



“Handling Being Hurt by Others”
Romans 12:14
Romans 12: Devoted to Service

Introduction: In 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 Paul described his ministry-life as facing many forms of persecution. How did Paul handle such abuse?

Romans 12:14 “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”

Question #1: What does persecution look like?

persecute: Greek word: *dioko* = to be put to flight.

The Many Facets of Persecution

Those that persecute us do so by...

- mistreating us
- maligning us
- pursuing us
- harassing us
- pressuring us
- rejecting us
- hating us
- reviling us
- speaking evil of us
- speaking evil to us
- slandering us
- insulting us
- cursing us
- hurling abuse at us
- removing us
- subjecting us to unfair laws
- silencing us
- discriminating against us
- casting insults at us
- ignoring us
- delivering us over to those who hate us
- harming us
- injuring us
- inflicting suffering on us
- laying hands on us
- killing us
- etc.

Question #2: When can we expect to be persecuted?

We can expect to be persecuted...

- when doing the right thing
- when proving zealous for what is right
- when speaking boldly about our faith in Christ
- when standing up for righteousness
- when speaking up against evil and hypocrisy
- when helping those who are weak
- when encouraging those who are strong
- when serving the Lord at home, the church and in the workplace

Ultimately, we can expect to be persecuted for no apparent reason at all!

- In John 15:20 Jesus Himself said, “If they persecuted Me. They will also persecute you...”
- In Acts 8:1 we find a great persecution began against the whole church...
- 2 Timothy 3:12 “Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...”

Persecution is the constant companion of revival...

Question #3: Where will the many forms of persecution come from?

In Acts 13:50, the Jews instigated a city-wide persecution against Paul
In John 16:33 Jesus said: “In the world you have tribulation...”

Question #4: What are we to do to those who persecute us?

Our very human inclination is to hurt people back. Jesus said the opposite in His Sermon on the Mount

cf. Matthew 5:38-48

We are to...

- love them
- be merciful to them
- don't hold a grudge against them
- do good to them
- lend to them
- turn the other cheek
- forgive them
- give to them
- not turn away from them
- overcome evil with good
- go the extra mile for them
- treat them as we want to be treated
- treat them with gentleness

- don't return evil for evil or insult for insult
- don't seek revenge against them
- be kind toward them
- not be afraid or intimidated by them
- expect nothing in return
- take courage (Be of good cheer!)
- extend mercy toward them
- live in peace with them, if possible
- count it all joy
- pray for them
- bless them

Romans 12:14 "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

Mandate #1: Bless those who persecute us

The Greek word for "bless" is *eulogeo* from which we get our English word *eulogy*. It basically means to say good words

- "Lord, you are in control." (Romans 8:18)
- "Lord, work all things together for good." (Romans 8:28) e.g. Genesis 50:19-20
- We declare the hope that lies within us (1 Peter 3:13-17)

Mandate #2: Do not curse those who persecute us

To curse someone (the Greek word: *kataraomai*) means to wish evil on someone.

James 3:8-10 "But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing."

1 Peter 3:8-9 "To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."

Principle #1: "Don't Bite Back"

1 Peter 3:9 "...not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult..."

Principle #2: "Retaliate With A Blessing"

1 Peter 3:9 "...giving a blessing instead."

Romans 12:20 "...by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

"When others are expecting retaliation offer grace instead. It will blow their mind and bless your soul." (Charles Swindoll)

Question #5: Why are we to do these things to those who persecute us?

Because...

- We are commanded to do so
- We will be seen as children of God
- We are to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect.
- We will be blessed, and our reward will be great
- It is a way of showing our reverence to God
- It is a form of worship
- It is a way of imitating God, the Father and His Son, Jesus
- It produces opportunities to express joy in the midst of trials
- It glorifies God who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good

Matthew 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Conclusion:

"People will hate you, rate you, shake you, and break you. But how strong you stand is what MAKES you."

Romans 12:19-21 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but ^uleave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Psalms 102:1 (A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is faint, and pours out his complaint before the Lord.) Hear my prayer, O Lord! And let my cry for help come to Thee..."

- *When you are forgiven or neglected or purposely set at naught and you sting and you hurt with the insult or the oversight but your heart is still happy being counted worthy to suffer for Christ - THAT IS DYING TO SELF!*
- *When your good is evil spoken of; when your wishes are crossed; your advice is disregarded; your opinions are ridiculed and you refuse to let anger rise in your heart or even refuse to defend yourself - but you take it all in patient, loving, silence - THAT IS DYING TO SELF!*

Discussion Questions and Action Items:

1. What forms of persecution (hurt) have you most experienced?
2. What is the most difficult thing for you to do when hurt by others.
3. In what ways can you bless those who persecute you?
4. In what ways are you tempted to "curse" those who persecute you?
5. How could you "give a blessing instead" when persecuted?
6. What motivates you not to retaliate when hurt by others?
7. What did you get most out of this message?