

# Walking Through Romans to Christ

## Romans chapter 13 "Living by the Laws of Love"

### Righteousness by Faith Series

**Opening/REVIEW:** *In our last chapter we learned many of the principles by which Christ calls us to live our lives. Jesus desires that we should be entirely different from the order of this world! We should not be "conformed to this world" but rather we should be "transformed" by the renewing of our minds, so that we may prove what God's good and perfect will is (ch.12). In today's lesson we'll be looking at the Christian's duty to the governments under which we live, and also our duty to God and our fellow men.*

#### 1. The Christian's Duty to be a Good citizen (v.1-5, 6-7)

- a. "...appointed by God" (v.1) God raises up kings, and brings them down.
- b. **It is a moral duty** from Christ to obey the laws of the government. "...they that resist...receive...judgment" (v.2) "...for conscience sake" (v.5).
- c. Governments bear "not the sword in vain" (v.4). **Capital punishment is God's extended work. The government must enforce rules and laws to keep righteousness in the land.** Under God's Theocratic rule of Israel there was a death penalty for sins (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). And so it is to be under the governments of today, to keep rule and order in a land that has been filled with vile sins of mankind.
- d. **Daniel** was faithful to all government ordinances (**Daniel 6:4, 5, 13**) (a testimony for God). *Daniel was faithful in all things. He never did anything amiss against the government. The only time however, when Daniel chose not to obey the earthly government was when they tried to make a law for everyone about how to worship God. Daniel put God and His law above all!*
- e. **What line can government not cross?** (when duty to God conflicts with duty to an earthly government, then we should obey God's law instead) (**Acts 5:29**). Also consider Christ's words, "Render to Caesar that which is Caesar's but to God that which is God's" (Mark 12:17). **Governments have no right to tell us who or how to worship!** *They cannot enforce the first 4 of God's commandments or anything that is contrary to them either. It is not their earthly right. The last six however, governments can, should, and often do enforce!*
- f. **True Christians do not evade their taxes** (v.7) **Jesus paid taxes (Matthew 17:24-27)**
- g. Should Christians obey stop signs? Red lights? How about speed limits? (absolutely). *We ought to set a good example of who a follower of Christ is!*

#### 2. The Principle of God's law is Love (God's Character)(v.8-10)

- a. (v.8-10) Don't be in debt. If in debt, we need to be sure and get it paid off. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." Why can this be said? Even Jesus, and the Old Testament Bible writers additionally, pointed this out (*See Matthew 22:36-40; ref. Deuteronomy 6:5,6; Leviticus 19:18*).
- b. Some think they can call disobedience to God's law, "love." Some have said, "Oh, we love God so we don't have to keep the Ten Commandments anymore." But that's foolishness (**See 1 John 5:3**). It's the unconverted heart that does not want to keep them (Rom. 8:7)
- c. *The Ten Commandment Law of God is quoted here. These are God's righteous precepts of love. To disobey them is to sin against God. We, by God's grace, out of love for God and man, are to keep these commandments diligently. This is the fullest expression of love to live by these commands, and not only the letter of them, but by the true spirit of them as well. Even our*

- hearts and minds must be made pure and obedient to the will of God. **The first four** of the Ten Commandments deal with our relationship to man (**Exodus 20:1-11**). **The last six** of the commandments deal with our relationship to our fellow men and women (**Exodus 20:12-17**). They express love to God and love to man. Jesus says if we love Him, then we should keep his commandments (John 14:15,21). If we are breaking them, this is sin (1 John 3:4). The Apostle James says that we will be Judged by this law [not saved, but judged or evaluated], as does the book of Romans. And if we are living a life that is knowingly disobedient to even one of God's commandments then we are guilty of breaking them all (James 2:10-12; Romans 2:12,13). We will be judged according to our choices and actions in these matters. The commandments are God's "law of liberty." Jesus sets us free from the bondage of sin and its penalty. Then He gives us power to be free and stay free from that bondage of sin (John 8:32-36).
- d. (v.10) "Love does no evil" to his neighbor. Therefore, it can be said that Godly love is a summary of God's law. Love is the fulfilling of the law, because love does not transgress God's commandments. (For further study of God's perfect love you may read 1 Corinthians 13; to see more of Christ's teachings on the law, you may read Matthew 5:17-48; Christ "magnified" the law of God and made it "honorable"-Isaiah 42:21).
  - e. God's righteous commandments are to be our "wisdom and understanding in the sight of all the nations..." God has made us a "wise and understanding people" through them (Deuteronomy 4:5,6). "Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

**3. It is High Time to Cast off the works of Darkness (v.11-14)**

- a. (v.11,12) The time of Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming draws nearer and nearer. The Lord will cut this work short in righteousness (Romans 9:28). We should not be spiritually asleep, but rather awake, and alert, seeking the Lord, and helping others that they may know and follow God's righteous precepts, being forgiven, and converted by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ! We must learn from God how to "...number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" and to not abuse the time which the Lord has given us (Psalm 90:12).
- b. (v.13-14) Let us therefore cast off all sin, all darkness, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ and "making not provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts." We should not give sin a chance to overtake us. Do not make any provision for it. Stay far from the door behind which you know an evil temptation is lying in wait to destroy you! (Proverbs 5:8). Do not leave any room for yourself to be overcome. Escape, and "flee" from all evil (1 Corinthians 6:18), whatever it may be!

**Today's Appeal: Is it your desire to live by God's laws of love? \_\_\_\_\_** Will you seek to always obey His righteous commandments? \_\_\_\_\_