*Northwest Bible Church – April 17, 2005                Worship Service – Alan Conner*
**Rom. 12:17-21**

*RIGHTEOUS RESPONSES*

**INTRO**
**I. HOW TO RESPOND TO THOSE WHO HARM US (v. 14).**
        Promise of persecution. John 15:20; 2Tim. 3:12

    A. Bless and do not curse.

        1) Bless our persecutors. Cf. Mt. 5:44; Lk. 6:27

            “Bless”-
             “Do not curse” -

        2) Godly examples.

            a) Christ’s example - Luke 23:34
            b) Stephen’s example - Acts 7:54-60
            c) David did not kill Saul.

    B. Why bless and not curse?

        1) Our persecutors are doing the will of God and it will work for our good.

        2) The blessings of persecution.

            a) it proves our faith - 1Pet. 1:7; 1Pet. 4:12

            b) it advances the gospel, Phil. 1:12-14; Acts 8:2,4; Matt. 16:18

            c) sign of grace in the heart - 1Pet. 4:14

            d) it can be a source of great joy for the Christian - 1Pet. 4:13

            e) teaches us to trust in God - 1Pet. 4:19

            f) teaches us that the world hates us that this is not our home - John 15:18-19

            g) increases our blessedness both now and in heaven – Mt. 5:10-12; 2Cor.4:17
                2 Cor. 12:10

**II. HOW TO RESPOND TO THE HAPPY (v. 15).**

    A. “Rejoice with those who rejoice” -

    B. Rejoicing with those who are rejoicing, is not always easy.

**III. HOW TO RESPOND TO THE HEART-BROKEN (v. 15).**

    A. Christ’s example. Jn. 11:35

    B. Requires sensitivity of the HS.

**IV. HOW TO RESPOND TO THE HUMBLE (v. 16).**
    A. Two prerequisites:

        1) Unity of mind. “be of the same mind toward one another.”

        2) Humility of mind. “do not be haughty in mind.”

    B. Associate with the lowly.

    C. Don’t be wise in your own estimation.

**CONCLUSION**
    To those who harm you, bless them, pray for them. Do not curse them.
    To those who are happy, be happy with them.
    To those who are heartbroken, weep with them.
    To those who are humble, associate with them. Don’t remain aloof.