



SDG Discussion Guide

"Vengeance Costs - Forgiveness Pays"

Romans 12:17-21

March 12, 2017

Opener:

If you could be alone for three days, where would you go? Why?

Complete the following statement: I am most contented and at peace when...

Group Interaction: *[The following content is meant to supplement the sermon, to offer further points of interaction with the sermon text. Also, feel free to facilitate your own discussion regarding the sermon or text.]*

1. In what circumstances have you ever been inclined to "repay [some]one evil for evil" (v 17)?

How are we to redirect such an inclination? [see Matt 5:44]

2. How are we to determine what is "right" or "noble" or "honorable," especially with the caveat, "in the eyes everybody" (v 17)?

3. What do you find challenging about living "at peace with everyone," including those who do evil (v 18)?

4. In what ways has your action or inaction -- concerning a situation that "depended on you" -- caused peace? In what ways has such an action or inaction prohibited peace?

How could that latter situation be altered?

5. Are there limits to the extent to which we pursue peace, and if so what do you think these are?

6. Do you or someone you know struggle with a desire for revenge? Why does Paul forbid revenge here [see Deut 32:35)?

7. How does the phrase, "on the contrary" help us understand the rest of that verse?

8. What do you make of the phrase, "in doing this you will heap burning coals on his head" [see Prov 25:21-22)?

9. Verse 21 seems to be a summary of verses 17-20. Elaborate on both parts of this sentence: Use actual, concrete examples from your own life to illustrate each.

It requires both trust in God and courage to confront painful memories or to face the hurt that certain relationships have caused us. Is there a relational wound or hurt in your life that you are still carrying around? How are you handling it? How might God want you to respond? How can you participate in a forgiveness process and receive healing? If you need help forgiving someone or vice versa, ask for prayer and support from your group -- there's no need to share the details. Spend whatever time is necessary to pray for those in your group who are dealing with relational wounds.