

**Welcome - (~2 min)****Opening prayer – (~1 min)****Opening Comments – (~1 min)**

- In all of Paul's letters, he concludes with a list of practical duties that were based on the doctrines he had discussed.
- In Christian life, doctrine and duty always go together.
- What we believe helps to determine how we behave.
- It is not enough for us to understand Paul's doctrinal explanations.
- We must translate our *learning* into *living* and show by our daily lives that we trust God and His Word.
- As we saw in Chapter 12, Paul's key idea was Christian relationships: **12:1-2** our relationship to God; **12:3-8** our relationship to our spiritual gifts; **12:9-16** our relationship to other believers; and lastly, **12:17-21** our relationship to unbelievers;
- In Chapter 13 he continues the idea of relationships: **13:1-7** he speaks to the relationship a Christian should strive to maintain with governing authorities. As we read this chapter, we need to remember the original context. Christians were viewed with suspicion by a government that held religious views in sharp contradiction to Christian beliefs. Likewise, the Christians had good reason to question the type of relationship they should have with the governing authorities. So Paul addresses the need to submit to the governing authorities because God is who placed them in that position.
- He then moves to how Christians are to relate with fellow believers as well as those around them.
- We too may have many questions about the things Paul is talking about in this lesson.
- For instance, is it really important to stay within the speed limit or to not turn left when the light is red?
- Are we really supposed to obey all governing leaders? What if they make bad choices?
- Does it really hurt anything if we hedge a bit on our taxes?
- And, how are believers to love their neighbors? Who are their neighbors anyway?
- Paul says "*the hour has come for you to wake up*" what does that mean?
- Hopefully, you will understand the answer to these types of questions, partially if not fully, by the end of our study today.

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~54 min)**Week's Aim: The Gospel's Power to Heal the World – The Transformed Life**

(Start time: _____)

Topic for Day 1: Overview of Romans 13:1-14**1. What are at least three responsibilities a believer has towards society according to this chapter?**

- Following are possible responses to the question:
- 1) Submit to the governing authorities. – **13:1**
- 2) Love your neighbor. – **13:9b**
- 3) Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. – **13:14**

2. (+2 min) How many commands does Paul give in this chapter? Identify the verses and the command.

- Part 1: There are at least 11 commands.
- Part 2: Following are the verse followed by the command:
 - 1 – submit to authorities; 3 – do what is right; 5 – submit because of conscience; 6 – pay taxes; 7 – give what you owe; 8 – don't let debts remain outstanding; 9 – love neighbor; 11 – do by understanding; 12 – put aside wrong deeds; 13 – behave decently; 14 – clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ; 14 – do not think of sinful gratification.)

3. (+2 min) **What are some attributes of God that you see demonstrated in these verses?**

- Sovereign, Authority, Omniscient, Loving, Planner, Sustainer, Provider, Light, Fortress

(+1 min) **Application 1: What will you apply to your life this week from the sermon? How will you do that?**

Topic for Day 2: A life transformed submits to the governing authorities. - 13:1-4

1. (+2 min) **Use a dictionary and write the definition for the word "submit."**

- *a* : to yield oneself to the authority or will of another : SURRENDER
- *b* : to permit oneself to be subjected to something <had to *submit* to surgery>
- *c*: to defer to or consent to abide by the opinion or authority of another
- There will be a variety of definitions depending where people went to get them.

2. (+1 min) **Why is it necessary for "all people" to submit to governing authorities?**

- Paul's answer is because, "*The authorities that exist have been established by God.*"
- Before going further, it is very important that we **know** that God is sovereign.
- God being sovereign means that he is Supreme in position and authority over **all creation!**
- Supreme in position means that He is above all persons, creatures, and things.
- Supreme in authority means that His commands apply to all persons, creatures, and things.
- Nothing exists that is not ultimately under His direction and control
- If you remember Paul alluded to this at least twice so far.
- In **Romans 1:20** "*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*"
- And in **Romans 8:30** "*And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.* "
- Here is the logic Paul is using: if we **know** God is sovereign, then it makes sense that everyone is to submit to Him and His purposes.
- If His *purpose* is to place a person in a position of governing authority, then it is logical that those under that person are to submit to him or her –
- Why? Because God placed that person in that position according to His purpose, not ours!
- Understand this, the person submitting has a responsibility to God **but so does the one in authority!**
- Both will answer some day to God!
- **Philippians 2:10-11** says, "*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* "
- There are many examples of **bad/evil** authorities in Scripture.

- God put the Pharaoh's in place – what did they do – they oppressed the Jews 400 years – God was using them – the last Pharaoh mentioned Exodus rebelled the most against God.
- God put Herod in place – what did he do – killed babies trying to find Jesus – God used him.
- God put Pilate in place – what did he do – he passed the death sentence on our Lord Jesus Christ – God used him.
- God put the religious leaders in place – what did they do – they caused Jesus to be hung on a tree – God used them.
- How do we reconcile this?
- **1st** – we must **know** and **believe** God is sovereign.
- **2nd** – we must **conform to the fact**: *“His thoughts are not our thoughts nor His ways our ways”* – Isa. 55:8
- **3rd** – He isn't obligated to tell us His thoughts and/or reasons for doing things – we must **trust in His purposes, plans, and authority**.
- We need to understand this is a contextual type question.
- We don't want to take what Paul is saying out of the context of Scripture and make it say something that is contrary to Scripture.
- So we need to see the context of Scripture from other places to get a better understanding of what Paul is actually saying.
- We know that all people placed in a governing authority position are not good.
- So the next question are examples to help us understand what Christians should do under certain circumstances.

3. (+7 min) **Why was it ok for Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (Daniel 3) and Daniel (Daniel 6) to not submit to the authority over them? Why was it ok for Peter and the apostles to disobey the Sanhedrin? (See Acts 5:25-29)**

- **Daniel 3:4-6** - *“Then the herald loudly proclaimed, “This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: ⁵ As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”*
- A proclamation by King Nebuchadnezzar that all peoples were to bow down and worship an idol.
Daniel 3:8 - *“astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews....*
Daniel 3:12 – *“But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon--Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego--who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”*
- **Daniel 3:16-18** – *“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up”*
- Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego did not conform to Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation because it went against God's commandments – *“You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...” (Ex. 20:4-5)*
- The “governing authority” was saying Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to worship a false god.
- This is a case where these men knew that was wrong and stood against it at the risk of their lives.

Daniel 6:7 – “The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den.”

Daniel 6:11-12 – “Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹² So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree”

Daniel 6:16 – “So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

Daniel 6:19-22 – “At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?” ²¹ Daniel answered, “O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight”

- The king was telling people they could not pray to any god for 30 days.
- Daniel could not abide by that ruling and so he stood against it.
- Notice in either of these cases, the people did not demonstrate, get violent, make a scene but quietly continued in their worship.

Acts 5:25-29 – “Then someone came and said, “Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people.” ²⁶ At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them. ²⁷ Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. ²⁸ “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood.” ²⁹ Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men!”

- Peter did not make a scene but continued spreading the gospel message until caught.
- When caught and questioned, Peter gave the explanation for going against the governing authority.

4. (+6 min) **From the answers to the above question, when is it proper for a Christian to not obey the governing authority?**

- From the examples above, we can see there are times when a Christians is to disobey the governing authorities.
- Peter and the disciples summed it up very well, saying that Christians must obey God first!
- If the governing authorities step out of line with God’s Word, then the Christian must stand for God first.
- It is good to note that the governing authorities have responsibilities too according to Paul.
- **1st** – *do you good* – they are supposed to do good to those they govern.
- **2nd** – they are to bring *wrath/punishment to wrongdoers* – they are to protect those they govern.
- **3rd** – they are to *give their full time* – they are to work hard for those they govern!

(+2 min) **Application 2: What will you do today to show others that you obey those in authority over you?**
(Listen to how people planned to obey)

Topic for Day 3: A life transformed deals honestly with the governing authorities. - 13:5-7

1. (+2 min) **What are the reasons Paul gives for submitting to the authorities? Using a dictionary, write the definition for the word "conscience."**

- First, he said to avoid punishment, but second, it is because of conscience.
- Word *conscience* comes from two Latin words, *con* = *with*; *scientia* = *knowledge*
- *Conscience* means *with knowledge* and deals with knowing one's heart, our inner motivations.
- Understand, God has quickened the Christian's **moral nature** so he/she **knows right from wrong**.
- **And** He has given the believer a true desire and ability to do what his/her conscience demands!
- Therefore, whether an action is convenient, personally advantageous, or popular, Christians ought to pursue the right and moral course of action.
- Dr. James Boice says, "our consciences are valuable only when they are themselves enlightened by the written Word of God"¹

2. (+3 min) **What is the example Jesus gives about paying taxes in Luke 20:22-25? What are your thoughts about Jesus' statement?**

Luke 20:22-25 – *"Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"* ²³ *He saw through their duplicity and said to them,* ²⁴ *"Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?"* ²⁵ *"Caesar's," they replied. He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."*

- Again Paul refers to the authorities as God's servants who *give their full time* to govern.
- Paul gives two personal relationships to contributions – taxes and revenue
- To paraphrase, Paul is saying *don't cheat people and give them what you owe them!*
- Isn't this divine providence that we would be talking about taxes at this time of year!
- Paul says we are to pay the full amount of what we owe.
- Do we always agree with how those in authority spend the money we give, probably not, but they are in authority over us and therefore we are to be obedient and true – for God's glory and how others view us as Christians!

3. (+2 min) **Honor and respect are to be shown to a variety of people. Identify those we are to honor and respect in the following verses: Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:32; John 5:22-23; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Timothy 6:15b-16; 1 Peter 2:13-17.**

Exodus 20:12 – *"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you "*

- We are to show honor and respect to our parents – see the promise, *"you may live long"*

Leviticus 19:32 – *"Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD. "*

- We are to show honor and respect for the elderly.

John 5:22-23 – *"Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him."*

- We are to demonstrate honor and respect to Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 5:17 – *"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. "*

- Our church officers are to be shown honor and respect.

1 Timothy 6:15b-16 – *"God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To Him be honor and might forever. Amen. "*

- We are to give glory, honor (and respect) to God.

1 Peter 2:13-17 – *“Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority “*

- We are to submit (show honor and respect is a form of submission) to the king – of course we don't have a king in the U.S. but we have a president.
- Most have heard the comment, “if you can't show respect for the person, then at least show respect for the position.”
- This is not what Paul is saying, he has said we are to honor and respect those in authority over us because *“He is God's servant...!”*
- Basically what Paul is saying is that Christians are to be law abiding citizens who support the authorities God has placed over them.
- A thought is we are to contribute what we owe to God's authoritative servants.
- As Jesus said, *“Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's”*

(+7 min) **Application 3:** With whom will you demonstrate honor and respect to today? How will you do that?

- Ask how they did this or will do it some time this week.

Topic for Day 4: A life transformed loves his or her neighbors. - 13:8-10

1. (+2 min) **Paul warns in 13:8 to not let any debt remain outstanding. What does Proverbs 22:7 say about the relationship of borrower and the lender? What does Exodus 22:25-27 show you about the lender's responsibility to the borrower?**

Proverbs 22:7 – *“The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”*

- The borrower is the servant to the lender.

Exodus 22:25-27 – *“If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, **do not** be like a moneylender; charge him no interest. ²⁶ If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset, ²⁷ because his cloak is the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.”*

- The lender is **not** to charge interest, do not put the lender in discomfort (return cloak by sunset).
- The lender is wise to care for the borrower because God hears his/her cries and will have compassion on him/her.
- Remember Paul is teaching about relationships throughout this chapter.
- Most of us have borrowed something from our neighbor, friend, family, someone.
- We've all borrowed money from someone or some institute, Paul is saying pay it back.

2. (+2 min) **Paul identifies a debt from which a Christian is never freed, what is it and why is it so? Give scriptures to support your answer (if you can).**

- **Part 1:** He is encouraging people to be debt free except for one debt which is the debt to love one another!
- Paul tells us to get rid of all debt but there is one that never ends: *“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another”*
- And the benefit for people who practice being “indebted” this way *“have fulfilled the law.”*
- **Part 2:** It is so because God and Jesus have both said it is so.

- God said it in **Leviticus 19:18**, “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD”
- Jesus said it in **Matthew 22:39**, “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD”

3. (+2 min) **Identify some ways you can love the following people:**

- This is a personal type exercise to get people thinking about loving others and who the others might be:
- Go over each group: Family members, friends, neighbors, our church, our society in general and those in need both physically and spiritually throughout the world
- **Romans 13:10** would be another good memory verse “Love does no harm to its neighbor.”
- Remember the type of love that fulfills the law places God first, others second, and self last.

(+2 min) **Application 4: How will you demonstrate love to those around you today? Who do you know specifically that needs a kind word from you? How will you fulfill that need?**

(Ask for practical ways people did this)

Topic for Day 5: A life transformed moves towards Christ likeness. - 13:11-14

1. (+2 min) **Why do you think Paul says “wake up from your slumber” (13:11) and then mentions the word “salvation?” How do you see Christians slumbering today?**

- Paul is calling believers to understand the world they live in, to keep up with current events.
- By this phrase “wake up from your slumber” Paul is encouraging the believers to not waste opportunities that come to them to serve.
- What Paul is saying is building on verses 13:8-10, that there might not be much time to demonstrate *true love* to people.
- We need to keep evaluating what we spend time doing.
- We eat physically every day multiple times but how much do we eat spiritually from the Bible?
- Without food, our spiritual life suffers, we become weak and it limits our service for the Lord.
- Seems Paul's teaching is applicable to us today – **believers need to wake up and alert others!**
- What exactly is Paul talking about in his use of the word *salvation* in this context?
- The founding fathers were aging and maybe Paul thought they might die soon – we don't know.
- The word *salvation* in this context isn't referring to their initial commitment as a believer.
- The words *when we first believed* support this idea.
- Most commentators say Paul was referring to the time when believers come face-to-face with Jesus.
- Only two ways that happens: 1) When the person dies; 2) Eschatological when Jesus returns.
- Either case may apply, Paul's logic is clear, their deliverance via death or Christ's second coming was nearer every day.

2. (+2 min) **What do you think Paul means by the two words (13:12) “night” and “day?” How does Paul tell believers to prepare each day in Ephesians 6:10-18?**

- Part 1: The word *night* typically refers to evil in the world, it is all around where we and the lost live.
- When comparing life in heaven to life on earth, the world is a *dark* place in comparison.
- The words *the day* are words the Roman Christians were expecting to experience when they died and went to heaven or when Christ returned.

- **Part 2:** Paul gives the spiritual clothing Christians are to put on every day.
- Put on the **full armor of God: 6:14-18** *“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints”*
- This is very good to go over in some detail if time permits.

3. (+2 min) **We certainly understand the deeds of darkness by now, but what does Paul mean when he says “to clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ?” Use Galatians 3:27 to help you answer the question. Galatians 3:27** – *“for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ “*

- In ourselves we are wretched, poor, blind, and naked!
 - But when we come to Jesus Christ, we are clothed with the garments of *salvation*.
- Isaiah 61:10** *“I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”*
- All believers have put on these garments when they accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior!
 - This event takes place in an instant in time but it is also a process called *sanctification* where we continue to commit to putting off sin and becoming more Christ like.
 - Paul gives the key to doing this daily – *“don't think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”*
 - Believers have the Holy Spirit to guide, the Lord Jesus Christ to intercede for us, and our Lord God Master over all things, a Mighty Fortress is our God!
 - **Believers are to discipline their thoughts and be clothed with Christ daily.**

(+2 min) **Application 5: What will you do today to clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and move towards Christ likeness?**

- Listen to how people clothe themselves with Christ.

(+2 min)

Closing Comments – (~1 min)

- **Romans 13:13-14** was not only God's means of leading Saint Augustine to faith in Christ, it was also a summary of his life.
- **Verse 13** describes what he was and **verse 14** describes what he became.
- The passage from the first condition to the second is what the Bible urges upon everyone.
- These two verses are best known for effecting the conversion of Saint Augustine.
- But if we think about them for a moment, it is evident that they are not in the first instance written to unbelievers to urge them to become Christians at all.
- This part of Romans, beginning with the first verse of chapter 12, is written to Christians to explain how they are to live.
- It really means that we who profess Christ are to live godly lives.

Closing Prayers – (~1 min)

¹ Dr. James Montgomery Boice, “The Expository Commentary Romans Volume 4,” Baker Books, 1995, p. 1669