

When People Attack

The Key To Handling Personal Attacks:

Exodus 17:1-7 2 Samuel 16:5-14

If you are **following God**, then be confident that he is **leading**.

It All Depends On Who Is Leading:

Exodus 17:1-7 14:14 15:2 Numbers 11:10-15 1 Peter 5:7 Romans 12:14-21

God:

Then it's his **problem**, not **mine**.

Me:

Then it's my **problem**, and God's a **spectator**.

God:

I can let God **handle it**, and **move on**.

Me:

It's my **problem**, and I have to be my **savior**.

God:

God gets my **frustration** and **anger**.

Me:

People get my **frustration** and **anger**.

God:

I can let God **defend** me and take **revenge**.

Me:

I need to **defend** myself and bring **justice**.

Where Do I Go From Here?

Exodus 17:5-7

Regardless of whom I've been **following**,
I need to pick up my **staff** and **walk**.

Food for Thought for the week of March 20, 2016

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. This weekend we heard that we should not necessarily seek our own revenge, but rather let God take care of it when others are attacking us. But doing that can be difficult because it can feel like the other person is getting away with something. In 1 Samuel 24:1-13, we see an example of David not seeking revenge, even though he had been wronged by Saul. How and why do you think David was able to not seek justice for himself?

1 Samuel 24:1-13 *New International Version (NIV)*

David Spares Saul's Life

¹ After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the Desert of En Gedi." ² So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crags of the Wild Goats.

³ He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. ⁴ The men said, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

⁵ Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. ⁶ He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the LORD." ⁷ With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

⁸ Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. ⁹ He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you'?" ¹⁰ This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD's anointed.' ¹¹ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. ¹² May the LORD judge between you and me. And may the LORD avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. ¹³ As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you.

What is the most challenging aspect for you in not seeking justice or revenge?

2. A key element in not taking our own revenge and letting God bring about justice is being able to forgive the other person. How does Psalm 139:17-24 help you balance forgiveness with asking God to "sic 'em"?

Psalm 139:17-24 *New International Version (NIV)*

- ¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
- ¹⁸ Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you.
- ¹⁹ If only you, God, would slay the wicked!
Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
- ²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent;
your adversaries misuse your name.
- ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD,
and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
- ²² I have nothing but hatred for them;
I count them my enemies.
- ²³ Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

3. Even when we're following close to God it can still be confusing as to what actions we should take and/or avoid when we're under attack. As you read Romans 12:9-21 jot down anything that is important for you to remember when the attack is on.

Romans 12:9-21 *New International Version (NIV)*

Love in Action

- ⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.
- ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.
- ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ 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."
- ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Looking back at your list, what 2 or 3 points are the most important for you remember? How might you remember them this week?