

ROMANS 12:19-20

RADICAL RESPONSE

Big Idea: Because God is the perfect Judge, followers of Jesus respond with radical love instead of revenge. This is an intentional effort that requires remembering the Word, resisting indifference and relying on the Lord.

REMEMBER THE WORD (Romans 12:19)

Key thought - Revenge begins when we stop trusting God with justice. Because God is sovereign, just, and merciful, we can surrender our desire for revenge and trust Him to make things right.

- Why do you think Paul uses such absolute language when he says, "Never avenge yourselves"? What makes revenge so difficult to surrender? (e.g. Deuteronomy 32:35; Galatians 5:17)
- How does remembering that "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord" change the way we respond when someone hurts us? (e.g. Ecclesiastes 12:14)
- How can we recognize the pain we feel without allowing it to become our identity?

Consider these questions:

- What situation or person am I struggling to trust God with?
- What offense am I still trying to make someone pay for?
- Do I really believe God will handle justice better than I can?

RESIST INDIFFERENCE (Romans 12:20)

Key thought - Biblical peace is not passive. Followers of Jesus are not called to ignore evil or simply endure suffering; we are called to actively pursue reconciliation, restoration, and grace. Love is not just a feeling toward someone—it is an action toward someone.

- What is the difference between passively avoiding conflict and actively pursuing peace? (e.g. Proverbs 25:21-22; Matthew 5:43-44; Luke 6:27)
- Why does Paul tell us to feed our enemy when they are hungry and give them something to drink when they are thirsty? What does this teach us about biblical love?
- What does the statement "Sin retaliates, salvation restores, silence rots" mean? How can doing nothing allow bitterness to grow?
- How can actively showing kindness to someone who has hurt you become an opportunity for God to bring restoration to you and to them?

Consider these questions:

- Am I avoiding a difficult situation because I am afraid of being hurt again?
- Is there someone I need to actively pursue with grace?
- What would it look like for me to respond with biblical love instead of indifference?

RELY ON THE LORD (Romans 12:20)

Key thought - We don't have to win the battle ourselves because God is the perfect Judge. Our responsibility is to bless rather than curse, love rather than retaliate, and trust God with the outcome.

- What does it mean to "leave room for the wrath of God"? How does this change the way we think about revenge? (e.g. Romans 12:14, 19; Romans 10:1)
- Paul says to bless our enemies rather than curse them. Why is repentance and salvation a greater goal than simply seeing them receive what they deserve?
- How does the Gospel change our perspective when we feel that mercy is "unfair"? How have we personally received mercy that we did not deserve? (e.g. Isaiah 53; Romans 12:1)
- What is the difference between forgiving someone and removing accountability? How can we refuse revenge while still confronting sin, seeking justice, protecting others, or creating healthy boundaries?

Consider these questions:

- *Have I trusted God with the person who hurt me, or am I still trying to be their judge?*
- *What would it look like for me to leave it with God?*

Final Thought: You may be one choice, one step, or one prayer away from freedom. Bring your pain anger, bitterness, and desire for revenge to Jesus—and leave it there.