

Romans: The Foundation of Our Faith

Student Study Guide

Part Six

*Unless otherwise marked scripture is from the NKJV Bible.

Romans Chapter 13 addresses your behavior and relationship with others.

Do not to remove yourself from the world into a life of Christian isolation; this practice or teaching of living as a hermit was not practiced nor is this teaching supported in the New Testament.

Your interaction with the world around you is vital for others and for yourself.

Influence others with the Gospel message, and do not allow others to influence you with their worldly ways.

You have the honor of being given the privilege and responsibility to carry the Good News, the Gospel, to another person.

When you are humble, in your presentation of the Gospel, you experience the Holy Spirit's work in your own life convincing you of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Romans 13:1-10

1Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

2Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

3For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise for the same.

4For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

5Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

6For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

7Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

8Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

9For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

10Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

Practical instructions for the Believer.

Understanding obedience to authority is important to your participation in the Kingdom of God.

If, you are rebellious in your family and society, do you think you will understand obedience to authority in the Body of Christ?

Civil authority has its origin with God.

Paul's Question:

Who should obey civil authority? Everyone!

What if the government is totalitarian, or unfair, or oppressive, or non-democratic, or promotes secular values, or is not your idea of a Christian nation? What if you disagree with the government's policies?

Defiance of civil authority can only be justified when:

1. The government directly prevents you from obeying God.
2. The government attempts to force you to disobey God.

Acts 5:38 NIV

Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail.

The Apostle Peter's statement to the authorities:

Obedience to God takes precedence over obedience to man.

Example issue: Stealing

1. Obedience to God involves not stealing.
2. It is not my directive to stop everyone else from stealing.

Romans 13:7-8

Misapplied: Do not incur debt.

Properly applied: Pay that which you owe and pay it to whom you owe it.
Do not let a debt that is owed go unpaid.

When questioned, Jesus summarized the Law of Moses this way:

1. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, and all your strength.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Paul lists 5 commandments from the Law of Moses that relate to our relationships with one another: Adultery, Murder, Stealing, Lying, Coveting.

How does the "Law of Love" cover each of these?

The Law of Love: Is the ethical principle that fills any gaps that may be observed or perceived in the commandments.

Questions for consideration:

If you love the Lord as fully as you should and you love your neighbor as fully as you should . . .

Will you commit adultery?

Will you commit murder?

Will you steal?

Will you lie?

Will you covet?

As Jesus rules in your heart by the Law of Love, not only will you not be involved in these activities, you will be actively involved in reaching your heathen neighbor in the agape love of Jesus Christ!

Romans 13:11-14

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now, our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

12The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

14But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Romans 13:11

Wake up! The completion of our salvation is nearer than when you began.

Salvation is not a transaction of a single experience affecting your past, that involves forgiveness and justification in the sight of God, but has many ongoing operations affecting both your present and your future.

Past Romans 1-6 Saved from the penalty of sin

Present Romans 7-8 Saved from the power of sin

Future Saved from the presence of sin

Now that you are awake, and now that you are aware of God's continuing intervention in your life through salvation, What should you wear?

The Armor of Light!

Romans 13:12

Dress up and put on the armor of light! The armor of light is compared to your defense or protection. Light, is the revealed truth of God through Jesus Christ.

Putting on the light occurs when you understand and apply the revelation truth of Jesus to your life. Just knowing or having a head knowledge about truth is insufficient!

Romans 13:14

Put on Christ! Allow yourself to be changed by the inner work of the Spirit of God. Become increasingly like Him! "Put on" the Lord Jesus Christ.

Put on His mission.

Put on His prayer life.

Put on His knowledge of the Scripture.

Put on His attitude of service.

Put on His concerns and priorities.

Put on His treatment of other people.

The Donut Illustration:

You know you're not supposed to eat donuts and you are trying to free yourself of a donut addiction although, you have not quit going to the bakery. You explain to the Baker, as you are drooling over his display case that you are just looking, smelling and imagining your favorite donut in your mouth. The Baker knows it won't be long until you break down completely and participate in the actual eating his donuts.

Put on Christ and quit going to the bakery!

Eliminate the opportunities for sin.

Living within our culture: Where do you draw the line?

In most fellowships or local churches, you will find Christians in many stages of discipleship development; some are strong in the faith and mature in their walk, some are growing and responding to discipleship, while others are weak and immature. Paul instructs and motivates all of us, in all categories, in how to have a good relationship with one other.

Romans 14 deals with two practices dealing with physical things and religious observances.

1. Should we eat all things including red meat, or should we just be restricted to healthy vegetables?

2. Should we observe certain special days as having value above others, or should we treat all days as the same?

Today, there are still practices in question among sincere, Bible-believing Christians that can result in mutual criticism and resentment concerning where to draw the line in our practice. There are certain things that Scripture clearly directs us to do. There are certain things that Scripture clearly forbids us to do. In between, there are convictions and guidelines that you and I may apply differently. The things that the Scripture does not specifically address are addressed here in principle.

Some examples:

Fashion and dress. Where is the line between modesty and vulgarity?

Or, is it simply just rude, or just in bad taste?

Note: No one here would be allowed to join many of the fundamentalist churches of the first half of the last century.

Your manner of dress is too suggestive, too vulgar, and much too worldly. Your hairstyle is immodest, and you are wearing jewelry.

Entertainment	Theater, movies, television, internet; G - PG - R - NC17 – X In your own home or in a public building?
Language	Swearing, cursing, slang. When does slang move into swearing?
Sunday Activities	Reserved or open-season?
Music	Classical, gospel, country, rock, jazz; rap; hip-hop; big band; folk; military anthems; hymns; choruses; soft and slow or hard and fast?
Competitive Sports	Good physical exercise or compulsion in aggressive display of ego?
Dancing	Celebration style or seduction style?
Bible Translation	Some restrict fellowship over which translation of the Bible that you use. Is the King James Version of the Bible holy and inspired?

Romans 14:1-12

1Receive one who is weak in the faith, but no to disputes over doubtful things.

2For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

3Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.

4Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

5One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

6He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord, he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

7For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

8For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

9For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

10But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, and every

tongue shall confess to God." 12So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

The principle of liberty applied.

Practices of other Christians in these areas should be respected, even when you disagree. Treating another as a spiritual midget or as a cultural dinosaur is not the attitude Paul is instructing you to have towards those you disagree with.

Romans 14:2-3

Paul characterizes the weak person as the one who abstains from the practice of eating meat. The strong one sees the weak one and disdains him. The weak one sees the strong one and condemns him. Both mindsets are dangerous!

Romans 14:4

Who are you to judge the servant of another? (Please, do not let unbelieving people apply this quotation universally to each and every situation of life!)

This statement is intended to be limited to the subject being discussed. That is, the areas of Christian conduct that are not directly addressed by Scripture! It is intended to be applied to the area where there is no clearly stated moral guideline in Scripture.

Romans 14:5-9

Have a strong opinion? Whatever you do it unto the Lord! Everything is to be done with the right heart and the right mindset, do it unto the Lord! The key is to make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life. Then allow Him, not you, to be the Lord of the life of other Believers! Everything is to be done by the work of the Holy Spirit, if He convicts you concerning an activity or practice then, please obey Him! Remember just because the Holy Spirit has directed your decision and behavior, it does not make you the new standard for the entire Christian world to follow!

Romans 14:13-23

14I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.

16Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil;

17for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

18For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

19Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

20Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.

21It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

22Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

23But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

The principle of love applied.

We have liberty **but** we love one another; and because of this love, we refrain from that which would cause another to stumble and fall.

Romans 14:18 Serving Christ

BY

Romans 14:19 Edifying others (a love-based building up)

NOT

Romans 14:20 Destroying the faith of others by flaunting our liberty.

Romans 14:20

Key to understanding. "Things" have no moral quality or value! (Kosher beef vs. pork)

Romans 14:22-23

Opinions of conscience are important to each of us. But we must resist forcing our own opinion in areas upon others, or worse, present them as the standard of the Kingdom of God for all Christians everywhere.

A test of fellowship in a local body.

Paul writes that we **not** become divided over things that the Scripture does not address specifically.

Paul does not write, "Be sure to be on the correct side of the division!" Instead, he emphasized, "Let there be no divisions among you!"

I Corinthians 1:10 NIV

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Ask yourself these questions.

Am I self-indulgent or defensive, defending my practice in liberty even if others stumble as a result? Am I willing to seek and know God's will on this practice?

Advice from Augustine of the Fourth Century:

In essentials, unity;
in non-essentials, liberty;
in all things, love.

If you are strong, love the weaker members.

If you are weak, learn from the strong members.

Psalm 133:1 NIV

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Drawing From Romans Chapter 14

There are issues over which Christians disagree. Issues of application concerning how we are to live in this world. These are not disagreements over the character of God or the realities of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Social issues do not define your Christian faith.

Romans 15:1-7

1We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

2Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.

3For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

4For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

5May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had,

6so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7Accept one another, then. Just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Understanding liberty and living in love.

It is vital that you have an understanding of your liberty in Christ, along with the responsibility your life expression of God's agape love has on others; by being concerned for their welfare in the careful exercise of your freedom. This insight and acknowledgment will help you determine proper choices for your attitude and behavior.

You will always be able to join one of these groups:

The first group who continuously argues about Sunday afternoon activities, about fashion and clothing, about food and drink.

The second group open in fellowship, giving testimony to the active work of God in their lives.

Romans 15:5

Accept the unity in Jesus Christ that God gives.

Romans 15:6

Join with others in giving glory to God. This is the fruit of following the right example and God is glorified with your heart and through your mouth!

Romans 15:7

Now, accept one another!

Romans 15:8-33

Accepting Others: The Example of Jesus Christ

God has designed, defined, and determined that you need Jesus Christ to be identified with you in your salvation. For Him to do that requires that you be clothed or covered in His righteousness. This new condition now requires you to be identified with Jesus Christ. As you come to the full realization of what that means, the understanding of your relationships with others now directly connects to your identification with Jesus Christ.

Francis of Assisi's said, "Preach everywhere you go, use words when necessary."

Others are learning from your example and your lifestyle. The progression of thought concerning behavior, decisions and choices should go along these lines:

1. Does Scripture prohibit it?
2. Is it right?
3. Can I do this with a clear conscience?
4. Would it cause a weaker brother to stumble?
5. Will this bring glory to God?

Answering these questions honestly will help guide you in our daily life and the choices that you are making.

Romans 16:1-27

1I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,
2that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

3Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
4who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5Likewise greet the church this in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ.

6Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

7Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

9Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

10Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

11Greet Herodion, my countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

12Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.

13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patobas. Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.

15Greet Philologus and Juia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

18For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

19For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore, I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.

20And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen

21Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you.

22I, Tertiu, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

23Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you and Quartus, a brother.

24The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

26but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith –

27to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen

The mystery that is now revealed.

Should you accept everyone? No, look at Romans 16:17.

Watch out for, or mark those who cause division based on doctrine that is in opposition to that which you have learned! Watch out for them and avoid them!

Romans 16:18

They serve their own appetites and desires; and their intent is to deceive!

Romans 16:25-26

A Mystery. This is not a puzzle, or a detective case to solve; it is something that is hidden from prominent view. Paul proclaims the item that was previously hidden and it is now manifested!

What is this mystery?

The righteousness of God is available to men and women through faith in the person Jesus Christ!

It is now manifested to you and if you believe in Jesus Christ for your salvation, it is manifested in you!