



ROMANS 13

While chapter 12 dealt in part with Christians' behavior among Christians, chapter 13 instructs Christians how to live in the secular world, in relation to civil government as well as the general population. While the world is serving darkness, Christians live properly and make no provision to serve the flesh.



ROMANS 13:8-10
CHRISTIAN, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

{9} For the commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

{10} Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”



ROMANS 13:11-14

CHRISTIAN, PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

“And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

{12} The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

{13} Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

{14} But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”



ROMANS 14

Romans 14 addresses pursuing peace with one another in matters of liberty. Matters of liberty are things we may do about which God is indifferent. But God is not indifferent about how we deal with each other in those matters of liberty. The instruction of this context fits with the instruction of 1 Corinthians 8 and 10. This context is not talking about Christians' interaction with each other in matters of sin and error.

ROMANS 14

How can we know that the instruction given in chapter 14 is about matters indifferent to God?

Throughout the context, we may observe that the descriptions of the matters and the actions commanded toward one another are different than the descriptions of and the actions commanded toward one other regarding sin and error. For example, consider these phrases: “receive one” (v.1), “for God has received him” (v.3), “God is able to make him stand” (v.4), “let each be fully convinced in his own mind” (v.5), “to the Lord” (v.6-8), “let us not judge one another any longer” (v.13), “nothing unclean of itself” (v.14), “acceptable to God” (v.18), “all things are pure” (v.20), and “have it to yourself before God” (v.22). Such phrases do not describe sin and error, God’s response to it, nor what God expects of His children toward it. Contrast that with plain instruction regarding sin and error in contexts such as 1 Corinthians 5:1-11, Ephesians 5:11, 1 Timothy 6:3-5, 2 John 9-11.