

RESTRAINING THE REVENGE REFLEX

James 5:7–12

Doing right when we've been "done wrong" never comes naturally or easily. The sting of being mistreated and the hurt of experiencing misunderstanding are painful to endure. Our common reaction is to strike back, to "get even" with the person who had no right to put us through such an ordeal. Such hurts come in a variety of ways: we face an intolerable situation at work, arguments occur at home, a former friend turns against us, a relative takes unfair advantage, a neighbor spreads an ugly rumor, and dozens of other issues. Our natural reaction is to resent the pain, then retaliate as soon as possible. Those who traffic in this cycle become angry, bitter people. God offers an alternative plan, which James writes about in these six verses as he not only tells us what to do, but also how to do it.

I. Analyzing the Problem

- The natural reaction

- A supernatural alternative

II. Understanding the Scriptures

- Several observations

- Specific instructions

III. Living the Truth