

Romans 13

Lesson 17

As Christians we have been called to not be conformed to this world. Yet, we still are subject to its authorities. Chapter 13 addresses our responsibilities to others, not only those in government positions but all those we come in contact with. Our primary debt to all men is love. We are to *do this, knowing the time...the night is far spent, the day is at hand.*

DAY ONE: Read Romans 13

1. Read through this week's verses. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?
 - a. Romans 13 has been divided into three sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section. How would you title each section?
Verses 1-7
Verses 8-10
Verses 11-14
2. The term of conclusion, *therefore*, is used several times in Romans 13. Record one conclusion that Paul arrived at and what it was based on.

DAY TWO: Read Romans 13:1-7

1. The chapter contains practical instructions and exhortations for believers concerning our responsibility to civil authority and to our neighbors. In Romans 13:1-7 Paul first addressed the Christian's relationship to governing authority. What instruction are we given about these *authorities* in verse 1?
 - a. According to Romans 13:1 why should a Christian *be subject to the governing authorities*?
2. *So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow* (Romans 13:2 NLT). This *punishment* could refer to the punishment by those in authority for disobedience to its laws. In your own words write what verse 3 says about this.
3. Read Romans 13:4-7. What purpose or function of government is revealed in Romans 13:4?

- a. Cite one or two ways God uses government as His *minister to you for good*.
 - b. What reasons for being *subject* to those in authority are recorded in verse 5?
 - 1.) When might it be necessary for a believer to *obey God rather than men*? (Acts 5:29)
 - c. *For because of this* what are we to do according to verses 6,7?
4. Think for a moment about the historical setting in which this was written. Paul had personally experienced beatings and imprisonment (Acts 16:22-24). Opposition against Christians was common and persecution from civil authorities was a real danger. With this in mind, reflect on the instructions of Romans 13:1-7. How might God use evil and unjust rulers for His purposes?
- a. Regardless of who is in authority over us, what are we to do according to 1 Timothy 2:1,2?
 - (1) Why should we do this? Answer from 1 Timothy 2:2b.

DAY THREE: Read Romans 13:8-10

- 1. In Romans 13:8-10 Paul writes to Christians concerning our responsibility to our neighbor. Thoughtfully consider verse 8 as you write it here using another translation or your own words.
 - a. Consider Romans 13:8 in the New Living Translation: *Pay all your debts, except the debt of love for others. You can never finish paying that! If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill all the requirements of God's law.* Why would love for others be called a *debt*?
- 2. In Romans 13:9a Paul quoted from the second table of the law by citing laws dealing with man's relationship with others and then wrote *and if there is any other commandment, it may be summed up in this saying...NASB.* Contemplate the powerful summary statement of Romans 13:9b as you print it here in all caps.
 - a. Read Luke 10:30-37 and answer the question asked of Jesus in Luke 10:29b.
 - b. Look again at the commandments mentioned Romans 13:9. How is breaking any of these commands a violation of the principle of love?

1.) Comment on the following quote: "Most of these sins are accepted or excused in today's culture and are often glamorized by the media. If this isn't bad enough, the most grievous fact is that they are all too frequently committed by believers".

3. How does Romans 13:10 conclude the subject of *loving your neighbor*?

a. Explain why *love is the fulfillment of the law*.

b. Summarize what Jesus said about this in Matthew 22:37-40.

4. What kinds of actions communicate love to you?

DAY FOUR: Read Romans 13:11,12

1. We are given another reason in Romans 13:11 for loving others and living right. Notice the phrase *knowing the time*. *Knowing the time*, what are we to do according to this verse?

a. Focus on the word *awake*. In this context how does it speak to you?

b. *Now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed* (verse 11). The final phase of our salvation will be completed when we stand face to face with Jesus Christ. How should the awareness of Christ's soon return *awaken* Christians to right living?

1.) What changes would you make in your life if you knew that Jesus was coming within the next six months?

2. Record the two instructions that begin with the words *let us* in Romans 13:12.

- a. *...So don't live in darkness. Get rid of your evil deeds. Shed them like dirty clothes...* (Romans 13:12 NLT). What does this mean to you in practical, daily living?
 - b. The Bible often follows instructions of things we are to put off or shed with things we are to put on. Explain as you would to a new Christian what it means to *put on the armor of light*.
3. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8 observing the similarities to Romans 13:11,12. Jot down a few words and phrases from these verses that expand the Romans 13:11,12 instructions.

DAY FIVE: Read Romans 13:13,14

1. Romans 13:13 describes how the believer is to *walk*. Record the phrases Paul used to describe this *walk*.
 - a. Write some synonyms for the word *properly* as it is used in this verse.
2. Record what we are *not to walk in* using your own words.
3. We have seen in Romans 13:13 what we are **not** to do. What are believers to do according to Romans 13:14a?
 - a. What does it mean to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*?
 - b. What does it mean to *make no provision for the flesh*?

4. Romans 13:14 commands us not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. *Lusts* as it is used in this verse refers to desires or longings that are forbidden. It is within the nature of our *flesh* to *lust*. What are some practical things we can do to keep from *fulfilling the lusts of the flesh*?

Challenge: Cross-references are verses found in other places of the Bible that relate to the verse (verses) being studied. Find and record some cross-references to one or some of the verses in today's lesson.

DAY SIX: Review Chapter 13

1. Recall an insight, instruction or application you received from the following:
 - a. Romans 13:1-7
 - b. Romans 13:8-10
 - c. Romans 13:11,12
 - d. Romans 13:13,14
2. Based on this week's study, form an acrostic or acronym for *love*:

L
O
V
E
3. What is the believer to understand about the times? Romans 13:11,12
4. With Romans 13:12,13 in mind, what did you discover through the contrasts of:
 - a. *day* and *night*

b. *light and darkness*

5. How has this study spoken to you concerning choices we make as believers?

*Why all this stress on behavior?
Because, as I think you have realized,
the present time is of the highest importance –
it is time to wake up to reality.
Every day brings God's salvation nearer.*

-Romans 13:11 Phillips