wrongfully, I will continue to respond to any proposition you bring up and any contradictions you make. In fact, I do the same with all people of… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Second Apology* (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** "when we are examined, we make no denial, because we are not conscious of any evil, but count it impious not to speak the truth in all things, which also… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 6) to Christ (it says, 'and He shall be the hope of nations'), I choose not to engage in a mere verbal dispute with you, as I have not tried to… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · source 16*

16 *Diatessaron* 50 (1885 English; on point 3) "15:3a And 16 the chief priests and the elders accused him of many things… [continues online] **read ›**

Athenagoras, *c. 170–190 AD · source 17*

17 *A Plea for the Christians* 2 **Quote 7, page 4** "escape punishment. We are ready to endure the harshest and most merciless penalties. But if the accusation is only about our name, then the matter is different. It cannot be… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · source 18*

18 *Stromata* 4.8 (1885 English; on point 2) "6:10 Putting on, therefore, bowels of mercy, gentleness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering… [continues online] **read ›**

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Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · source 19*

19 *Against Marcion* 15 (1885 English; on point 1) “is to offer the other cheek; which is not only not to return railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 20–21*

20 *Against Celsus* 1 **Quote 4, page 3** “false witnesses testified against our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, He remained silent. And when false charges were brought against Him, He gave no answer. He believed that His whole… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Against Celsus* 2 (1885 English; on point 5) “this is our answer to his allegations, and our defense of the truths contained in Christianity, that if any one were to come from the study of Grecian opinions and… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 22–23*

22 *Treatises* (on point 7) “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which your adversaries shall not be able to resist… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Epistles* (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “I will give you a month and wisdom, which your adversaries shall not be able to resist… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 24*

24 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 2) like manner it is in the Gospel also: Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *126 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

25 **Exodus 20:16** You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor with false testimony. **read ›**

26 **Exodus 21:25** burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. **read ›**

27 **Exodus 23:1** You shall not accept an empty report; you shall not join with the unjust man to become an unjust witness. **read ›**

28 **Deuteronomy 5:20** You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor with false testimony. **read ›**

29 **Deuteronomy 19:16** And if an unjust witness rises up against a man, accusing him of ungodliness, **read ›**

30 **Job 20:3** I will hear the discipline that shames me, and a spirit from understanding answers me. **read ›**

31 **Job 32:14** But you have permitted a man to speak such words. **read ›**

32 **Job 33:32** If you have words, answer me; speak, for I want you to be justified. **read ›**

33 **Psalms 15:3** who has not deceived with his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbor, nor taken up an insult against those nearest to him; (Septuagint Psalm 14:3 (Psalm 15:3 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

34 **Psalms 119:42** And I will give an answer to those who taunt me, for I have hoped in your words. (Septuagint Psalm 118:42 (Psalm 119:42 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

35 **Proverbs 6:19** An unrighteous witness kindles lies, and sends disputes between brothers. **read ›**

36 **Proverbs 9:7** He who disciplines evil men will get dishonor for himself, and he who rebukes the ungodly will bring blame on himself. **read ›**

37 **Proverbs 9:8** Do not rebuke evil men, lest they hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. **read ›**

38 **Proverbs 12:17** The righteous declares a faithfulness that is shown openly, but the witness of the unrighteous is deceitful. **read ›**

39 **Proverbs 12:18** There are some who wound when they speak, like swords, but the tongues of the wise heal. **read ›**

40 **Proverbs 15:1** Anger destroys even those of sound judgment, yet a submissive answer turns away wrath, but a hurtful word stirs up anger. **read ›**

41 **Proverbs 17:4** A bad man listens to the tongue of the lawless, but a righteous man does not pay attention to lying lips. **read ›**

42 **Proverbs 19:5** A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who accuses unrighteously will not escape. **read ›**

43 **Proverbs 19:9** A false witness will not go unpunished, and whoever kindles wickedness will perish by it. **read ›**

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44 **Proverbs 21:28** A false witness will perish, but an obedient man will speak with caution. **read ›**

45 **Proverbs 24:25** but those who rebuke will appear better, and blessing will come upon them; **read ›**

46 **Proverbs 25:18** A club and a sword and a sharp arrow— so also is a man who bears false witness against his friend. **read ›**

47 **Proverbs 26:4** Do not answer a fool according to his foolishness, lest you become like him. **read ›**

48 **Proverbs 27:5** Open rebukes are better than hidden friendship. **read ›**

49 **Proverbs 28:23** He who rebukes a man’s ways will have more favor than he who flatters with the tongue. **read ›**

50 **Ecclesiastes 7:11** Wisdom is good with an inheritance, and an advantage to those who see the sun. **read ›**

51 **Ecclesiastes 7:14** In the day of goodness live in good, and in the day of evil, see; see, God has also made the one to match the other, concerning speech, so that man may find nothing after him. **read ›**

52 **Isaiah 2:16** and upon every ship of the sea, and upon every sight of beautiful ships. **read ›**

53 **Isaiah 2:17** And every man shall be brought low, and the arrogance of men shall fall, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. **read ›**

54 **Isaiah 2:20** For in that day a man shall cast away his abominations of silver and gold, which they made to worship worthless things and bats, **read ›**

55 **Isaiah 13:7** Therefore every hand will grow slack, and every soul of man will lose heart. **read ›**

56 **Isaiah 17:4** In that day the glory of Jacob will fail, and the rich things of his glory will be shaken. **read ›**

57 **Isaiah 29:21** and those who make men sin by a word; and they will make all who rebuke in the gates a stumbling block, because they have turned aside the righteous with unrighteous things. **read ›**

58 **Jeremiah 14:3** And her nobles sent their young ones for water; they came to the wells and found no water, and they brought back their vessels empty. **read ›**

59 **Jeremiah 24:9** And I will give them up to be scattered into all the kingdoms of the earth, and they will be an object of taunts and a proverb and an object of hatred and a curse in every place where I have driven them out. **read ›**

60 **Jeremiah 33:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

61 **Jeremiah 34:14** ‘When six years are completed, you shall send away your brother the Hebrew who shall be sold to you; and he shall work for you six years, and you shall send him away free.’ But they did not listen to me and did not turn their ear. (Septuagint Jeremiah 41:14 (Jeremiah 34:14 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

62 **Jeremiah 36:11** Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the Lord from the book. (Septuagint Jeremiah 43:11 (Jeremiah 36:11 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

63 **Jeremiah 37:21** The king gave orders, and they put him into the prison house, and gave him one loaf a day from outside, where they bake, until the bread was gone from the city. And Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison. (Septuagint Jeremiah 44:21 (Jeremiah 37:21 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

64 **Jeremiah 38:8** He went out to the king, and spoke to him and said, (Septuagint Jeremiah 45:8 (Jeremiah 38:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

65 **Jeremiah 40:9** Gedaliah swore to them and to their men, saying, “Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans; dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be better for you. (Septuagint Jeremiah 47:9 (Jeremiah 40:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

66 **Ezekiel 6:1** And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **read ›**

67 **Ezekiel 11:3** who say, ‘Have not the houses been newly built? This is the caldron, and we are the meat.’ **read ›**

68 **Ezekiel 15:3** Will they take wood from it to make it into anything for work? Will they take a peg from it to hang any vessel on it? **read ›**

69 **Ezekiel 15:6** Therefore say: Thus says the Lord: As the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire to be consumed, so I have given up those who dwell in Jerusalem. **read ›**

70 **Ezekiel 16:1** And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **read ›**

71 **Ezekiel 16:3** and you shall say: Thus says the Lord to Jerusalem: Your root and your birth are from the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. **read ›**

72 **Ezekiel 16:8** And I passed through by you and saw you; and behold, it was your time, and a time of those who lodge; and I spread my wings over you and covered your nakedness, and I swore to you; and I entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord, and you became mine. **read ›**

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73 **Ezekiel 20:3** “Son of man, speak to the elders of the house of Israel, and you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: Have you come to inquire of me? As I live, I will not answer you, says the Lord. **read ›**

74 **Ezekiel 21:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

75 **Ezekiel 23:4** And their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister; and they became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And as for their names, Samaria was Oholah, and Jerusalem was Oholibah. **read ›**

76 **Ezekiel 24:25** And you, Son of man, will it not be on the day when I take from them their strength, the pride of their boasting, the desires of their eyes, and the pride of their soul, their sons and their daughters, **read ›**

77 **Ezekiel 27:8** And your rulers who dwell in Sidon, and the Arvadites, became your rowers; your wise men, O Tyre, who were in you, these were your pilots. **read ›**

78 **Ezekiel 33:32** And you are to them like the sound of a sweet-toned, well-tuned psaltery; and they shall hear your words, but they shall by no means do them. **read ›**

79 **Ezekiel 34:16** The lost I will seek, and the straying I will bring back, and the broken I will bind up, and the failing I will strengthen, and the strong I will guard; and I will feed them with judgment. **read ›**

80 **Ezekiel 40:2** in a vision of God into the land of Israel, and set me on a very high mountain, and on it was something like the building of a city, opposite me. **read ›**

81 **Ezekiel 40:4** And the man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes at him whom you have seen, and hear with your ears, and set in your heart all that I am showing you; for you have come here so that I may show you; and you shall show all that you see to the house of Israel.” **read ›**

82 **Daniel 9:7** To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, and to us shame of face, as at this day—to the men of Judah, and to those who dwell in Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those near and those far off in every land where you have scattered them, for their faithlessness with which they dealt faithlessly. **read ›**

83 **Daniel 9:8** In you, O Lord, is our righteousness, and to us belongs shame of face—to our kings and to our rulers and to our fathers—for we have sinned. **read ›**

84 **Amos 1:11** Thus says the Lord: For three ungodly deeds of Idumea, and for four, I will not turn away from them, because they pursued their brother with the sword, and he destroyed the mother upon the earth, and seized his trembling for a testimony, and kept his onrush forever. **read ›**

85 **Amos 5:10** They hated the one who rebukes in the gates, and detested holy speech. **read ›**

86 **Jonah 4:4** Then the Lord said to Jonah, “Are you deeply grieved?” **read ›**

87 **Micah 5:10** And it shall be in that day, says the Lord, that I will utterly destroy the horses from your midst, and I will destroy your chariots; (Septuagint Micah 5:9 (Micah 5:10 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:11** Beware, then, of useless grumbling, and keep your tongue from slander; for no secret word goes out empty, and a lying mouth slays the soul. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Solomon 2:19** Let us examine him with insult and torture, that we may know his gentleness, and prove his patient endurance of wrong. **read ›**

90 **Wisdom of Solomon 18:21** For a blameless man hastened to fight on their behalf; bringing the weapon of his own ministry, prayer and the atonement of incense, he withstood the wrath and put an end to the disaster, showing that he was your servant. **read ›**

91 **Wisdom of Sirach 3:17** My child, perform your works in meekness, and you will be loved by an acceptable man. **read ›**

92 **Wisdom of Sirach 4:8** Turn your ear to the poor, and answer him in words of peace with meekness. **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Sirach 4:25** Do not speak against the truth, and be ashamed of your lack of instruction. **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Sirach 5:11** Be quick to listen, and give your answer with patience. **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Sirach 5:12** If you have understanding, answer your neighbor; but if not, put your hand over your mouth. **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Sirach 5:14** Do not be called a gossip, and do not lie in ambush with your tongue; for shame is upon the thief, and an evil condemnation upon the double-tongued. **read ›**

97 **Wisdom of Sirach 8:11** Do not rise up from the presence of an arrogant man, lest he sit like an ambush for your mouth. **read ›**

98 **Wisdom of Sirach 11:31** For he lies in wait, turning good things into evil, and on choice things he will lay blame. **read ›**

99 **Wisdom of Sirach 19:15** Question a friend, for slander often happens; and do not believe every word. **read ›**

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100 **Wisdom of Sirach 20:1** There is a rebuke that is not fitting, and there is one who keeps silent, and he is of sound judgment. **read ›**

101 **Wisdom of Sirach 20:2** How much better it is to rebuke than to be angry, **read ›**

102 **Wisdom of Sirach 20:6** There is one who keeps silent because he has no answer, and there is one who keeps silent, knowing the right time. **read ›**

103 **Wisdom of Sirach 21:6** He who hates correction is in the footsteps of the sinner, but he who fears the Lord will turn back in his heart. **read ›**

104 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:28** Mockery and taunts belong to the proud, and vengeance will lie in wait for him like a lion. **read ›**

105 **Wisdom of Sirach 28:13** Curse the gossip and the double-tongued, for they have destroyed many who were at peace. **read ›**

106 **Wisdom of Sirach 35:17** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

107 **Wisdom of Sirach 36:4** Prepare your word, and so you will be heard; bind up instruction, and then answer. **read ›**

108 **Baruch 4:22** For I have set my hope on the Everlasting for your salvation, and joy has come to me from the Holy One because of the mercy that will soon come to you from the Everlasting, your Savior. **read ›**

109 **Susanna 1:43** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

110 **Susanna 1:49** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

111 **1 Maccabees 12:18** And now you will do well to reply to us on these matters." **read ›**

112 **2 Maccabees 7:11** and said nobly, "I received these from heaven, and for the sake of his laws I disregard them, and from him I hope to receive them back again." **read ›**

113 **2 Maccabees 7:14** When he was near death, he said this: "It is better to die at the hands of men and to look for the hopes that God gives of being raised up again by him; but for you there will be no resurrection to life." **read ›**

114 **2 Maccabees 9:20** If you and your children are well and your own affairs are as you wish, I give the greatest thanks to God, having my hope in heaven. **read ›**

115 **2 Maccabees 14:38** For in the former times of separation he had been brought to trial for Judaism, and he had risked body and soul for Judaism with all earnestness. **read ›**

116 **2 Maccabees 15:11** He armed each of them not so much with the security of shields and spears as with the encouragement of good words; and besides, he related a dream worthy of belief, a kind of waking vision, which gladdened them all. **read ›**

117 **3 Maccabees 3:15** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

118 **3 Maccabees 3:18** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

119 **4 Maccabees 2:16** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

120 **4 Maccabees 2:17** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

121 **4 Maccabees 2:20** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

122 **4 Maccabees 5:31** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

123 **4 Maccabees 13:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

124 **4 Maccabees 17:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

125 **1 Enoch 14:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

126 **1 Enoch 95:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

127 **Matthew 2:3** When King Herod heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **read ›**

128 **Matthew 5:5** Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. **read ›**

129 **Luke 21:15** for I will give you a mouth and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to contradict or resist. **read ›**

130 **John 18:23** Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, testify of the evil; but if well, why do you beat me?" **read ›**

131 **Acts 22:1** "Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense which I now make to you." **read ›**

132 **Acts 24:10** When the governor had beckoned to him to speak, Paul answered, "Because I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I more cheerfully make my defense, **read ›**

133 **Acts 24:15** having hope toward God, a hope these men themselves also hold, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the righteous and the unrighteous. **read ›**

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134 **Acts 26:6** Now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers, **read ›**

135 **Acts 26:7** which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving night and day, hope to attain. Concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa! **read ›**

136 **Acts 27:8** Sailing along it with difficulty, we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. **read ›**

137 **Acts 28:11** After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship that had wintered at the island, with the Twin Brothers as its figurehead. **read ›**

138 **Acts 28:20** For this cause therefore I asked to see you and to speak with you. For because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." **read ›**

139 **Romans 8:24** For we were saved in hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. For why does anyone still hope for what he sees? **read ›**

140 **Galatians 5:23** meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. **read ›**

141 **Ephesians 4:2** with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **read ›**

142 **Philippians 4:5** Let your gentleness be known to all people. The Lord is near. **read ›**

143 **Colossians 1:5** because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel **read ›**

144 **2 Timothy 2:25** in meekness correcting those who oppose him. Perhaps God may give them repentance leading to a full knowledge of the truth, **read ›**

145 **Titus 2:8** and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. **read ›**

146 **Titus 3:2** to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable and gentle, showing all meekness toward all men. **read ›**

147 **1 Peter 3:9** not repaying evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but instead blessing, knowing that you were called to this so that you might inherit a blessing. **read ›**

148 **1 Peter 3:15** but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, always ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope in you, with meekness and fear, **read ›**

149 **1 Peter 3:16** having a good conscience, so that, when they speak against you as evildoers, those who malign your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. **read ›**

150 **Jude 1:3** Beloved, while making every effort to write to you about the common salvation, I found it necessary to write and urge you to contend earnestly for the faith delivered once for all to the saints. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *86 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Genesis 9:5 · 26:4

Exodus 20:7

Psalms 4:4

Proverbs 11:13

Isaiah 10:23 · 45:1

Jeremiah 8:4

Zechariah 7:10

Matthew 4:3 · 4:10 · 5:3 · 5:7 · 5:8 · 5:42 · 5:44 · 6:10 · 7:1 · 7:2 · 12:36 · 12:37 · 18:3 · 18:10 · 26:59 · 27:11

Luke 6:20 · 6:27 · 6:29 · 6:30 · 6:31 · 6:36 · 6:37 · 6:38 · 11:1

John 8:26 · 11:25

Acts 8:9 · 17:31

Romans 8:11 · 8:29 · 9:28 · 12:8 · 12:9 · 12:19

1 Corinthians 1:10 · 2:8 · 5:13 · 6:14 · 8:6 · 11:3

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2 Corinthians 4:14
Galatians 1:1 · 5:10 · 6:1
Ephesians 4:3 · 4:4 · 4:26 · 5:21 · 5:28 · 6:9 · 6:14
Philippians 2:2 · 2:10 · 3:14 · 3:16
Colossians 1:23 · 3:11 · 3:18 · 4:1
1 Thessalonians 5:14 · 5:15
1 Timothy 2:2 · 3:4 · 6:10
2 Timothy 2:24 · 3:2
Hebrews 10:30 · 11:32 · 13:20
James 1:8
1 Peter 1:13 · 1:21 · 2:23 · 3:22 · 4:3 · 4:7

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What does the Bible say about defending yourself with words?” on May 18, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY