

The Just Shall Live By Faith

Lesson 5

Living A Life That's Been Justified By Grace Through Faith (Rom. 12:1 – 15:13)

Introduction

Thus far in his epistle to Rome, Paul has accomplished 3 objectives:

- ✓ a fair & equal indictment of all men (Jew & Gentile alike) re: sin (3:9, 23)
- ✓ a powerful presentation of God's solution to save man in Christ (5:12-19)
- ✓ a logical refutation of Jewish objections by anticipating & answering questions (6:1 – 11:31)

The last major section of the letter is the "*Application Section*" (12:1 – 15:13). As is the case in Paul's epistles, he follows the doctrinal section with an application section. Instruction from the mind of God loses its real value if saints cannot correctly find a way to apply Divine wisdom in everyday living.

How should one who has been justified by grace through faith live in everyday situations? God has done His part in justifying us in Christ. Our part is to put into practice the righteous demands of the gospel. We'll find this will not always be easy. But it is our task if we truly want to be justified.

Application #1 → *Refusing To Conform To The World Around Us* (12:1-2)

Even though saints of God have been forgiven of that which condemned them (8:1), they must still live in a world dominated by sin (1 Jn. 5:19). They must do all they can to steer clear of the world's influence (Jn. 17:14-19). Any right-thinking Christian would never deny the struggle of such a challenge (Gal. 5:17-18).

1. Thought question: why do you think the Holy Spirit begins with this application?

2. Using a concordance, expository dictionary, and/or lexicon, answer the following questions:
 - a) Define "conformed" and "transformed".

 - b) Where else in the N.T. does "conformed" occur?

 - c) Where else in the N.T. does "transformed" occur?

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3. How is one “transformed”? (v. 2) How would one go about accomplishing this?

4. Where does such a “transformation” begin? (v. 2) Where does it next proceed? (v. 1) What does the rest of the Scripture say about this? (Mt. 15:18-19; Prov. 23:7a)

5. What kind of sacrifices are offered? (v. 1) How does this compare with the O.T. sacrifices?

6. What 2 motivations, one in each verse, are given as incentives for us to refuse conforming to the world as well as transforming our minds?

7. What other Bible passage(s) can you list that would harmonize with Rom. 12:1-2?



List *specific* & *practical* ways in your life in which you can apply Rom. 12:1-2. Support your applications with Scripture.

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Application #2 → *Serving Others With Humility* (12:3-16)

Once saints have properly “reset” (*renovated*) their minds, they are ready to put this new perspective into practice. The focus should always be on others, not on self (**Jn. 13:3-16; Phil. 2:3-8**). The right attitude must always be manifested when we serve, or the service becomes meaningless (**1 Cor. 13:1-3**).

10. Of what does Paul warn Christians about in **v. 3a**? *Thought question*: what would lie at the root of such selfishness? Where else in the Bible are we taught about the dangers of pride?

11. What is the correct mindset Paul encourages in **v. 3b**? Define “*sound judgment*” [NASV] or “*sober thinking*” [KJV, NKJV].

12. Be able to explain “...as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.”

13. To create such a “service-oriented” environment, what is Paul’s discussion in **vv. 4-6a**? Where else is this taught in the N.T.?

14. How would you classify the “gifts” listed in **vv. 6b-8**?

15. In **vv. 9-16**, Paul gives general instructions about things Christians must do and attitudes we must have. Be able to comment on the significance of each item listed, and try to find Biblical examples elsewhere of what Paul is teaching.
 - a) What love are we to show others? (**v. 9**) What should be our general attitude towards all things?

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- b) How should saints feel about each other? (v. 10)

- c) What contrast does Paul make in v. 11?

- d) What should characterize our overall service to others? (vv. 12-13)

- e) What about those who would persecute us? (v. 14)

- f) What should characterize our service to others re: their fortunes & misfortunes? (v. 15)

- g) What final point does Paul make in v. 16?



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Application #3 → *Refusing To Return Evil On Those Who Mistreat Us* (12:17-21)

Emotionally, the greatest challenge in living like one who has been justified by grace through faith may be dealing with others who mistreat you. The majority of the world obviously has on a “revenge” mentality. However, justified saints have to rise above such ungodly conduct, looking to their Savior for the example. (1 Pet. 2:20b-23).

16. What is the prohibition stated for saints in v. 17a? *Thought question*: would you agree this passage admits saints will be the target of evil conduct? Where else in the N.T. is this taught?
17. Carefully read the way v. 17b is phrased. Where should the Christian place his/her focus when such mistreatment happens?
18. Be able to explain “*If possible, so far as it depends on you,...*” (v. 18)
19. What is the absolute prohibition stated for saints in v. 19a? What are Christians to do in such situations? (v. 19b) Using both a secular & Bible dictionary and/or lexicon, define “vengeance.”
20. *Research question*: find passages that show God displaying vengeance.
21. Why is God the only One qualified to exact revenge? (Nah. 1:1-8) Why is man forbidden to take revenge? (Rom. 12:19b; Deut. 19:4-6; Jas. 1:19-20)

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22. From a practical perspective, answer the following questions:
- a) What would personal vengeance prevent? (v. 18)

 - b) Upon what are we trespassing if we take personal revenge? (v. 19)

 - c) What does personal revenge ignore? (v. 20a)
23. Be able to explain “...for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.” (v. 20b)
24. What is the solution we are to follow when we are mistreated? (v. 21; cp. Gen. 4:7)
25. Does a response of active good will always guarantee the conversion of those who mistreat us? (Heb. 12:2-3) If not, what is the over-riding principle Christians should remember that will help them when they are mistreated?



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Application #4 → *Submitting To Civil Rule* (13:1-7)

Society needs moral people to uphold common decency & righteousness (**Prov. 14:34**). In God's scheme, the state depends upon the gospel to make men & women upright citizens re: all their civil dealings. Saints cannot ignore the government. Paul teaches we must submit to civil rule.

26. How does Paul exhort Christians in regard to their civil responsibilities? (**v. 1a**) Where else is this taught in the N.T.

27. What is the reason for this exhortation? (**v. 1b**) Where else in the Scripture is this taught?

28. What is Paul's warning if saints ignore his exhortation? (**v. 2**)

29. *Thought question*: what does the Scripture say is the obvious exception to this Divine rule?

30. *Thought question*: the prophet Habakkuk illustrate how God's people through the centuries have agonized over so much ungodliness in civil rule? (**Hab. 1:1-7, 13-15**) What is God's reassuring answer to His people who struggle with such issues? (**Hab. 2:4**) [*Hint: remember our theme for these studies in Romans...*]

31. What should our civil behavior be, and what should be the government's response? (**vv. 3-4a**)

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32. What implications exist if we do not do good? (v. 4b) Is there a connection to the previous application? (cp. 12:17-21) What does Rom. 13:4 authorize?
33. Other than the reason previously stated in v. 1, why should we be in subjection to civil rule? (v. 5) This "moral sense of ought" leads us to do what? (v. 6) *Thought question*: did Jesus ever address this topic?
34. How does Paul conclude this section? (v. 7) Be able to define each term he uses, using other passage(s) to support your answer.



List *specific* & *practical* ways in your life in which you can apply Rom. 13:1-7. Support your applications with Scripture.

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Application #5 → *Loving & Serving Others Diligently In The Cause Of Christ (13:8-14)*

Civil or financial obligations are not all we owe. Justified disciples of Christ wear a badge...we are to love others (**Jn. 13:34-35**). Such active good will doesn't come from indifference...it will only come from diligently practicing what the gospel teaches.

35. Do you see any connection from **v. 8a** to the previous verses?

36. What kind of love is Paul discussing here?

37. What does Paul say results from loving others? (**v. 8b**) How does Paul use the Law in **v. 9**? (**Mt. 22:39-40**)

38. How is love praised in **v. 10**? (**1 Cor. 13:4-8a**) *Thought question*: do you see a connection to *Application #3* in **12:17-21**? What does "agape love" always require? (**Lk. 10:25-37**)

39. How does Paul exhort saints to love in this way? (**v. 11**; **Eph. 5:8-14**) Since "time" cannot refer to knowing the Lord's return (**Mk. 13:32**), what "time" should we know? (**Eph. 5:15-16**)

40. How does Paul use "sleep" in **v. 11**? How else is it used in the N.T.? (**1 Thess. 4:13**; **1 Cor. 11:30**; **Mk. 13:34-37**; **1 Thess. 5:4-8**)

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41. What imagery is used in v. 12? What are “deeds of darkness”? (Jn. 3:19-21) What is the “armor of light”? (Eph. 6:10-17)

42. What “deeds of darkness” does Paul mention in v. 13? How might one categorize these sins?

43. What should justified saints do? (v. 14)

44. How does v. 14 connect back to *Application #1*? (12:1-2)



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Application #6 → *Getting Along With Brethren Having Different Opinions* (14:1 – 15:13)

Saints must learn to get along with fellow believers who have different opinions. We know Jesus prayed for unity (**Jn. 17:21**). We know this pertains to matters of doctrine. How can we be “like-minded” when we do not agree on matters of personal scruples? The principles Paul outlines in this section will help promote peace even when there are disagreements.

45. *Preliminary Questions:*

- a) Be able to harmonize **Rom. 14:2** with the following passages: **Lev. 11:1-47; Acts 10:10-16; 1 Tim. 4:3-4; 1 Cor. 8:1-13; 10:23-33.**

- b) Be able to harmonize **Rom. 14:5** with the following passages: **Lev. 23:1-44; Col. 2:16-17; Gal. 4:9-11.**

- c) Obviously, what part of the human make-up is under consideration in this application? Is it enough all by itself to serve God acceptably? (**Acts 23:1**)

46. Without getting specific into the text, be able to define both the “strong” and weak” brothers.

47. What are the issues with which Paul deals in the text? (**14:2, 5a**) What is the “strong brother” forbidden to do? (**14:1**) What kind of “faith” is under discussion? (**14:1-2**)

48. What are both brethren forbidden to do regarding each other? (**14:3a**) Why? (**14:3b-4**)

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49. What should brethren do when they differ over such matters? (14:5b) Even though they may differ, how are both the "strong" and "weak" brothers alike? (14:6)

50. What main idea do you see Paul presenting in 14:7-12?

51. What does Paul say to brethren who differ? (14:13) How did he himself show the right attitude? (14:14) What about disciples who ignore this teaching...what results? (14:15)

52. Rather than focusing on personal liberties, where should the justified saint's focus be? (14:16-21) What had the Lord already taught about this? (Mt. 18:6-7)

53. What does Paul encourage us to do in 14:22a? *Thought question:* how does this help us know matters of "the faith" are not under consideration in Rom. 14? (Jude 3)

54. To what must saints always pay attention? (14:22b-23)

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55. Who has the greater burden when brethren disagree? (15:1) What does Paul encourage, and how does he illustrate it? (15:2-3) From where does Paul quote, and what is his point in 15:4?
56. What is God's intention for His people when they differ? (15:5-6)
57. What final instructions does Paul give in 15:7? How does he support what he teaches? (15:8-12) From where does he quote?
58. If brethren follow Paul's inspired teaching, what will result? (15:13)



List *specific* & *practical* ways in your life in which you can apply Rom. 14:1 – 15:13. Support your applications with Scripture.

Additional Notes On Romans 14

Division over **Rom. 14** is not just recent

- numerous times brethren have misused this text to justify something that did not belong

- ◆ **1800's → Isaac Errett**

- advocated the use of the musical instrument

*"Since we all believe in the deity of Christ & the necessity of baptism, we must not dictate where Christ has not dictated. Some of the brethren who are pushing for division over the instrument are guilty of murderous stifling of free thought and free speech. We insist **Rom. 14** allows that very large liberty that we have no right to trench on."*

- ◆ **1908 → J.B. Briney (Otey/Briney debate over the instrument)**

- Briney defended the use of the instrument

"I close the debate in fellowship and love if we will agree that unless instrumental music is hurting someone else, it may be used just as meat may be used if it don't hurt someone."

- ◆ **1930's & 40's → R.H. Boles**

- advocated and taught premillennialism

*"We agree to disagree over premillennialism...it comes under **Rom. 14**."*

- ◆ **1950's & 70's → Carl Ketcherside**

- advocated the "Unity In Diversity" movement (Grace/Fellowship movement)
- others who held different doctrinal beliefs could be fellowshipped due to **Rom. 14**

- ◆ **1988 → Ed Harrell**

- advocated fellowship to Homer Hailey despite his erroneous views on M/D/R
Rom. 14 covers matters of great doctrinal & moral import."

- problem => if I decide a doctrinal or moral issue fits in **Rom. 14**, what stops another from including the opposite view on that same doctrinal or moral issue?

Textual reasons why **Rom. 14** does *not* cover "matters of great doctrinal & moral import"

- examples used => homosexuality & adultery (*doctrinal & moral issues*)

- (1) Will God accept the homosexual, adulterer? (v. 3; 2 Jn. 9-11)
- (2) Will God make the homosexual, adulterer stand? (v. 4; 1 Cor. 6:9-10)
- (3) Can one practice homosexuality, adultery "to the Lord?" (v. 6; 1 Cor. 6:18)
- (4) Are we to refrain judging homosexuality, adultery? (vv. 10, 13; Jas. 5:19-20)
- (5) Is homosexuality, adultery clean of itself? (v. 14; Gal. 5:19-22)