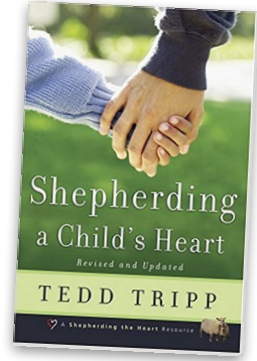


14.

Bless those who persecute you

Romans 12:14a

In one of the best books written on parenting, from a Christian perspective, (*Shepherding Your Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp), he makes the case that most parents don't "shepherd" their children with the Gospel. He gives an example of a child coming home and reporting to their parents that they had been hit by a bully at school. Most Christian will tell their children to either not hit back or stand up for their rights or tell a teacher. Tedd Tripp says this is *reasonable* advice, but it's not *Gospel* advice.



1. Based on Romans 12:14a what advice could a parent give to their child that would constitute "Gospel advice"?
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2. Ricky is having brother-in-law problems. Ricky's brother-in-law is demeaning and rude. Ricky has just been yet again deeply offended by him. But Ricky loves God and wants most to please Christ. You have just been challenged by Romans 12:14a, and the words of Christ in Matthew 5:44. How would counsel Ricky?
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3. Have you ever heard of or seen someone you know surprising their persecutor with a "Gospel response"? Discuss.
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4. Peter wrote his epistles to persecuted Christians. He reinforces the Gospel response of Romans 12:4a in First Peter 3:9 but includes two reasons why believers should do so. What are these two reasons?
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5. The early Christians mystified their persecutors by their Gospel response to them. What is so marvellous about the connection between Luke 6:28, Acts 12:1-5, First Peter 2:13-14?
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We are not only charged by the Lord not to be bitter toward those who revile us, we are actually commanded to bless those do so! We do this by giving them gifts, praying for them, speaking well of them, and protecting their welfare.

*Father, I can sometimes barely forgive those who hurt me let alone bless them!
Please help me to forgive AND bless people who mistreat or slander me. I need
Your grace to do this. Thank You for it.*

Amen.