

# LOVE Without Hypocrisy

(in the book of Romans)

## 32 – The issue of "Cursing"

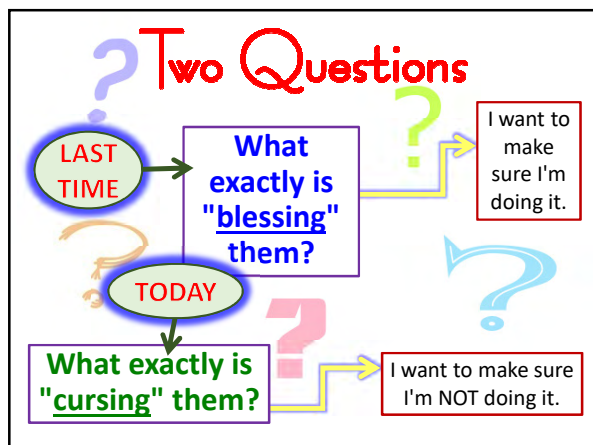
Bless those who persecute you; **bless** and do not curse.  
Romans 12:14 (NIV)

"Have you done so this week?"

★ With a desire that they really do get blessed? ★

**This is part of what it means to "follow" Jesus.**

A willingness to do this distinguishes between saved and unsaved.



**IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...**

There are TWO groups of words translated as "BLESS, BLESSING, ETC."

There are TWO groups of words translated as "CURSE, CURSING, ETC."

**KNOWING THE DIFFERENCES WILL HELP US TO BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE TO DO!**

Today, we look at the concept of "cursing"

—

There are **both** legitimate and sinful ways to use each of these words.

**"CURSING" #1**  
Pronouncing judgment (punishment or harm) upon someone.  
(The *general* concept of "cursing.")

**"CURSING" #2**  
"Anathema" – Handing someone over to God for (eternal) condemnation.  
(A *specific* type of "cursing.")

**DOES PAUL CONTRADICT HIMSELF?**

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.  
Romans 12:14 (NIV)

If anyone does not love the Lord--a curse be on him.  
1 Cor. 16:22a (NIV)

**NO! PAUL USES TWO DIFFERENT WORDS IN TWO DIFFERENT CONTEXTS!**

## "CURSING" #1

Pronouncing judgment  
(punishment or harm)  
upon someone.

THE WAY WE USE THIS WORD DETERMINES  
WHETHER THE CURSING IS LEGITIMATE OR SINFUL!  
(This is the word used in Romans 12:14.)

### LEGITIMATE

1) This word is used to describe the deserved  
consequence of sin: SIN LEAVES US CURSED!

✓ The consequence of not obeying God's law.

All who rely on observing the  
law are under a curse, ...  
Galatians 3:10a (NIV)

Since we have  
FAILED to obey  
100%, we need  
Jesus! (v. 13)

✓ The eternal consequence.

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart  
from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal  
fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' "

Matthew 25:41 (NIV)

### SINFUL

2) Also used to describe one's personal desire for  
someone to receive harm or punishment.

- ✓ This is how the word used in Romans 12:14.
- ✓ This type of desire is forbidden!

Bless those who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14 (NIV)

Even GOD does not desire that people be punished,  
though it must happen to all who refuse to repent and  
be saved – Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9.

### WHEN WE DO THIS TYPE OF CURSING ...

- ✓ We are more interested in vengeance or  
personal vindication, than in God's honor!
- ✓ We are not focusing on love for God and  
neighbor.

THIS IS THE TYPE OF CURSING  
THAT UNSAVED PEOPLE DO.

Their mouths are full of curses  
and bitter resentment.

Romans 3:14 (GW)



### THIS CURSING IS NOT AN OPTION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

... no human being can tame the tongue. It is a  
restless evil, full of deadly poison.

With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it  
we curse people who are made in the likeness  
of God.

From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.  
My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

James 3:8-10 (ESV)

We can't tame it... but the Holy Spirit,  
who resides in God's people, can tame it!

### THE ONLY OPTION GOD GIVES US IS TO REPLACE THIS CURSING WITH BLESSING.

Love your enemies. Be kind to those who  
hate you. Bless those who curse you.  
Pray for those who insult you.

Luke 6:27b-28 (GW)

A desire to help & build up,  
rather than to harm and destroy!

**"CURSING" #2**  
**"Anathema" – Handing someone over to God for (eternal) condemnation.**

**THIS IS A VERY SERIOUS TYPE OF CURSING.**  
 It focuses specifically on someone receiving eternal punishment or harm.

**SINFUL**

**1) People sometimes used this word when binding themselves under an oath.**

— In all the examples in Scripture, doing this was sinful and foolish!

✓ **An oath to tell the truth.**

Then Peter began to curse and swear with an oath, "I don't know this man you're talking about!"

Mark 14:71 (GW)

✓ **An oath to keep a vow.**

[The Jews] asked God to curse them if they ate or drank anything before they had killed Paul.

Acts 23:12b (GW)

- There may be legal situations in which we must take an oath.

DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR TO TELL THE TRUTH...



- But being truthful and faithful to our promises should characterize our lives all the time ...  
 ... **without needing to take an oath!**

Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Matthew 5:37 (NIV)

**LEGITIMATE**

**2) Paul uses this word when handing false teachers and fake "Christians" over to God for judgment.**

Let God's curse fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other message than the one we told you about. Even if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed.

I will say it again: If anyone preaches any other gospel than the one you welcomed, let God's curse fall upon that person.

Galatians 1:8-9 (NLT)

**PAUL WAS QUALIFIED TO DO THIS TYPE OF CURSING!**

It was an expression of love for God.

- ✓ God's righteousness and honor were his focus!

If anyone does not love the Lord--a curse be on him.

1 Cor. 16:22a (NIV)

Love for neighbor was NOT absent in Paul.

- ✓ If it had been possible, Paul would have taken the curse upon himself.

For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ...

Romans 9:3 (NIV)



**BEFORE WE SEE THIS WEEK'S "MISSION," THERE IS AN IMPORTANT LESSON TO LEARN!**

**WHEN WE FIND VERSES THAT SEEM TO "GO AGAINST"  
EACH OTHER, WE DO NOT NEED TO PANIC!**

Bless those who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14 (NIV)

If anyone does not love the  
Lord--a curse be on him.

1 Cor. 16:22a (NIV)

**EVEN THOUGH WE MIGHT NOT KNOW THE ANSWER,  
THERE IS AN ANSWER.**

**IT'S OK TO ADMIT THAT WE DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING!**

- ✓ We don't need to pretend.
- ✓ We don't need to twist and distort the Bible,  
to make the difficult passages go away!

Some things in [Paul's] letters are hard to understand.

Ignorant people and people who aren't sure of what they believe distort what Paul says in his letters the same way they distort the rest of the Scriptures.

These people will be destroyed.

2 Peter 3:16b (GW)

**AS WE GROW IN KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD,  
WE WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND SCRIPTURE!**

- ✓ Even though there will always be room for more growth.

Desire God's pure word as newborn babies desire milk. Then you will grow in your salvation.

1 Peter 2:2 (GW)

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:18a (NIV)

**THOSE WHO HATE THE BIBLE MAY ATTACK ALL THEY WANT...  
BUT THEY CANNOT CHANGE THE TRUTH!**

- ✓ Paul's curse against false teachers will apply to them.

Every word of God is flawless;  
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Proverbs 30:5 (NIV)

--Scripture cannot be broken--

John 10:35b (ESV)

**WE KNOW THE AUTHOR...  
AND WE KNOW WE CAN TRUST HIM!**

All Scripture is God-breathed ...

2 Tim. 3:16a (NIV)

No prophecy ever originated from humans.  
Instead, it was given by the Holy Spirit as humans spoke under God's direction.

2 Peter 1:21 (GW)

**AND NOW, THE FINAL "MISSION"  
FOR THIS VERSE ...**



〔 DRUM ROLL TO BUILD  
EXCITEMENT! 〕

## Your Mission...

Bless those  
who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14 (NIV)

### YOU KNOW ...

- ✓ What this verse means.
- ✓ If you are saved, you will do what it says.
- ✓ It may be difficult, but the Spirit of God within you gives you power.

## Your Mission...

Bless those  
who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14 (NIV)

### THEREFORE ...

- ✓ **USE THAT POWER GOD HAS GIVEN YOU!!!**
- Aware that you will not succeed on your own.

(You can also remind yourself that you don't want to be a fake.)

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# Your Mission...

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

Romans 12:14

THE WORD "CURSING" IS USED TWO  
DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE N.T.

(2 different N.T. Greek word groups)

## Two types of cursing

### TYPE 1 - THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF "CURSING."

- All have sinned, so all *deserve* to be cursed. But God blesses us with the offer of mercy and salvation (available to all who are willing to repent and be saved).
- Since God has showed this kindness to us, we have an *obligation* to show kindness to others - to *bless* them, rather than cursing them (desiring harm and punishment for them).

### TYPE 2 - A SPECIFIC TYPE OF "CURSING."

- This is a serious matter, and refers to *eternal* condemnation by God - such as against false teachers, fake "Christians," etc.
- Don't take this concept lightly and misuse it - such as in making frivolous oaths, etc. (The *general* prohibition against cursing would apply here.)
- This word is also used to describe the "curse" that all creation experienced because of human sin. When Jesus returns, this curse will be taken away - Revelation 22:3.

## What do you want for yourself?

### WHAT WE ALL DESERVE.

- We *deserve* the curses that come from sinning against God - even the curse of *eternal* punishment.

### WHAT DO YOU WANT?

- God offers you *blessing* instead of the *cursing* you deserve. Do you want it? If so, God requires you to have the same attitude toward those who persecute or hurt you - a desire to *bless* them.
- Does that seem unreasonable? It's no more unreasonable than the salvation God offers *you*! Your sins against *God* are far worse than any human's sins against *you*!

## What if someone places a curse on *us*?

### WE HAVE NO REASON TO FEAR.

- Their words are not "irresistible magic," even if they are backed by demonic forces. We serve a God who is more powerful than any words uttered by humans (or by demons) - 1 John 4:4.

### GOD CAN OVERRULE WHAT THEY SAY.

- Their words have no value unless God agrees with what they say - Proverbs 26:2.
- God may cause their curse to "backfire" on them - Psalm 109:17-20.