

## **What About Those Who Hate Us** **Romans 12:14-21 (NKJV)**

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Persecuted, not us.

We Christians in America like to think that we would never be persecuted because everyone in the good old USA is a Christian.

But not so. Christians are not now nor ever were they in the majority.

We are blessed because our founders of this nation saw the worth of the Christian faith and made certain guarantees to see that it could thrive here.

But that does not change the fact that the world hates Jesus and it hates those who follow Him.

John 15:18–21 (NKJV)

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

John 16:1–3 (NKJV)

16 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. 3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

### **I. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.**

#### **A. Scripture**

1. Matthew 5:43–48 (NKJV) 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may

be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

2. Luke 6:28 (NKJV) bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.
3. Acts 7:60 (NKJV) Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.
4. 1 Corinthians 4:12 (NKJV) And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;
5. Luke 23:34 (NKJV) Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."
6. Proverbs 17:5 (NKJV) 5 He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

B. The Christian must not play God and try to avenge himself. Returning evil for evil, or good for good, is the way most people live. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 556.*

## II. 15 **Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.**

A. Be empathetic as God is

1. Lamentations 3:22 (NKJV) 22 Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.
2. Psalm 56:8 (NKJV) 8 You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?
3. Colossians 3:12 (NKJV) 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

## III. 16 **Be of the same mind toward one another.**

A. 1 Timothy 5:21 (NKJV) 21 I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.

## IV. **Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.**

A. Goodspeed takes the second as neuter and translates, "Do not be too ambitious,

but accept humble tasks.” Berkeley has, “Do not aspire to eminence, but willingly adjust yourselves to humble situations.” Similar to the NIV (which takes the second adjective as masculine) is Phillip’s, “Don’t become snobbish, but take a real interest in ordinary people,” and Norlie’s, “Avoid being haughty; mingle with the lowly.” *Robert H. Mounce, Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 240.*

- B. **Haughty in mind** translates *hupsela phronountes*, which literally means "minding high things." *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 199.*
- C. The point is that there is no aristocracy in the church, no place for an elite uppercrust. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 199.*
- D. James 2:2-9 (NKJV) 2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," 4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? 7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? 8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

We all live in this world. And I hope that you will not make many enemies but we must remember the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 3:12 “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

If you have no enemies in the world you might want to check and see which jersey you are wearing.