

Outline

What Would You Do...For Revenge?

The world and surviving in it is a pretty scary place these days.

- ◇ Swine Flu
- ◇ Financial Crisis and Foreclosures and job losses
- ◇ Uncertainty of love and family with divorce rate at high rates

So often we think our survival and success in this world is contingent upon our intense efforts and our looking out for ourselves, because we are sure that no one else will.

- ◇ As they say, "Desperate Times call for Desperate Measures." And at times our desperation causes us to make very questionable decisions that lead to unforeseen yet devastating consequences to our lives, our finances, our families, our professions, and our futures.
- ◇ It is time we stopped and took a look at our decision making philosophies, questioned them, and either reaffirmed the goodness of them or reassessed the questionable nature of the product of their impact.

What would you do to succeed or survive in this perilous world we live in?

- ◇ When really put to the test, I often wonder what my response would be in any situation that calls for my immediate decision making.
- ◇ If I were in the opportunity to help someone who was being murdered or threatened in anyway, would I put myself in harm's way to protect or save him or her?

I would like to make this a little simpler than a life-threatening situation, for I think very few of us will ever find ourselves in life threatening situations in our lives.

- ◇ We just might find ourselves in situations that call for day-to-day matters that involve the calling up of character and integrity where we find ourselves needing to make the right and good decisions. What would we do?
- ◇ How do you insure that tomorrow's predicament will be one where you make a godly, humanitarian decision?
- ◇ These situations in the future can only be handled correctly as we determine our character today and live a life of integrity consistently and purposefully in the present.
- ◇ I am not the first to consider this question. Throughout the last year *ABC News* has run a social experiment by the same title as this series and aired its results on television – It has been called *What Would You Do?* (Insert video)
- ◇ **What Would You Do?**

How about when faced with the situation that we saw earlier in the video clip? One of the ultimate tests of our character is Revenge.

- ◇ Most of us do not handle being wronged very well.
- ◇ Our reactions usually are accompanied by several words that need to be beeped and with gestures that cause those around us to blush.
- ◇ We come to our own defense and take action in a hot-headed, later regretted kind of way.

May 17, 2009

- ◇ Then as we are in our private moments, many of us plot revenge.
- ◇ Most of us plot the demise of those who have made life painful for us – whether that pain is uncalled for or something that we need to listen to like good discipline.
- ◇ **If someone has offended or hurt you, what would you do?**

What would God have us do when we feel the pain that others cause us? There are some very biblical responses for both reacting and revenge and we will seek out and attempt to practice throughout the week a response to the pain of being wronged or corrected.

When Hurt by another, Be Committed to Authenticity and Truth.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:9-12 NIV

- ◇ Find the kernel of truth in every attack – big or small kernel – just because it hurts does not mean it is not true – throw away the bad, keep the good – respond with honor not emotion by listening first and talking last – stay positive - pray about the attack before you choose to respond.

When Hurt by another, Be Committed to Blessing rather than Revenge.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Romans 12:14-16 NIV

- ◇ Choose the high road rather than joining in the gutter with your response – in other words, choose not to cuss them out, flip them off, punch them out, or increase your volume – choose to respond positively so as to defuse the situation – it is your responsibility to figure out how to make the best of a bad situation – kill your pride before it kills you – be the positive person choosing not to avoid others.

When Hurt by another, Be Committed to Avoiding Revenge at all costs.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. Romans 12:17-19 NIV

- ◇ Revenge always backfires. **(Insert Count of Monte Cristo video #2)**
- ◇ Take it as your responsibility to create peace no matter if the other does not agree.
- ◇ Sever the relationship if peace cannot be achieved, but do not fight back.
- ◇ God truly has your back and that of your enemy.

Seek Positive Revenge to turn your Enemy into your Friend.

On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:20,21 NIV

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