

“CLAIM THIS PROMISE WHEN YOU ARE HURT...”

TEXT: Rom.12:19b; Heb.10:30; 2 Thes. 1:8

INTRO: A. How many times have you been hurt by a friend, misjudged by an enemy, misquoted by a gossip, falsely accused by a person who didn't have all the facts or maligned by someone who was out to get you. Maybe your reputation has been soiled, your testimony tarnished or your character smeared. What do you do?

You need to “CLAIM THIS PROMISE WHEN YOU ARE HURT” – “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” Rom.12;19b (See also Heb.10:30 and 2 Thes.1:8)

B. Some of the most difficult counsel Jesus gave to His disciples were the words recorded in Mt.5:43-48. (He practiced what He preached.)

1 Peter 2:23

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

C. In one sense it may be even more difficult deal with family members (as in the case of Hannah, with her husband), or close friends (as in the case of Paul, with those he had won to Christ and loved), than with enemies (as in the case of David with King Saul)! [These are the 3 I will use to illustrate the principle.] I can handle criticism and hatred much easier from my enemies than I can from those who are supposed to be my friends. It hurts more from those who are close. (But I still have a hard time loving my enemies!)

I. HANNAH INTERCEDED:

1 Samuel 1:12-14

And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

A. She Didn't Panic:

1. This accusation came from the High Priest.
2. To make matters worse her husbands 2nd wife (!) added insult to injury. v.6-7
 - a. Here is a desperate woman, who saw herself under a curse: childless.
 - b. Here is a spiritual woman, doing a spiritual thing.
 - c. She is praying in the will of God and gets criticized, misunderstood and maligned.

ILLUS: How many of you have done something good for someone, only to be talked about, misunderstood by the person you were trying to help, etc.? Which of you has done something with pure motives only to be gossiped about, or criticized on the basis that you were just doing it for show or grandstanding?

3. She is called a drunk, which was a shameful thing, and associated with idolaters! V.14-16

a. Hannah was no doubt ashamed, embarrassed and hurt that the High Priest would think so poorly of her.

ILLUS: It is sad that Israel was so backslidden that the High Priest would even conclude what he did. It is also sad that the man of God would classify such an act of desperation and a spiritual act as a sinfully carnal thing. (Perhaps, like many of us, we have become so hardened over the years seeing those who are supposed to be believers, fail and fall that we become cynical.)

Very recently I heard about a family who got saved because their kids came on a bus and got saved. The preacher came to the home and led the father to the Lord, then mom got saved. But it was discovered that the pastor had misappropriated funds from church bonds he sold and the church and its assets had to be sold to cover the debt. It closed down and the pastor is barred from ever pasturing again in that state. The family moved to another church where the preacher's daughter became pregnant out of wedlock and he admitted to a 7 year affair with a woman in the church. They left there and went to yet another indep. Baptist church where the preacher who had been begging the people to give, had been hiding the fact that he owned a mansion and a yacht which he had not disclosed and the IRS came and got him and his wife. He is presently serving a 10 yr. sentence and his wife a 5 year sentence in prison! These folks are so cynical that they go to another church only out of some sense of duty, and two of their daughters are so turned off, that they and their families go nowhere, live like the devil and use the Lord's name in vain! (Thank the Lord that the other daughter married a good Christian young man and they are serving the Lord in a good church near us! Like Hannah, she didn't panic!)

b. Instead of getting backslidden because of what someone else does or says, we need to follow Hannah's example and not panic, but let the Lord deal with the situation and keep doing right; the blessings will come!

II. DAVID INTERVENED:

1 Samuel 26:8-9

Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time. And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?

A. He Didn't Retaliate:

1. Who would have blamed David if he had allowed Abishai to kill Saul that day...he had been trying to kill David!

a. It certainly looked as though God had delivered Saul into David's hands.

b. Abishai even says so! V.8a (Sounds spiritual! We can always rationalize our sinful tendencies.)

2. David knew the principle that Saul was in God's hands, not his and that the Sovereign Judge of the universe would do whatever pleased Him. V.8-11

a. Question: What would you have done, given the circumstances?

b. Question: What do you do when you have an opportunity to retaliate?

c. Question: How spiritual are you?

ILLUS: You say, "Well preacher, I haven't killed anyone yet!" That's not a measure of spirituality, that's because you fear the law! I'm asking, what is in your heart? Did you want to harm him/her? Did you secretly want some harm to come to him/her? Would you be pleased if it did? When you are hurt by some-one you have befriended, as with David, you need to "CLAIM THIS PROMISE... 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY, SAITH THE LORD.'" David listened to God Who said: "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense." Deut.32:35

III. PAUL INSTRUCTED:

1 Corinthians 4:12-16

And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

A. He Didn't Quit:

1. These were Paul's converts, but he wasn't always proud of them.
2. Corinth was a cosmopolitan city, thus his converts came from many cultures and many classes in society and found it difficult to always get along.
3. Paul sets himself up as not only their spiritual parent, but sets an example for them and can state with out embarrassment "be ye followers of me."
 - a. He is saying I didn't quit when I was misjudged, mistreated and maligned, and you should not either.
 - b. He is telling them to forget the teaching of others who were trying to influence them; he knew if they followed their teaching, they would only become frustrated and discouraged and quit on the Lord.

ILLUS: When Christians are criticized they should first be sure the criticism is not just or deserving. (If it is they should correct their behavior.) If it is not, they should rejoice and count it all joy to suffer for the Savior.

1 Peter 3:17

For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

1 Peter 4:15-16

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

CONCL: Yes, we need to remember that there will be times when we are hurt, mis- Judged, criticized, maligned and even persecuted. When that happens, we simply need to "CLAIM THIS PROMISE... 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY, SAITH THE LORD!'"