

Revenge and Forgiveness (Esther 5:9-14)

Matthew 5:43-44 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

God tells His children to trust Him, and that if we are wronged or hurt he notices and vengeance belongs to Him alone (Deut 32:35, Rom 12:19, Heb 10:30). Yet we constantly step in the place of God not offering forgiveness and seeking our own brand of justice for our perceived wrongs. When doing this, not only are we putting ourselves in God's place, but we are also placing ourselves in the middle of God's justice as he will discipline us for such actions.

Esther 5:9-10 (Ruining a Good Day)

Haman is like so many of us who cannot be happy because of an unforeseen circumstance in life. It only takes one little thing to turn us to bitterness. This is not because the person or thing has the ability to make us bitter; it is simply that we are already full of bitterness and anything brings it out. Ephesians tells us that we are to be a people who get rid of all of our bitterness, rage, anger, and slander and continues to tell us to instead be kind and compassionate to one another (Eph 4:31-32). Yet this is so often the exact opposite of what we do.

Esther 5:11-14 (Out of Control)

At this point everything runs out of control. Haman doesn't even think he can be happy if Mordecai is allowed to live; just as we cannot fathom how anyone who offends us should be allowed to continue to have any happiness of their own.

Forgiving is not condoning

Forgiving is setting someone free in the depths of your heart.

Forgiving is NOT forgetting

Forgiveness is the state where our own heart resides in

Forgiving does not always mean reconciliation

Forgiveness only takes you.

Forgiveness is a different issue than justice

Forgiveness is when you stop harboring evil intent for someone.

Forgiving is personal.

You forgive people not institutions.

Forgiveness is a process.

Forgiveness isn't just setting someone free in your heart; it is the realization you have become a certain type of person because of your unforgiveness.

Revenge always escalates - Revenge is always tempting

Forgiveness begins when we are willing to put the Jawbone down, deconstruct our gallows that we built, and surrender our need for revenge.

Step 1: We surrender our right for Revenge

Step 2: We must trust God

Step 3: Turn the person who has wronged you over to God.