

## Romans 12:14-16 Love in Action Life group Leader notes

Paul is continuing on with his instructions for the church in Rome. He is describing how to live out the Christian walk.

V14 This is not Paul's own teaching but rather he is reminding the Roman Church of the teaching of his Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus was teaching his disciples how to live on the sermon on the mount.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'<sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," Matthew 5:43-44

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,<sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:27-28

What do you learn from Romans 12:14 and the verses above?

What are we to do? What are we not to do?

Describe a situation when someone has persecuted you.

How did it make you feel?

How did you respond?

Notice that Paul does not specify who the persecutors are. This is a general command for all believers to follow. This is how we are to respond to anyone who harasses, troubles or persecutes us as a believer.

Who are the persecutors in your life?

Have you prayed for them?

Have you forgiven them?

Have you done anything loving towards them?

"Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34

Think of Jesus on the cross. What thoughts come to mind?

Did Jesus deserve any of the treatment?

As believers, we need to remember how much we have been forgiven. We have been forgiven much by our Savior who died for our sins. We should follow his command and forgive those who have persecuted us.

Notice: 1) Jesus prays for his persecutors 2) His forgiveness is unconditional 3) He loves those who are persecuting him.

“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times? 22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” Matthew 18:21-22

What is the point that Jesus is making here?

“When a Christian has forgiveness from the heart, he is concerned about the person who did the sinning against him. He is not concerned about himself.” Jim Wilson

What do you think about the above quote?

Are you struggling with praying for your persecutor?

V15 As believers we are to, ‘Rejoice with those who rejoice and; mourn with those who mourn’. In other words, we are to be involved in other people’s lives around us.

Discuss what opportunities you have to be involved in other people’s lives.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34,35

Pray about those opportunities as a group to show the love of Christ.

V16 What Paul is saying here is that as believers we are to be impartial and not have favorites, but to think of everyone equally.

Are you showing any favoritism?

Do you consider yourself better than others?

Jesus spent a lot of his time with the poor in society. He valued people and treated them equally. He cared for them and showed them compassion. He didn’t look down on them but showed them genuine love when they were hurting or life was tough on them.

Can you think of anyone in your circle of influence who is like that?

How can you help them?

Take time to pray for one another.