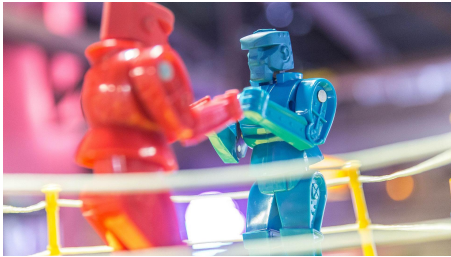




The Cost of Vengeance

April 30, 2023

When the Game is Just a Game



It can build up in all of us: Anger, Wrath, Vengeance!

When the Game Becomes Our Life (Defining Vengeance)

Vengeance is a persistent and often growing feeling of anger toward a person, group of people, or world view that can churn deep in our heart and manifest itself in subtle or explosive actions that hurt others, damage us, and break the heart of God.

Matthew 5:38-42

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Children of Vengeance

- Strife or Quarreling
- Insult
- Indignation
- Violence

When the Game Becomes Our Life (Describing Vengeance)

Matthew 5:43-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and

sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Signs that vengeance is churning in my heart:

- Hatred for all sorts of "enemies"
- We wish evil, hurt, problems on those who have wronged us
- We have people we will not greet or acknowledge
- We create mental scenarios of others, "Getting theirs!"
- We are planning retribution on others (or systems)

Unveiling the [Game Master](#) (His goal is to steal, kill, and destroy)

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Satan is the destroyer and knows that vengeance in our heart will steal our joy, kill our relationships, and destroy community.

How vengeance damages me, the people around me, and my relationship with God.

The only way to win this game is [not to play!](#)

Romans 12:17-21

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.

A Better Way to [Live](#) (Virtues and Tactics: how to put the game back in the box)

- Idea 1- Increase trust in God's justice and compassion
- Idea 2- Exercise patience with those around you
- Idea 3- Practice self-control as things heat up
- Idea 4- Meditate on God's grace in your life
- Idea 5- Humbly confess your growing anger
- Idea 6- Wisely walk away from wrath-producing situations