

The Law of Love – Romans 13:8–14:23



MEMORY VERSE: Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Romans 13:8

DAY 1 ROMANS 13:8-14 — Love and the Law

1. Paul had just instructed Christians pay taxes and respect to the proper authorities. What does he now say about our true debt? vv.8-9
2. Explain verse 10 in your own words. See also Galatians 5:13-15
3. Describe the urgency Paul seems to feel. vv.11-12
4. How do we “walk properly?” vv.13-14
5. What does it mean to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ?” v.14 See also Ephesians 6:10-18

LEARN THE TRUTH

Loving one another is the one “debt” Paul says believers have in the kingdom. He lays out specific relational aspects of walking in community with fellow believers. Watch for these as you study and ask God to reveal areas in your life that need work, and to help you walk in love and faith.

DAY 2 ROMANS 14:1-4 — Love for the Weak

6. How are we to treat a person who is “weak in faith?” vv.1-2
7. Why would quarreling about food cause difficulty within the fellowship? vv.3-4

8. What kinds of food were causing division, and why is this important? 1 Corinthians 8:4-13

9. How do you think we “pass judgment” on other believers today?

10. What determines whether a person stands or falls? vv.3-4

DAY 3 ROMANS 14:5-12 — Love with Personal Conviction

11. What does Paul mean about “esteeming” days? v.5

12. How do you think we can become “fully convinced in our own minds” about matters of food and days?

13. What is foundational for all believers in regards to behavior? vv.6-9

14. Why is it foolish to pass judgment on, or despise, other believers for their convictions? vv.10-12

15. In giving “an account to God,” what do we pray will happen? Matthew 25:21

DAY 4 ROMANS 14:13-19 — Love and Mutual Respect

16. How do we practically obey verse 13 in our lives?

17. What is true about food? v.14

18. What harsh words did Paul use to describe the effect our actions can have on a young believer?
vv.15-16

19. Why do you think it is easier to be opinionated and judgmental about non-essential personal convictions than it is to pursue righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit? vv.17-19

20. How does following Paul's instructions build up God's kingdom on earth?

DAY 5 ROMANS 14:20-23 – Walking in Love

21. What has the power to destroy the work of God? Why is this? vv.20-21

22. How can we honor one another by the way we handle our personal convictions? vv.21-23

Philippians 2:3-4

23. How can some of our behaviors bring condemnation on ourselves? vv.21-23

24. How do you think we can be blessed instead of condemned by our actions? James 1:6-8

25. Think about your own life. Do any of your behaviors, while not "sin," need to go? Has someone shown you love by refraining from a behavior that causes you to stumble?

LOVE THE TRUTH

True love is self-denial in midst of conviction. We have many opportunities to love others into the Kingdom, so pay attention and be careful not to push people away by your choices. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how others perceive you, and be willing to change to meet God's

Romans 13:8–14:23

The Law of Love

Ever consider what the “law of love” looks like in your life? As Paul continues his letter to the Roman church, he wrote, “love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (13:10) Just a few days before Jesus was crucified on the cross, He said to His disciples, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that someone lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:12-13) The Scripture in this lesson tells us what it looks like to love sacrificially.

The essentials of Christianity are not up for debate, especially that God is One and has always been, and will always be; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was born of a virgin; that salvation comes only through belief in His sinless life and death on the cross to atone for our sins; that He rose from the dead and conquered death once for all, that He is coming again... The Bible is clear about what is good and what is evil, but there are also “gray” areas that the Bible does not forbid and about which we are free to form our own convictions. It is these areas that Paul addresses.

Our one debt to people is to love them because Christ first loved us. We do this by casting off the works of darkness and putting on the armor of light (v.13:12), or essentially walking in righteousness. Our sacrifice for others is nothing compared to the Christ’s sacrifice for us, but it is still important. It begins with denying self and making no provision for the flesh. Our goal must no longer be to gratify our physical desires. (13:14)

Our personal choices matter- both to God and to our fellow believers. Young believers look to more mature Christians for answers on how to live, so we must take care how we walk. We would never purposely put toys in the pathway of a child who is learning to walk lest they trip and get hurt. Likewise, we must give special care to new believers who are “weak in faith.” (14:1)

We are to welcome them, but not to try to convince them to believe as we do about non-essentials such as eating, v and traditions about certain days. While something might not be a sin, it can still cause someone to stumble because of their background, personality or limited knowledge. At the same time, making rules about behavior that God has not called sin creates legalism at the expense of righteousness and peace and joy. Our goal must be to protect the Christian community and avoid the distraction of getting caught up in debating the non-essentials. We must pursue unity in the things that matter Biblically and keep the rest between ourselves and God.

WALK IN TRUTH



Are you showing Christ’s love in your actions and interactions with other believers? Is there a sense of grace about how you deal with people, especially those who are young in their faith? In order to truly love, we must make sure our actions do not cause anyone to stumble. We must be willing to forego something we might normally do in order to avoid confusing a young believer. How do others see us? Do people feel loved by us, or judged? Do we give the impression that our comfort and lifestyle are more important to us than the heart and well-being of others? We must not selfish, but instead walk as Christ did, sacrificially. God has entrusted us with the freedom to choose. While we may understand that something is not sin, others may not. “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (1 Corinthians 8:1) Our life is our witness, and we have the power to build people up by our choices and manner. May our lives give glory to God and cause others to thirst for Him and yearn to know Him better.