

Romans 12:14-21, Daily Devotions

☐ Monday - Bless Those Who Persecute You. Romans 12:14

The apostle Paul encouraged the church, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not" (Rom. 12:14). Paul himself was once a persecutor of the church (Acts 8:1-3), and after his conversion (Acts 9:1-9) was persecuted as part of the church (1 Cor. 4:9-13; 2 Cor. 11:23-29). And so the apostle speaks as an expert on both sides of the matter. Christian, though the world despises and mistreats you, yet you must ask yourself, how many other persecutors of the church may be won to Christ when you follow this command to "bless those who persecute you." Read Matthew 5:44

☐ Tuesday - The Church's Emotional Connection. Romans 12:15

Earlier Paul likened the church to the human body, because each member is vitally connected to the other members (Romans 12:4-5). Consider how the human body responds to pleasure and pain. Stub your toe and the whole body reacts: weight shifts to the other foot, hands rush to the injured member, and the mouth shouts, "Ouch!" But how strange it would be if the rest of the body did not respond, or the mouth yelled at the toe, "Stop whining!" One of the clearest indicators that a local church is healthy and operating correctly is when we, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12:15). Read 1 Corinthians 12:25-26

☐ Wednesday - No Church Celebrities. Romans 12:16

Here the Word of God exhorts members of the Christian church, "Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation" (Rom. 12:16). The world has its celebrities and superstars, but in the body of Christ there are no VIPs or "big shots." For we remember our Lord's words, "But many who are first will be last; and the last, first" (Mt. 19:30). Christian, if you want to be great in God's kingdom, learn to be the servant of all (Mt. 20:26). Christ must increase in importance in your life and you must decrease (John 3:30). Read 2 Corinthians 12:14-24

☐ Thursday - The Weapons Of Our Warfare. Romans 12:17

Here we are given the command, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone" (Rom. 12:17). The Word emphatically says, "Never" do it! Why? Because it will spoil your Christian testimony and Christ's reputation. Anger, revenge, slander and malice were once your worldly response to those who assaulted you. But now you are a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17) and "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:4a). No Christian, your weapons are now far more effective and "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Cor. 10:4b). They are the Word of God (Eph. 6:17) and intercessory prayer (Phil. 4:6). Read Ephesians 6:10-18

☐ Friday - Blessed Are The Peacemakers. Romans 12:18

The Christian is called to be a peacemaker. Here the apostle exclaims, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Rom. 12:18). Does someone have something against you? Go to him, humble yourself, and seek reconciliation (Mt. 5:23-25). If he accepts your olive branch, good. But if you have done all that you can to make peace, and he will not be reconciled, then at least your conscience will be clear, for the injunction here says, "If possible, so far as it depends on you." Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Mt. 5:9). Read Romans 14:19

☐ Saturday - Never Take Your Own Revenge. Romans 12:19

"Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). Escalation of a conflict usually results from excessive retaliation. But God is a perfect Accountant and He alone can make the punishment fit the crime. Read 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10