

Title: Bless and Curse Not

Text: Romans 12:14-21

We are in Romans. The book of Romans chapter 12 verse 14....

(Read Romans 12:14-21)

Prayer

This chapter is really a wonderful chapter. ~~Here we learn about the operation of LOVE.~~ And I hope you can see how this chapter flows from one point to another. *And how it is all tied together* It begins with a call to commitment. And this commitment is the key to *understanding this chapter* ~~experiencing God's love in and through your life.~~ Paul says that we need to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. Our commitment to God is so important.

Then, building upon this commitment, Paul talks about spiritual gifts. We all have different functions and gifts within the church. But, we are still one in Jesus Christ. We have gifts that differ. But all function in minister one to another.

Then building upon that theme, Paul talks about the key element that makes ministry happen in the church. And that, of course, is LOVE. Vs 9.. says, "LET LOVE BE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY." Love should be real. Not fake, but genuine and real. Then in verses 8-13 he gives to us the characteristics or real love.

(3D) Now, in verses 14 thru 21 Paul is still talking about the operation of love. ~~IF~~ We are christians, and we say that God's love is in our hearts, WHAT THEN SHOULD BE OUR REACTION, OUR ATTITUDE, TO PEOPLE THAT WE ASSOCIATE WITH ...PEOPLE WHO CROSS OUR PATH? *What should be our reaction?*

Well, God tells us what to do. In verses 14-21 God is COMMANDING us to do certain things. These are things that everyone of us should be doing all the time in our relationship one with the other WHY? BECAUSE WE ARE LOVING WITHOUT HYPOCRISY... *So, I want you to see these COMMANDS in two major areas.*

(1E) First of all, in verses 14-16, I want you to see these commands in your relationship with others. And there are three principles that will guide your relationship with others.

(1 F.) Number one, in Vs 14 "seek to build up not to tear down." Seek to build up, not to tear down. That is the first ~~principle~~ ^{principle}. Vs 14 says, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not."

Now, I know that is hard to do. It is a lot easier to attack those who are persecuting you. If someone is saying bad things about you, BOY.. the old sin nature wants to strick back.

In the sermon on the mount Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

Vs 14 says, "do not curse." In other words, don't bad mouth. Don't tear down. Our reaction ought to be..Bless those who persecute. Returning good for evil..

(2 F.) Number two, in terms of our relationship to others..SHARE THE EMOTIONS OF OTHERS." Share the emotions of others. You don't see this to often. But, let me tell you, it is very important.

Vs 15 says.."rejoice with those who rejoice. And weep with those who weep."

Dear friends, this is such a precious thing. Have you ever been excited about some thing. I mean...you are really thrilled about it? And you are so excited. And you come up to someone and say, "MAN, GOD JUST GAVE ME THE GREATEST BLESSING IN MY LIFE!" And then you share that blessing.

And then the other christian responds.."OH! THAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE."

What happens? You know what happens. A dark cloud sort of settles over your mood. YOU feel bad. And you think.."Maybe I am not such a mature christian. And you lost control of yourself in a moment of emotions. You should have known that everyone else is having this wonderful experience.

Why was I so dumb to have shared that experience

Oh, ~~that~~ that kind of attitude can rip apart the love in the church.

Or, somebody has a heart ach and they are hurting and another christian comes along and says : "Now, be strong, be stable, you don't have to cry. There is no reason for it at all.".....THAT IS DUMB....

Weep with those who weep....Rejoice with those who rejoice...

Do you know that we are all different emotional? I mean some of you are like Mr. Blop. I ~~can't~~ ^{couldn't} get you to laugh if I tickled ^{you} all day. And ~~others~~ ^{others} would have a hard time ^{get's you to} cry. I could tell the most heart filled story of love and you would set their like Mr stone face. You are just the same all the time. And I appreciate your steadness.....(HA) YOU see...

Paul There are people like that.... *Praise God for them*

Now, some of you are ~~so~~ ^{to} emotional. I mean the tears folow easily. You watch a T.V. ~~soap~~ soap, ~~and~~ and you cry all the way through it.

Dear Friend ~~For~~ ^{For} the point is that we should recognize that we are different within the church. We need to recognize this and just love others.

Do you know what made the prophet Ezekiel such a tremendous man of God? He was able to say, I weep with those who weeped. He said "I sat where they sat." Learn to identify with people in the emotions that they are experiencing. If they are happy, praise the Lord with them... *IF They hurt, hurt with them.*

You know, we need to learn to ~~do~~ ^{do} this. We are so uptight with one another..And when we are uptight we are basically showing that we don't love. When you love you are going to share emotions with a brother or a sister in Christ.

(3rd) Now, the third ^{principle} ~~thing~~ which is also very practical. And that is the great need to submit to the unity of the spirit. Submit to the unity of the Spirit. In your relationship with others ~~it~~ ^{this} is very important.

Vs 16 says "Be of the same mind toward one another." In other words, mind the same thing. Have the unity of the Spirit. Then Paul says "do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly." Literally "to low things." Not high things, but associate with low things. The word "associate" means to "be carried away with something."

If you want to be carried away with something, be carried away with the little thing.

Let me give you an illustration: Your little child comes in with a sucker. "Hay! daddy, look at this sucker I've got!"....

And daddy says. Now, look, Son, I am dealing with a great theological problem, here, over in the book of Deut., and I haven't got time.

Oh, no.... what should your responses be? "Hay, that fantastic. Let me have a bite!".....

Listen, you want to get carried away with something. Get carried away with the little things. You put the cookies ~~on~~ *Put them on the bottom shelf and* the bottom shelf and all the kids will get them. You will also experience the unity of the H.S. That is very important.

People are walk^d over and left out simply because we are not ~~seeking~~ the unity of the H.S. Mind the same thing.

Here is a new believer in Christ. And along comes an old believers. And this older believer tries to correct this new believer in his attitudes, and understanding according to his maturity, instead of according to that new converts maturity.....

He lost sight, you see of love. Love that doesn't mind high things but is carried away with lower thing.

I like the way Paul put it in Philippians 2, "Don't look on your own things, but look upon the things of others." Seeing others as better than yourself. Be concerned with what is going on in their life. Very important....

(2E) Now, the second area that I want you to see is found in Verses 17-21.

This area hurts because it involves your reaction to what others have done to you....

Now, if we have love in our hearts we must deal with this. We can't hide from ~~this~~ *this*. We can't run away from ~~this~~ *this*. Your reaction to what others have done to you. Vs 17 through 21. There are four things here that I want you to see.

(1F) First of all, in Vs 17 notice the attitude we should have. What kind of attitude should we have when someone does something wrong to you?

Vs 17 says "Never pay back evil for evil."....Never do that..

Some one has wrong you and you immidiately say back to them "Well, here is what you get!" "Here is what I am going to do to you."

You think that in your heart. Someone says something behind your back, and in your heart you want to say something against them.

Giving back in return. That is not love. That is not the attitude God wants. Instead he says, Vs 17, "respect what is right in the sight of all men."....Respect what is right.. Don't tear down...

Paul wrote in Philippians 4:8 "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good ~~re~~repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, LET YOUR MIND DWELL ON THESE THINGS."

Don't return evil for evil. But instead respect that which is good.

(2F) Now, the second thing that I want you to notice in Vs 18 is the acceptance of all things. The acceptance of all things. Learn to live with it.

Vs 18 "if possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men."

The word "peace" means "to bind." The idea is harmony. People bound together. Therefore, they are in peace.

In the church we need to be bound together ~~with~~ and be at peace. We have a lot of problems. People say things that they shouldn't. But learn ~~to~~ to live in peace. Accept all things as from the hand of God.

You will be so much happier for it. Let me give you an example.

Joe Blow Frank comes up to you and says, "*Pat* John, have you heard about what so and so said about you?"

Now, no body likes to hear that. So, *Pat* John responds, "Well, it is not true. I can give you fourteen reeasons why it isn't true."

God never wants you to do that. You know, you don't have to defend yourself. Did you know that God is going to defend you? You don/t have to defend yourself. Not at all.

Do you know what you should say in order to live peaceable with all men?

Back Down

Well, ~~John~~, that person may be right. We will have to leave that to the Lord.

You know, you say that to some one who wants to tell you a good piece of gossip about you, man, they will be floored.

"Hay, wait a minute. You didn't hear what I said. This person said this against you...."Well, that is ~~alright~~ alright. What ever the Lord wants." Evidently, he wanted this said."

Can you accent all things? This kind-off hurts, dosen't it. I read this and I wanted to close my Bible. No matter what people say about you, are you willing to be at peace with all men? Even those that said ~~that~~ ^{something} about you?

Now, if everybody is saying good things about you, watch out. Because Jesus said "be aware when all men speak well of you." So, be carefull..

(3F) The third thing, Vs 19, is that the ~~revenge~~ ^{revenge} should be left with the the lord. The revenging should be left with the Lord.

God never wanted any christian to get back at another christian. Never.. You may think that you are right. But you let God settle that.

Vs 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~~ ^{Lord} ~~for~~ ^{for}

Some of us need to go to others, right now, and seek their forgiveness. Because, instead of letting the Lord deal with it, ~~we~~ we have tried to deal with it ourselves. Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

You do not have to venticate yourself. God will do that. He will show it in time. He will reveal the truth about the ~~sit~~ situation in time. You don't have to venticate yourself.

(4F) Fourth, which is so important. Here are the actions that you should cultivate,,, in terms of ~~the~~ people who have done wrong to you. What kind of things should you, now, do to them? O.K. notice ~~what~~ what God says...

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"But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, Give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Just get to ministering. Just let your heart of love reach out so much that you will overcome the evil.

Now, that is possible according to the word of God. Do you know, there is nothing that drives a person who like to argue crazy then trying to argue with someone who will not ~~argue~~.

Have you ever ~~noticed~~ noticed that? I mean ~~they~~ they really love to argue. Nothing like a good fight. And they are so excited about fighting. Then someone walks up and he willn't fight. It just drives the person batty...

Have you notice this pasage in life? Oh, you see it all the time. Don't fight back. Some guy at work is trying to get ahead. And he is walking all over you feet/ to get there. You know it. Don't worry about getting back. Just commit it to the Lord.

You say, "Do you mean to let people walk all over you?"....Well, God says that in Ephesians 4. He says "with all lowilness". The word "lowiless" means "carpet" and "walk on". Be like a carpet and let folks walk on you.

You say, "I can't do that."....WHY NOT?.....

"Because I wouldn't get ahead.".....OH, I SEE....Your motivation isn 't correct, again, you see....

Rejoicing in the hope as it says in Vs 12. Who cares if you get ahead. The Lord might come today.....

Well, I willn't get the higher salary...Oh, why you could lose the job once you get it. God can do a lot of things. "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

WHAT IS OUR MOTIVATION? WHAT ARE WE AFTER? IF we are seeking to minster, if the love of Christ is in our hearts, then why are we trying to get even. Why are we trying to react to those who react to us and do us wrong?

Now, as we close will you look at the first two verses of Romans 12. Look at thèse verse carefully. Vs 1 says "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present you bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, whcih is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

No life is better discribed as being that kind of committed christian as the life that is loving. A life that is manifested in the love of the Hbly Spirit.

Christian I ask you again, are you really committed to Jesus Christ? To make this discision to be committed does not mean going to the mission field or going into fulltime Christian ministry or anything like that. It deals with your personal committed to Christ *in your personal life*

Dear Friends
Oh ~~my~~, let's present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. Let's come with a humble spirit ~~and~~ *to* Jesus and say, "Jesus I commit myself to you."

You see Romans 12 is just the opposit~~e~~ in many of the attitudes that we have. Are ~~you~~ *we* willing to achknowledge that before God. And to come and say, "God, I know that I have been going my own way. " *I repent and turn* ~~And you know it.~~
to you!
~~Why not say,~~ "Lord, *have* is my life. I turn it over to you to use for your glory."

.... Let's close in prayer...