



**ROMANS: WEEK 3**

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## ROMANS – SMALL GROUP SERIES

### WEEK 3: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

**Bible:** *The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Romans 8:11 (NLT)*

**Bottom Line:** When you accept Christ, God’s Spirit dwells within you.

### REVIEW OF WEEKS 1 & 2

In Week One of our study on Romans, we learned that Paul genuinely cared about the Christians in Rome.

He wanted them to understand that God loves them – Jews and Gentiles alike.

Last week, we studied what it means to “mature” in your faith.

Even as he matured, Paul struggled with sin.

However, he saw it as an opportunity to grow closer and have a stronger dependence on God.

### TEACH

This week, we’re going to take a look at what “life in the Spirit” looks like to a believer.

The changes that take place in our lives are a result of God’s Spirit working inside of us – and us allowing the Holy Spirit to do so.

The Holy Spirit gives us the desire to become more like Christ and the ability and power to make changes in our lives.

### Read Romans 8:1-39.

*8 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.*

*<sup>2</sup> And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.*

*<sup>3</sup> The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.*

*<sup>4</sup> He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.*

*<sup>5</sup> Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.*

*<sup>6</sup> So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.*

*<sup>7</sup> For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will.*

*<sup>8</sup> That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.*

*<sup>9</sup> But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)*

*<sup>10</sup> And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God.*

*<sup>11</sup> The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do.*

*<sup>13</sup> For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.*

*<sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.*

*<sup>15</sup> So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."*

*<sup>16</sup> For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.*

*<sup>17</sup> And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.*

*<sup>18</sup> Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.*

*19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are.*

*20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.*

*22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

*23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.*

*24 We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it.*

*25 But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)*

*26 And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.*

*27 And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.*

*28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

*29 For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*

*30 And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.*

*31 What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?*

*32 Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?*

*33 Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself.*

*34 Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.*

*35 Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?*

*36 (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.")*

*37 No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*

*38 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.*

*39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

That was a fairly long passage of Scripture to read, but we're going to take a few minutes and break down some of the highlights.

Paul begins Chapter 8 by telling the Romans that *"there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus."*

Condemnation is a harsh word.

No one wants to be "condemned" for their actions.

If we do something we shouldn't have done, it would be great to just ignore the action and consequences and move on with life.

So, when Paul says *there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus*, believe it or not, that's what he is saying.

The sins we have committed and the things we have done against God no longer condemn us in God's eyes... if we belong to Christ Jesus.

When we come to God with a repentant and humble heart, God will not condemn us.

Sometimes we have to face the consequences of our actions, but we can ask God to show us grace and give us strength.

Next, let's look at Romans 8:35-37.

As humans, our love for one another is often based on how much the other person loves us and how well they treat us.

So, it's not impossible to imagine that God feels the same way towards us – but, He doesn't.

God's love is unconditional.

His love isn't based on our actions.

If that was so, we would have to earn God's love.

Instead, God freely pours His love out on us.

When life seems tough, we should be encouraged that God is with us, and He loves us.

We can have peace knowing that nothing, absolutely nothing, can take His love from us.

- What does the word “condemnation” mean?  
How does condemnation pertain to a Christian?
- What two kinds of people are mentioned in Romans 8:5?
- How should we deal with our actions and feelings when they are contrary to what God wants us to do?
- How does the Spirit help us in our weakness?

**Read Romans 9:1-33.**

*<sup>9</sup> With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it.*

*<sup>2</sup> My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief <sup>3</sup> for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them.*

*<sup>4</sup> They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God's adopted children. God revealed his glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them his law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping him and receiving his wonderful promises.*

*<sup>5</sup> Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. And he is God, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.*

<sup>6</sup> Well then, has God failed to fulfill his promise to Israel? No, for not all who are born into the nation of Israel are truly members of God's people!

<sup>7</sup> Being descendants of Abraham doesn't make them truly Abraham's children. For the Scriptures say, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted," though Abraham had other children, too.

<sup>8</sup> This means that Abraham's physical descendants are not necessarily children of God. Only the children of the promise are considered to be Abraham's children.

<sup>9</sup> For God had promised, "I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son."

<sup>10</sup> This son was our ancestor Isaac. When he married Rebekah, she gave birth to twins.

<sup>11</sup> But before they were born, before they had done anything good or bad, she received a message from God. (This message shows that God chooses people according to his own purposes; <sup>12</sup> he calls people, but not according to their good or bad works.) She was told, "Your older son will serve your younger son."

<sup>13</sup> In the words of the Scriptures, "I loved Jacob, but I rejected Esau."

<sup>14</sup> Are we saying, then, that God was unfair? Of course not! <sup>15</sup> For God said to Moses, "I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose."

<sup>16</sup> So it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it nor work for it.

<sup>17</sup> For the Scriptures say that God told Pharaoh, "I have appointed you for the very purpose of displaying my power in you and to spread my fame throughout the earth."

<sup>18</sup> So you see, God chooses to show mercy to some, and he chooses to harden the hearts of others so they refuse to listen.

<sup>19</sup> Well then, you might say, "Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven't they simply done what he makes them do?"

<sup>20</sup> No, don't say that. Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God? Should the thing that was created say to the one who created it, "Why have you made me like this?"

<sup>21</sup> When a potter makes jars out of clay, doesn't he have a right to use the same lump of clay to make one jar for decoration and another to throw garbage into?

<sup>22</sup> In the same way, even though God has the right to show his anger and his power, he is very patient with those on whom his anger falls, who are destined for destruction.

*23 He does this to make the riches of his glory shine even brighter on those to whom he shows mercy, who were prepared in advance for glory.*

*24 And we are among those whom he selected, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles.*

*25 Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea,*

*“Those who were not my people, I will now call my people. And I will love those whom I did not love before.”*

*26 And, “Then, at the place where they were told, ‘You are not my people, there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”*

*27 And concerning Israel, Isaiah the prophet cried out, “Though the people of Israel are as numerous as the sand of the seashore, only a remnant will be saved.*

*28 For the LORD will carry out his sentence upon the earth quickly and with finality.”*

*29 And Isaiah said the same thing in another place: “If the LORD of Heaven’s Armies had not spared a few of our children, we would have been wiped out like Sodom, destroyed like Gomorrah.”*

*30 What does all this mean? Even though the Gentiles were not trying to follow God’s standards, they were made right with God. And it was by faith that this took place.*

*31 But the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded.*

*32 Why not? Because they were trying to get right with God by keeping the law<sup>[a]</sup> instead of by trusting in him. They stumbled over the great rock in their path.*

*33 God warned them of this in the Scriptures when he said, “I am placing a stone in Jerusalem that makes people stumble, a rock that makes them fall. But anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Because of God’s sovereign grace and mercy, you can spend eternity with Him.*

Here’s a quick summary of what we just read.

God is sovereign.

That means He can do what He wants to, when He wants to do it.

God is the Creator and King over all creation.

Each of us have a free will.

We have the ability to make choices that draw us close to God or further away from Him.

God's desire is that we would choose to honor Him with our lives, but He leaves that choice up to us.

In Romans 9, Paul highlights God's love for the nation of Israel.

Throughout history, Israel would turn to God, and then, they would turn away from Him.

They would serve Him, and then they would worship idols.

They would honor Him, and then they would follow their own ideas and head the wrong path.

Now, Paul wants Jews to know that God offers salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike.

His desire is for Israel to realize that righteousness is only gained by faith in Jesus Christ.

**Read Romans 10:1-11:36.**

*<sup>10</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for the people of Israel to be saved.*

*<sup>2</sup> I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal.*

*<sup>3</sup> For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law.*

*<sup>4</sup> For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God.*

*<sup>5</sup> For Moses writes that the law's way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands.*

*<sup>6</sup> But faith's way of getting right with God says, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will go up to heaven?' (to bring Christ down to earth).*

*<sup>7</sup> And don't say, 'Who will go down to the place of the dead?' (to bring Christ back to life again)."*

*<sup>8</sup> In fact, it says, "The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart." And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: <sup>9</sup> If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,*

you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.

<sup>11</sup> As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.”

<sup>12</sup> Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him.

<sup>13</sup> For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”

<sup>14</sup> But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

<sup>15</sup> And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”

<sup>16</sup> But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, “LORD, who has believed our message?”

<sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.

<sup>18</sup> But I ask, have the people of Israel actually heard the message? Yes, they have: “The message has gone throughout the earth, and the words to all the world.”

<sup>19</sup> But I ask, did the people of Israel really understand? Yes, they did, for even in the time of Moses, God said, “I will rouse your jealousy through people who are not even a nation. I will provoke your anger through the foolish Gentiles.”

<sup>20</sup> And later Isaiah spoke boldly for God, saying, “I was found by people who were not looking for me. I showed myself to those who were not asking for me.”

<sup>21</sup> But regarding Israel, God said, “All day long I opened my arms to them, but they were disobedient and rebellious.”

**11** I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

<sup>2</sup> No, God has not rejected his own people, whom he chose from the very beginning. Do you realize what the Scriptures say about this? Elijah the prophet complained to God about the people of Israel and said, <sup>3</sup> “LORD, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.”

<sup>4</sup> And do you remember God’s reply? He said, “No, I have 7,000 others who have never bowed down to Baal!”

<sup>5</sup> *It is the same today, for a few of the people of Israel have remained faithful because of God's grace—his undeserved kindness in choosing them.*

<sup>6</sup> *And since it is through God's kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God's grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved.*

<sup>7</sup> *So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the hearts of the rest were hardened.*

<sup>8</sup> *As the Scriptures say, "God has put them into a deep sleep. To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see, and closed their ears so they do not hear."*

<sup>9</sup> *Likewise, David said, "Let their bountiful table become a snare, a trap that makes them think all is well. Let their blessings cause them to stumble, and let them get what they deserve.*

<sup>10</sup> *Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see, and let their backs be bent forever."*

<sup>11</sup> *Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves.*

<sup>12</sup> *Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.*

<sup>13</sup> *I am saying all this especially for you Gentiles. God has appointed me as the apostle to the Gentiles. I stress this, <sup>14</sup> for I want somehow to make the people of Israel jealous of what you Gentiles have, so I might save some of them.*

<sup>15</sup> *For since their rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, their acceptance will be even more wonderful. It will be life for those who were dead!*

<sup>16</sup> *And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their descendants will also be holy—just as the entire batch of dough is holy because the portion given as an offering is holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too.*

<sup>17</sup> *But some of these branches from Abraham's tree—some of the people of Israel—have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, have been grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in the rich nourishment from the root of God's special olive tree.*

<sup>18</sup> *But you must not brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. You are just a branch, not the root.*

*19 “Well,” you may say, “those branches were broken off to make room for me.”*

*20 Yes, but remember—those branches were broken off because they didn’t believe in Christ, and you are there because you do believe. So don’t think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen.*

*21 For if God did not spare the original branches, he won’t spare you either.*

*22 Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off.*

*23 And if the people of Israel turn from their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to graft them back into the tree.*

*24 You, by nature, were a branch cut from a wild olive tree. So if God was willing to do something contrary to nature by grafting you into his cultivated tree, he will be far more eager to graft the original branches back into the tree where they belong.*

*25 I want you to understand this mystery, dear brothers and sisters, so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ.*

*26 And so all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say, “The one who rescues will come from Jerusalem, and he will turn Israel away from ungodliness.*

*27 And this is my covenant with them, that I will take away their sins.”*

*28 Many of the people of Israel are now enemies of the Good News, and this benefits you Gentiles. Yet they are still the people he loves because he chose their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

*29 For God’s gifts and his call can never be withdrawn.*

*30 Once, you Gentiles were rebels against God, but when the people of Israel rebelled against him, God was merciful to you instead.*

*31 Now they are the rebels, and God’s mercy has come to you so that they, too, will share in God’s mercy.*

*32 For God has imprisoned everyone in disobedience so he could have mercy on everyone.*

*33 Oh, how great are God’s riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways!*

*<sup>34</sup> For who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice?*

*<sup>35</sup> And who has given him so much that he needs to pay it back?*

*<sup>36</sup> For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen.*

In Romans 10, Paul expresses his desire for Israel to accept Jesus as the Messiah.

Throughout the Old Testament, we read about prophets who told of a Messiah who would bring a New Covenant.

He would be born of a virgin, live a sinless life, die for our sins and suffer in our place, and be raised from the dead.

However, many Jews refused to believe Jesus was the Messiah – and they still do today.

Let's take a look at what Paul says in Romans 11:33-36.

Paul continues to talk about God's love for Israel and the Gentiles alike.

God's wisdom and knowledge ways are beyond our understanding.

It's impossible for us to grasp His blessings – our minds can't begin to comprehend God's ways.

We could never deserve or repay all that He has done for us and all glory belongs to Him alone.

**Read Romans 12:1-13:14.**

***12** And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.*

*<sup>2</sup> Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

*<sup>3</sup> Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.*

*<sup>4</sup> Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, <sup>5</sup> so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.*

*<sup>6</sup> In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.*

*<sup>7</sup> If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well.*

*<sup>8</sup> If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.*

*<sup>9</sup> Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.*

*<sup>10</sup> Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.*

*<sup>11</sup> Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.*

*<sup>12</sup> Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.*

*<sup>13</sup> When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.*

*<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them.*

*<sup>15</sup> Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.*

*<sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!*

*<sup>17</sup> Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.*

*<sup>18</sup> Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.*

*<sup>19</sup> Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD.*

*<sup>20</sup> Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."*

*<sup>21</sup> Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.*

**13** *Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.*

<sup>2</sup> *So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.*

<sup>3</sup> *For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you.*

<sup>4</sup> *The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong.*

<sup>5</sup> *So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.*

<sup>6</sup> *Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do.*

<sup>7</sup> *Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.*

<sup>8</sup> *Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law.*

<sup>9</sup> *For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law.*

<sup>11</sup> *This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

<sup>12</sup> *The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.*

<sup>13</sup> *Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy.*

<sup>14</sup> *Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.*

In Romans 12, Paul opens by encouraging each member of the Church to live as a holy sacrifice.

Before Jesus, the Law required Jews to sacrifice animals to atone, or make amends, for their sins.

A sacrifice was to be holy, blameless, and perfect.

When Jesus came, He was the ultimate sacrifice, not only covering, but taking away the sin of the world.

Now, God wants us to live holy and blameless before Him.

This means that we choose to offer ourselves to God, following His will and purposes above our own.

In Romans 13, Paul addresses the way believers should view the governing authorities.

Followers of Jesus should submit to those who have been placed in authority – believing that God appoints those in positions.

However, there are exceptions when the governing law is contrary to Scripture.

In Acts 5, we read about a time when Paul and the other apostles who were with him were told not to teach in the name of Jesus.

Peter told the authorities that they must obey God, rather than human beings.

At that time, Peter and the other apostles could have been put to death, but instead, the authorities were released.

Back in Romans 13, Paul encourages believers to be light in a dark world.

We can honor God by demonstrating His love in our actions because it can lead others to salvation.

- How can you live as a “holy sacrifice”?
- What should you do when people in authority have actions that are contrary to what God’s Word says?
- How can you be light in a dark world? What does that mean?