



## Pt 7- **Being Empathetic**

*“Don’t be full of ourselves.”*

**Pr Barry Silverback**

**Romans 12:14-16** (niv)

**Romans 12:14** (niv) *Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*

### **1. This has to do with THOSE who oppose us.**

- What is **your response** to such a command?
- **Is this possible** for a person to do this?
- Do you think it is **beyond your reach?**
- But this is what the disciple of Christ **is called to do?**

#### **Firstly, we need to understand **WHO WE ARE****

- We are followers of Christ and so WE HAVE access to an ability which is **not** available to others.
- Access to a power which enables us **to bless** those who persecute us.
- It is possible to be able to do this, **but** not without God’s help.
- So this means that we have **access** to an ability which can make us act differently to what we would normally want to or could do.
- It also enables us to act differently to **what others** would normally do.
- Christ does not **command** His followers to do something which is impossible to accomplish.
- **He expects** that it can and will be done – **with His help.**
- And that is the key – **asking** for His help because this is what **He desires.**

## Secondly, we need to understand **WHO WE ARE TO PLEASE**.

- Doing what He **desires**.
- **Seeking to do** things which please our master.
- We are called to **be** a blessing.
- We are **not** called to curse.
- This would be **inconsistent with** our master's heart and behaviour.
- We are called to **bless**.

...because of **what** we have received.

...because of **who** we are - children of Abraham.

*(and he was called to be a blessing to everyone in every nation).*

## ACT Accordingly.

- Display the **characteristics** of Christ

**1 Peter 2:23** (nlt) *He did not retaliate when he was insulted. When he suffered, he did not threaten to get even. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.*

**1 Corinthians 4:11-13** (nlt) *We have worked wearily with our own hands to earn our living. We bless those who curse us. We are patient with those who abuse us. We respond gently when evil things are said about us. Yet we are treated like the world's garbage, like everybody's trash - right up to the present moment.*

**James 3:10-12** (nlt) *And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? Can you pick olives from a fig tree or figs from a grapevine? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty pool.*

**1 Peter 3:9** (nlt) *Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate when people say unkind things about you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God wants you to do, and he will bless you for it.*

**Romans 12:15** (niv) *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*

## 2. Identification is the message here.

- **How to act** as a follower of Christ towards other people in whatever they are going through in their daily lives.
- The **message** here is to **find a way** to be able to convey **true** love.
  - ...**Love** which is more than just 'words.'
  - ...**Love** which really gets down alongside of people's situation.
  - ...**Love** which makes others think 'they really do care.'
- **Genuine love** - is the power behind **identification**.

## 3. Get with it – get genuine love.

**Romans 12:16** (kjv) *Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*

**Romans 12:16** (tlb) *Work happily together. Don't try to act big. Don't try to get into the good graces of important people, but enjoy the company of ordinary folks. And don't think you know it all!*

The message here is to be **HUMBLE**.

- It is also to **stay** humble.
- Have the **same** mind towards one another.
- The Message here is – do not be **partial** – do not have **favourites**.
- Be **fair** in how you relate to all people.
- Do not be high minded = arrogant - in **how** you **think** of **yourself**.
- Do **not** think that you are better than another.
- **Come down** to the level of people who are considered to have little.
- People who have a **poor** image of themselves
- Come down – this is the message here – **how to** do that!

Don't be wise in **YOUR OWN OPINIONS**

**CONCEITS** = opinions

- COME DOWN – from any **lofty opinions** that you might have of **yourself**.
- COME DOWN – from any thoughts of **high mindedness**
- COME DOWN – from any **partiality** and **favouritism**