

Romans – 13 Listening Guide

1. We're in the middle of the third part of Romans which focuses on our response to what God did for us. Paul builds framework and within that framework he presents specifics representative of the kind of things that should mark our lives.

2. We described this as a bull's-eye.

The center of it being _____, the individual, the person and Paul describes character issues or specific goals for the individual Christian that should naturally follow from what God has done in _____ us.

3. From there he moves outward.

The next step was _____. Our individual role; our individual _____ to the Body of believers.

4. The next step, _____. Our personal, individual relationship with men and women who are not _____.

5. We moved outward from unbelievers to the _____ or _____ and _____.

6. Now we pick up in Chapter 13, verse 8 with society.

7. His statements become more _____.

Vs. 8

8. If we suggest here that we're never to _____ anything from anyone, then logically...Paul says that we should constantly be in _____ to people for the way they _____ us. It is OK that you _____ them love. This makes no sense.

9. Let no debt remain _____ except the continuing debt to love one another. Always pay back what you _____.

10. We should constantly be trying to pay back _____. We never stop paying it off.

11. The Law is _____ in loving our neighbor. When we truly love another we meet the purposes of God's law in that all the rules and regulations of the Law...were directed toward two ends: love _____ and love your _____.

12. If you want to understand the rules for Christian living in a societal context it's actually very simple - _____.

13. Love must be defined.

Vs. 9

Paul lists a few of the 10 Commandments, those that are specifically related to our relationship to individuals. He lists those that have to do with “love your neighbor”.

14. When I love my neighbor I hold their interests _____ my _____.

15. Why don't we?

The _____ of the Lord is the beginning of _____.

If you remember that _____ it will change your behavior. There are consequences later that come to bear from our behavior now.

16. Paul appeals to that fact.

Vs. 11

Knowing the time, meaning the urgency, the immediacy, the immanency of Christ's return. Do this (love) because you know that we are in the final stage before our _____.

17. As a result Paul says _____ from sleep.

1 Thessalonians 5:1

It's a call to _____ living knowing that the Lord's return is immanent.

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18. The Lord's return brings _____.

Vs. 13

19. Another set of exhortations.

Paul emphasizes these here because they constitute our relationship with _____.

20. We should never be _____.

21. We should never engage in any kind of out of _____, embarrassing, demeaning behavior.

22. Have nothing to do with sexual promiscuity. If your behavior, your speech, your _____ causes someone else to _____ you're violating this principle.

23. Don't encourage strife or _____.

24. These are all directly related to _____ our neighbors and to being a good _____.

Vs. 14

25. In contrast...put on the _____. Put aside the _____ make no provisions for it, put on _____.

Chapter 14

26. Now we move into the section on Christian liberty.

Vs. 1

27. *Liberty* means freedom...specifically the freedom that comes through the New Covenant to the _____ in Christ as a result of God's _____.

28. Prior to faith, men are kept under _____, meaning that our every _____ and _____ is judged against God's standards of holiness which are reflected in the _____ He gave to Moses.

29. That law...was good enough to reveal _____.

30. Before faith you're at all times under _____ because you have from _____ been sinful and offensive to God and failed to live up to His standard of holiness.

31. The believer, having entered into a New Covenant by _____, sees _____ the terms of Law met in _____. The one's whose behavior will be judged is _____, not _____.

32. There is no longer anyone in heaven keeping track of which laws you're keeping or breaking because you've kept them all (through Christ). You're no longer under _____ or a set of rules, you're under _____.

33. There are standards of _____ that are placed on the believer.

34. The difference is that these laws you have written on your _____ are the laws to _____ your _____ with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to _____ your _____ as yourself.

35. The Law of Moses gave stipulation for what was *immoral*, for what is *moral*, and rules for things that are *amoral*.

36. *Amoral* meaning it has no inherent morality...it's not automatically good or automatically bad...it has no relationship to morality

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37. The counsel of the Spirit, as we seek Him in the moment...sets up the potential for obedience or sin.

38. Christian living has two forms of potential abuse.

39. One is *licentiousness* which comes from the word _____ as in a license to _____. People who do that fail at the test of loving their neighbor because they abuse their liberty by infringing on others.

40. The other pitfall is _____. People who create _____ for themselves in place of the ones that God has _____ by grace. These people fail the test of others because they rob others of their _____ in their freedom in Christ because they convince them that these rules are still necessary in order to be seen as righteous before God.

41. Paul's chapter theme is to not be on either end of these two extremes.

42. The context of Chapter 14 makes clear what Paul means by weak. It does not mean that someone is less convinced of the _____ or less _____ to Christ.

43. Weak in faith means an _____ often associated with _____ of faith about how to _____ it day to day.

44. They are weak in the sense that they don't see the big picture for what _____ provides and allows for. Structure and rules leave them constrained from exploring the depths of what liberty allows.

45. Paul's premise (for these baby-Christians) is _____ them.

46. *Accept* means to take in or receive _____ another.

47. Do not receive them so as to pass _____, but receive them so as to come _____ them. Don't accept them in so that you can _____ them.

48. Paul gives a contrast between strong and weak.

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49. What is immoral does not depend on individual perspective.

50. Neither person should sit in judgment against the other (on amoral issues).

51. Holy and righteous living is to live according to the Spirit's leading. When we live by rules...when we get into a situation where there are no rules, I have no experience with walking in the Spirit. It removes the maturing process of the Spirit walking us through situations.

52. How can we say what is right for another's _____ to do, presuming the servant is _____ to their _____ with respect to these _____ issues?

53. We have liberty to use our freedom to its fullest, we also have liberty to _____ ourselves. We have the liberty to say, _____.

54. God often asks us to _____ our liberty. Self-restraint is a perfectly valid expression of liberty.

55. So, on the one hand don't _____ the weak. On the other side of this the weak can't turn to the _____... and _____ them because they have freedom in these amoral matters.

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56. The moment you take an amoral matter and try to _____ somebody else into your _____ you're asking them to go against their conviction. When you are convicted by God to do a certain thing and do the opposite...this is _____.

Leader's Guide – Lesson 13

Overview

Pastor Armstrong moved quickly through the last part of Chapter 13, and most of Chapter 14 which teach principles regarding our relationship with other believers, our responsibilities to them, and the reasons that motivate our behavior.

Discussion Topics and Questions

1. Read Romans 13:8 and 11. What two reasons motivate our behavior toward other believers?
2. Look ahead to Romans 14:10-12 and the cross reference to 2 Corinthians 5:10. What do these verses add to what Paul said in Romans?
3. Be clear that these do not indicate a judgment unto condemnation, but are rather an accounting of our actions. Read further in 1 Corinthians 3:9-15. What does this passage teach about our works?
4. How can you apply the first motive of love to the truth of this passage? Work motivated by what, will be the work that passes the test?
5. How can that guide you as you make decisions about where and how you serve in the Body, and the resulting rewards you can expect?
6. Now read our Lord's words in Luke 18:11-27.
7. Which servant was considered "faithful"? Why? How does this relate to a motive of love? How does it spur on our labors of love?
8. According to Romans 13:8 what do we fulfill by loving our neighbor?
9. Why is that true, according to Romans 13:10?
10. Keep in mind then that Chapter 14 springs from an attitude of love already taught in Chapters 12 and 13. From the NIV translation, Romans 14:1 reads, "*Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters*". To be absolutely clear, the discussion here is not about matters of salvation, nor matters that affect salvation. Neither are they matters of certain and clear sin or immorality. These are matters that are **disputable**.
11. According to Colossians 2:16 these disputable things are limited largely to what kinds of things?
12. So, all things disputable like food and drink, festivals and Sabbaths, are lawful for a Christian, but there is further guidance in 1 Corinthians 10:23. What two other things should instruct us in making decisions about disputable matters?

Edify in Greek means to build up from the foundation, or to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness.

13. How does this express love? How does it express an understanding that the day of our Lord draws near?

14. Paul has two other cautionary words on this subject in 1 Corinthians 6:12. What further instruction do we need before making decisions on disputable matters?

15. What does this mean?

16. You could sum this statement up by saying, “just because I can, doesn’t mean I should”.

17. Can you apply this to a place in your own life where you are enjoying your freedom, but to an extreme that has caused you to be mastered?

18. In the second half of Chapter 14 Paul gives a lengthy explanation of the final reason that we should be careful in exercising our freedom, and we’ll study that in depth next week. For now we need to refresh our understanding of one other fundamental truth. See what you can remember about judging from what you learned from lesson 2A.

19. Reread Romans 14:1. What are we instructed to do, and not to do?

20. The word **judge** means essentially to preside over a case as at a trial – to make a determination of **guilt or innocence, to condemn**.

21. **Guilt**, by definition, carries the idea that a person is more than just culpable, but morally bereft and corrupt. Not only did I pull the trigger, but I am the *kind of person* who will naturally do it again. Not just responsibility but a bent toward it to the degree that I am beyond rehabilitation. It makes the assumption that given the same opportunity again, I would without doubt make the same choice.

22. Can this apply to disputable matters? Why / Why not?

23. However, in preparation for what’s ahead, return to Ezekiel 18:18-21 and Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. What principles do these verses teach and how do they apply to love, the coming of our Lord, and judging others on disputable matters?

24. Why are these verses important to apply? Consider how the verses in Romans have been bastardized by the world into an idea that “*what’s good for you isn’t necessarily good for me*” can apply to all things, including sin and truth.

25. As a group, can you think of some things that have become “disputable” matters which are really governed by scripture? (Leader note – Think about issues like television viewing for example. How much time I spend watching television is not

governed by God's word, but the general use of my time is, that upon which I dwell is, etc... Listening to the radio is not governed, but being a party to slandering political leaders would be. Sometimes what seems like a disputable issue really is not, or at least has limits when run through the filter of being beneficial, constructive and edifying. Let your group think of others, but you may want to come prepared with a list of your own, and scriptures which might restrict a disputable matter.)

26. The next time you have a decision to make about a seemingly disputable matter, where will you go for guidance? Is it safe to watch the choices of other believers and make your decisions solely based on what they've decided? Why / Why not?

27. What would make an issue completely disputable for one believer and not for another? Read Romans 14:2 and 4.

28. How does that further restrict us from judging one another on disputable matters?

29. In closing today, look one more time at Romans 14:1. The word *accept* means *to take as one's companion, to take to one's self, take by the hand in order to lead, take into one's home as a kindness, and to grant access to one's heart.*

30. What principal does this return us to as our guiding motivation in all things?

Summary

That motivation will carry over into next week's teaching...our last week of teaching! In the mean time, dwell on the principles Paul has taught and the motives behind them. Pray for a greater understanding of how to love God and love people, and how to let these two commands lead every aspect of your life.