

Marks of a Christian – Part 5

Romans 12:14

a. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

- a. This imperative extends beyond the family of Christians.
- b. Bless (εὐλογεῖτε *eulogeite*) – to give a blessing is to act kindly and impart benefits to the one being blessed.
 - i. A eulogy is given at a funeral or memorial – speaking good things about the deceased.
 - ii. To the living, act kindly, even to those who persecute you.
 - iii. If you find it difficult to do good to your enemies, remember the words of Jesus on the cross, echoed in the final words of Stephen.
 - iv. Notice that Paul repeats the imperative to bless. It is not a suggestion; it is an imperative.
- c. persecute (διώκοντας *diōkontas*) – to pursue, persecute, to systematically oppress and harass a person or group.
 - i. She was a Christian and she was in line for a good promotion in her office complex. An ungodly lady worked in the same area and wanted the job herself. She began to slander the saint. The Christian knew it and the ungodly woman knew the Christian knew it; but she continued the defamation until she succeeded in her evil endeavor. The Christian was passed over and the ungodly one got the job. The saint bought a dozen red roses and a card. She wrote (something like): “I’m pleased for you. If I can be of any assistance at all. Please, call on me.” That morning the ungodly lady found the roses on her desk and read the note. Shattered she came to the office of Christ’s woman, stood speechless for a moment and then sobbed bitterly. The Christian took her in her arms and hushed her crying, invited her to her home. They became good friends. Some time later the ungodly lady went to the assemblies with her friend and submitted to Christ. This is an actual incident. Don’t say that we can’t live that way. Lovely people are doing it day after day.

d. curse (καταρᾶσθε *katarasthe*) - to wish evil to.

e. Matt. 5:38-40 - 38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.