

XII

The Sin of Getting Even

ROMANS 12:14-21

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰ To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

READ | ROMANS 12:14–21

THINK ABOUT

If you are going to offer yourself as a living sacrifice to God (12:1), it is going to be painful at times; death to self hurts. Living in the world is not easy. As a follower of Christ, it is even more difficult. You should not be surprised when life is hard and when you suffer in general or for Christ in particular. “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you” (1 Peter 4:12).

God commands you to do some very difficult things when you suffer at the hands of someone else. Bless the one who persecutes you. Instead of giving someone what they deserve, give him grace. Instead of giving evil for evil, give good for evil. Do not get even. If you choose to obey God, you are leaving room for Him to do what only He is capable of doing — giving the right consequences. He is just and will take care of all injustices.

APPLY

In the world’s economy, this may not add up or make sense. It may seem unfair. Do you have enough faith to obey God? Will you trust Him to settle all accounts?

Remember, your life is a living sacrifice — an offering to God. He has a greater plan, so obey Him in faith: “Never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God” (v. 19).

Jesus suffered at the hands of others and was willing to forgive. Since you have received His forgiveness and grace, give it to others. You know what it is like to need it and receive it.

ASK

Think of an example of when you have been mistreated recently. How did you feel? What did you do?

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In your family, you have been treated unfairly, and you have treated others unfairly. We all sin from time to time! According to this passage, what should you do when you are treated unfairly? What should you do when you have treated someone else unfairly?

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Give an example of how you could “give good” when someone makes fun of you for following Christ. Give an example of how you can “give good” when someone questions your motives.

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PRAY

Father, grow my faith. Help me trust You to do what is right when I am wrongly treated. Forgive me when I try to do Your job and take matters into my own hands.

I’m so thankful for Your goodness and forgiveness to me. I know I don’t deserve it. Help me obey You and give good to others when they don’t deserve it.

Please use me as a light and testimony however You choose. Help me act like Jesus and point others to Him even when it is not easy. May You be glorified through me.

1 PETER 2:19–25

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

COLOSSIANS 1:10

Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him; bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...



SING

“Majesty (Here I Am)” — *Stuart Garrard, Martin Smith*

Do not be
overcome
by evil,
but
overcome
evil with
good.

ROMANS 12:21