

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“What It Means to Show Christian Love”:** (10 min.)

Ro 12:10—Have affection for fellow Christians (it-1 55)

Ro 12:17-19—When wronged, do not retaliate (w09 10/15 8 ¶3; w07 7/1 24-25 ¶12-13)

Ro 12:20, 21—Conquer evil with kindness (w12 11/15 29 ¶13)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)

Ro 12:1—What does this verse mean? (lvs 76-77 ¶5-6)

Ro 13:1—In what way are the superior authorities “placed in their relative positions by God”? (w08 6/15 31 ¶4)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ro 13:1-14 (10)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Use of Questions*, and then discuss study 3 of the *Teaching* brochure.
- **Talk:** (5 min. or less) w11 9/1 21-22—Theme: Why Should Christians Pay Taxes Even if These Are Used to Support Unscriptural Activities? (3)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 77
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 57
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 57 and Prayer


ROMANS 12-14 | What It Means to Show Christian Love



12:10, 17-21

When someone wrongs us, Christian love requires that we go beyond simply not retaliating. “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by

doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head.” (Ro 12:20) The kindness that we show to someone who has mistreated us may even cause that person to regret his or her actions.

 **How did you feel when someone you inadvertently hurt responded kindly?**

Cultivating the Quality of Love

(1 Corinthians 13:1-8)

C7 F C/E F C/Bb Bb D7/A

We hum - bly bow to our God in prayer, That
 Love looks for ways to give gra - cious - ly And

Gm D/F# Gm Gm7/C Am/C C7

all his qual - i - ties we may share. But
 thinks of oth - ers un - self - ish - ly. Love

F/A Gm/Bb D7/A Gm

most im - por - tant of all those things Is
 nev - er har - bors a hate - ful thought, For -

C7 Gm7 C Bb/F C7/F F

love, which hav - ing his spir - it brings. We
 gives our broth - ers, as Je - sus taught. Love

Cultivating the Quality of Love

B \flat F/A B \flat /F C C/B \flat B \flat D7/A

may helps be us tal - ent - ed, pa - tient - ly wise, suf - fer or bold, wrong, But Bears

Gm6 Gm7 C7 B \flat /C C7 E $^{\circ}$ F

we are noth - ing if love grows cold. We heav - y loads when it's real - ly strong. Through

F/E \flat B \flat /D F/C B \flat B $^{\circ}$ E7/B

pray ev - 'ry love tri - al is let warm love and pre - vail; Re - It

F/C C7 B \flat /F C7 B \flat m6/F F

vealed bears in all things; it that we will say nev - er and do. fail.

(See also John 21:17; 1 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 6:2.)

respect to the good news, they are enemies for your sakes; but with respect to God's choosing, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.^a **29** For the gifts and the calling of God are not things he will regret. **30** For just as you were once disobedient to God^b but have now been shown mercy^c because of their disobedience,^d **31** so also these now have been disobedient with mercy resulting to you, so that they themselves may also now be shown mercy. **32** For God has confined all of them together in disobedience^e so that he might show all of them mercy.^f

33 O the depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and beyond tracing out his ways are! **34** For "who has come to know Jehovah's* mind, or who has become his adviser?"^g **35** Or, "who has first given to him, so that it must be repaid to him?"^h **36** Because from him and by him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

12 Therefore, I appeal to you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodiesⁱ as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason.^k **2** And stop being molded by this system of things,^{*} but be transformed by making your mind over,^l so that you may prove to yourselves^m the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

3 For through the undeserved kindness given to me, I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think,ⁿ but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God

11:34; 12:11 *See App. A5. 12:2 *Or "this age." See Glossary.

CHAP. 11
a De 10:15
b Eph 2:1, 2
c Ac 15:7-9
d Ac 7:51
e Ro 3:9
f 1Ti 2:3, 4
g Isa 40:13
Da 4:35
h Job 41:11

CHAP. 12
i Ro 6:13
j 2Co 7:1
1Pe 1:15
k 2Ti 1:7
l Eph 4:23, 24
m 1Ti 4:15
n Pr 16:18
Ga 6:3
1Pe 5:5

Second Col.

a Eph 2:8
b 1Co 12:12
c 1Co 12:25
d Eph 3:7
e 1Ti 5:17
1Pe 4:10, 11
f 2Ti 4:2
g De 15:11
2Co 8:2
h 1Th 5:12
1Pe 5:2
i Eph 4:32
j 1Ti 1:5
Jas 3:17
1Pe 1:22
k Ps 97:10
Pr 8:13
l Php 2:3
m Pr 13:4
n Ac 18:24, 25
o Ro 6:22
p Ac 14:22
q Php 4:6
1Th 5:17
r Pr 3:27
1Jo 3:17
s 1Pe 4:9
3Jo 8
t Mt 5:44
Lu 6:27, 28
u Jas 3:9, 10

has given* to him a measure of faith.^a **4** For just as we have in one body many members,^b but the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, although many, are one body in union with Christ, but individually we are members belonging to one another.^c **6** Since, then, we have gifts that differ according to the undeserved kindness given to us,^d if it is of prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; **7** or if it is a ministry, let us be at this ministry; or the one who teaches, let him be at his teaching;^e **8** or the one who encourages,^{*} let him give encouragement;^{ff} the one who distributes,^g let him do it liberally;^g the one who presides,^h let him do it diligently;^{ch} the one who shows mercy, let him do it cheerfully.ⁱ

9 Let your love be without hypocrisy.^j Abhor what is wicked;^k cling to what is good. **10** In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another, take the lead.^{kl} **11** Be industrious,^m not lazy.^{am} Be aglow with the spirit.ⁿ Slave for Jehovah.^o **12** Rejoice in the hope. Endure under tribulation.^p Persevere in prayer.^q **13** Share with the holy ones according to their needs.^r Follow the course of hospitality.^s **14** Keep on blessing those who persecute;^t bless and do not curse.^u **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. **16** Have the same attitude toward others as toward yourselves; do not set your mind on lofty things,^{*} but be led

12:3 *Or "apportioned; distributed."
12:8 *Or "exhorts." #Or "exhortation." ^Or "contributes." @Or "takes the lead." □Or "earnestly." 12:10 *Or "initiative." 12:11 #Or "diligent; zealous." ^Or "Do not loiter at your business." 12:16 *Or "cultivate lofty ideas."

along with the lowly things.^a Do not become wise in your own eyes.^b

17 Return evil for evil to no one.^c Take into consideration what is fine from the viewpoint of* all men. **18** If possible, as far as it depends on you, be peaceable with all men.^d **19** Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath;^e for it is written: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says Jehovah."^f **20** But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head."^g **21** Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good.^h

13 Let every person* be in subjection to the superior authorities,ⁱ for there is no authority except by God;^j the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God.^k **2** Therefore, whoever opposes the authority has taken a stand against the arrangement of God; those who have taken a stand against it will bring judgment against themselves. **3** For those rulers are an object of fear, not to the good deed, but to the bad.^l Do you want to be free of fear of the authority? Keep doing good,^m and you will have praise from it; **4** for it is God's minister to you for your good. But if you are doing what is bad, be in fear, for it is not without purpose that it bears the sword. It is God's minister, an avenger to express wrath* against the one practicing what is bad.

5 There is therefore compelling reason for you to be in subjection, not only on account of

12:17 *Or "in the sight of." **12:19** *That is, God's wrath. #See App. A5. **12:20** *That is, to soften the person and melt his hardness. **13:1** *Or "soul." **13:4** *Or "bring punishment."

CHAP. 12

- a Lu 14:10
- Lu 22:24-26
- Joh 13:14
- Php 2:3
- b Job 37:24
- Pr 3:7
- c 1Th 5:15
- 1Pe 2:23
- 1Pe 3:9
- d 2Ti 2:24
- Heb 12:14
- Jas 3:18
- e Le 19:18
- Mt 5:39
- f De 32:35
- Heb 10:30
- g Pr 25:21, 22
- h Ex 23:4
- Mt 5:44
- Lu 6:27

CHAP. 13

- i Tit 3:1
- 1Pe 2:13, 14
- j Joh 19:10, 11
- k Ac 17:26
- l 1Pe 2:13, 14
- m 1Pe 3:13

Second Col.

- a 1Pe 2:19
- 1Pe 3:16
- b Mt 22:21
- Mr 12:17
- Lu 20:25
- c Pr 24:21
- d 1Pe 2:13, 17
- e Col 3:14
- 1Ti 1:5
- 1Jo 4:11
- f Ga 5:14
- Jas 2:8
- g Ex 20:14
- Mt 5:27, 28
- 1Co 6:9, 10
- h Ge 9:6
- De 5:17
- i Ex 20:15
- j Ex 20:17
- k Le 19:18
- Mt 22:39
- l Lu 6:31
- 2Ti 2:24
- m Mt 22:37-40
- n Lu 21:36
- 1Th 5:6
- o Eph 5:10, 11
- p 2Co 6:4, 7
- Eph 6:11
- 1Th 5:8
- q 1Pe 2:12
- r Eph 4:19
- 1Pe 4:3
- s 2Co 12:20
- t 1Co 11:1
- Ga 3:27
- Eph 4:24
- u Ga 5:16

CHAP. 14

- v Ro 15:1
- 1Th 5:14

that wrath but also on account of your conscience.^a **6** That is why you are also paying taxes; for they are God's public servants constantly serving this very purpose. **7** Render to all their dues: to the one who calls for the tax, the tax;^b to the one who calls for the tribute, the tribute; to the one who calls for fear, such fear;^c to the one who calls for honor, such honor.^d

8 Do not owe anything to anyone except to love one another;^e for whoever loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law.^f **9** For the law code, "You must not commit adultery,^g you must not murder,^h you must not steal,ⁱ you must not covet,"^j and whatever other commandment there is, is summed up in this saying: "You must love your neighbor as yourself."^k **10** Love does not work evil to one's neighbor;^l therefore, love is the law's fulfillment.^m

11 And do this because you know the season, that it is already the hour for you to awake from sleep,ⁿ for now our salvation is nearer than at the time when we became believers. **12** The night is well along; the day has drawn near. Let us therefore throw off the works belonging to darkness^o and let us put on the weapons of the light.^p **13** Let us walk decently^q as in the daytime, not in wild parties* and drunkenness, not in immoral intercourse and brazen conduct,^r not in strife and jealousy.^s **14** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,^t and do not be planning ahead for the desires of the flesh.^u

14 Welcome the man having weaknesses in his faith,^v but do not pass judgment on differing opinions.* **2** One man

13:13 *Or "in revelries." #Or "acts of shameless conduct." Plural of the Greek *a-sel/gei-a*. See Glossary. **14:1** *Or possibly, "inward questionings."

has faith to eat everything, but the man who is weak eats only vegetables. **3** Let the one eating not look down on the one not eating, and let the one not eating not judge the one eating,^a for God has welcomed him. **4** Who are you to judge the servant of another?^b To his own master he stands or falls.^c Indeed, he will be made to stand, for Jehovah* can make him stand.

5 One man judges one day as above another;^d another judges one day the same as all others;^e let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. **6** The one who observes the day observes it to Jehovah.* Also, the one who eats, eats to Jehovah,* for he gives thanks to God;^f and the one who does not eat does not eat to Jehovah,* and yet gives thanks to God.^g **7** Not one of us, in fact, lives with regard to himself only,^h and no one dies with regard to himself only. **8** For if we live, we live to Jehovah,*ⁱ and if we die, we die to Jehovah.* So both if we live and if we die, we belong to Jehovah.*^j **9** For to this end Christ died and came to life again, so that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living.^k

10 But why do you judge your brother?^l Or why do you also look down on your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.^m **11** For it is written: "As surely as I live,"ⁿ says Jehovah,* 'to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will make open acknowledgment to God.'"^o **12** So, then, each of us will render an account for himself to God.^p

13 Therefore, let us not judge one another any longer^q but, rather, be determined not to put a stumbling block or an obstacle before a brother.^r **14** I know and am convinced in the Lord

14:4, 6, 8, 11 *See App. A5.

CHAP. 14

- a Col 2:16
- b Mt 7:1
 Jas 4:12
- c 1Co 4:4
- d Ga 4:10
- e Col 2:16
- f 1Ti 4:4
- g 1Co 10:31
- h 1Co 6:19, 20
- i Ps 146:2
 1Pe 4:1, 2
- j 1Th 4:14
- k 1Th 5:10
 Re 1:17, 18
- l Lu 6:37
 Ro 14:4
- m Ac 10:42
 2Co 5:10
- n Isa 49:18
- o Isa 45:23
- p Ec 12:14
 Mt 12:36
 2Co 5:10
- q Mt 7:1
- r Mt 18:6
 1Co 8:9
 1Co 10:32

Second Col.

- a Mt 15:11
 Ac 10:15
 1Ti 4:4
- b Eph 5:2
- c 1Co 8:10, 11
- d 1Co 8:8
- e Mt 5:9
 Ro 12:18
- f 1Co 14:12
 Heb 10:24
- g Ro 14:3
 1Co 8:11
- h 1Co 8:9
- i Ro 14:13
 1Co 8:13
 1Co 10:24

CHAP. 15

- j Ro 14:1
 1Th 5:14
- k 1Co 10:24
- l 1Co 9:22
 Php 2:4
- m Mr 10:45
 Joh 5:30
- n Ps 69:9

Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself;^a only where a man considers something to be unclean, to him it is unclean. **15** For if your brother is being offended because of food, you are no longer walking according to love.^b Do not by your food ruin* that one for whom Christ died.^c **16** Therefore, do not let the good you do be spoken of as bad. **17** For the Kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking,^d but means righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit. **18** For whoever slaves for Christ in this way is acceptable to God and has approval with men.

19 So, then, let us pursue the things making for peace^e and the things that build one another up.^f **20** Stop tearing down the work of God just for the sake of food.^g True, all things are clean, but it is detrimental for* a man to eat when it will cause stumbling.^h **21** It is best not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles.ⁱ **22** The faith that you have, keep it to yourself before God. Happy is the man who does not judge himself by what he approves. **23** But if he has doubts, he is already condemned if he eats, because he does not eat based on faith. Indeed, everything that is not based on faith is sin.

15 We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong,^j and not to be pleasing ourselves.^k **2** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.^l **3** For even the Christ did not please himself,^m but just as it is written: "The reproaches of those reproaching you have fallen upon me."ⁿ **4** For all the things that were

14:15 *Or "destroy." 14:20 *Or "wrong for."

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“What It Means to Show Christian Love”:** (10 min.)
 Ro 12:10—Have affection for fellow Christians (it-1 55)
 Ro 12:17-19—When wronged, do not retaliate (w09 10/15 8 ¶3; w07 7/1 24-25 ¶12-13)
 Ro 12:20, 21—Conquer evil with kindness (w12 11/15 29 ¶13)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Ro 12:1—What does this verse mean? (lvs 76-77 ¶5-6)

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What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ro 13:1-14 (10)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
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ROMANS 12-14 | What It Means to Show Christian Love



12:10, 17-21

When someone wrongs us, Christian love requires that we go beyond simply not retaliating. “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by

doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head.” (Ro 12:20) The kindness that we show to someone who has mistreated us may even cause that person to regret his or her actions.

 **How did you feel when someone you inadvertently hurt responded kindly?**

March 4-10 / Romans 12-14

Treasures From God's Word

Romans 12:10—Have affection for fellow Christians

Romans 12:10: In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another, take the lead.

it-1 55

Brotherly love (Greek, *philadelphia*, literally, “affection for a brother”) should exist among all members of the Christian congregation. (Romans 12:10; Hebrews 13:1; see also 1 Pe 3:8.) Thus, the relationships within the congregation should be as close, strong, and warm as in a natural family. Even though the members of the congregation already show brotherly love, they are urged to do it in fuller measure.—1 Th 4:9, 10.

The Greek word *philo'storgos*, meaning “having tender affection,” is used of a person who is close to another in warm intimacy. One of the roots of this compound term, *stergō*, is frequently used to denote a natural affection, as between family members. The apostle Paul encouraged Christians to cultivate this quality. (Romans 12:10) Paul also indicated that the last days would be characterized by people “having no natural affection” (Greek, *astorgoi*) and that such persons are deserving of death.—2 Ti 3:3; Romans 1:31, 32.

Romans 12:17-19—When wronged, do not retaliate

Romans 12:17-19: Return evil for evil to no one. Take into consideration what is fine from the viewpoint of all men. If possible, as far as it depends on you, be peaceable with all men. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: “Vengeance is mine; I will repay,” says Jehovah.”

w09 10/15 8 paragraph 3

Read Romans 12:17. Paul explained that when faced with hostility, we should not retaliate in kind. Heeding his counsel is particularly important in homes that are religiously divided. The Christian mate resists the temptation to repay an unkind word or act with another unkindness. No good comes from ‘returning evil for evil.’ On the contrary, such an attitude can only aggravate the situation.

w07 7/1 24-25 paragraphs 12-13

12 Paul’s next admonition on how to treat believers and unbelievers is: “Return evil for evil to no one.” That statement is a logical consequence of what he said earlier, namely: “Abhor what is wicked.” After all, how could a person say that he truly abhors what is wicked, or evil, if he were to use evil as a means to repay others? Doing so would be the opposite of having love “without hypocrisy.” Then Paul says: “Provide fine things in the sight of all men.” (Romans 12:9, 17) How do we apply those words?

13 Earlier, in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote about the persecution that the apostles faced. He said: “We have become a theatrical spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. . . . When being reviled, we bless; when being persecuted, we bear up; when being defamed, we entreat.” (1 Corinthians 4:9-13) Similarly, true Christians today are being watched by the people of this world. When those around us observe the fine things we do even while we are being treated unjustly, they may be inclined to look more favorably upon our Christian message.—1 Peter 2:12.

Romans 12:20, 21—Conquer evil with kindness

Romans 12:20, 21: But “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head.” Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good.

w12 11/15 29 paragraph 13

There may be times when you feel that you can help someone who has wronged you to appreciate Christian standards. The apostle Paul wrote: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing this you will heap fiery coals upon his head.’ Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good.” (Romans 12:20, 21) By your graciousness in the face of provocation, you may soften even the hardest of attitudes and bring out the good in people. By showing understanding, empathy—even compassion—for the offender, you might be able to help him learn Biblical truths. Whatever the case, a mild response gives the individual an opportunity to reflect on your fine conduct.—1 Peter 2:12; 3:16.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Romans 12:1—What does this verse mean?

Romans 12:1: Therefore, I appeal to you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason.

Ivs 76-77 paragraphs 5-6

5 Everything we do in life is connected to our worship of Jehovah. Paul explained this when he said: “Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” (Romans 12:1) Jesus said: “You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.” (Mark 12:30) We always want to give Jehovah our best. In ancient Israel, when people sacrificed an animal to Jehovah, they were expected to give a healthy animal. If the sacrifice had something wrong with it, God did not accept it. (Leviticus 22:18-20) In a similar way, our worship could become unacceptable to Jehovah. How?

6 Jehovah tells us: “You must be holy, because I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:14-16; 2 Peter 3:11) Jehovah will accept our worship only if it is holy, or clean. (Deuteronomy 15:21) Our worship cannot be clean if we do things Jehovah hates, such as things that are immoral, violent, or connected with demonism. (Romans 6:12-14; 8:13) But it would also displease Jehovah if we allowed ourselves to be entertained by such things. This could make our worship unclean and unacceptable to Jehovah and could seriously damage our relationship with him.

Romans 13:1—In what way are the superior authorities “placed in their relative positions by God”?

Romans 13:1: Let every person be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God.

w08 6/15 31 paragraph 4

Secular authorities “stand placed in their relative positions by God” in that they rule by God’s permission, and in some cases their rulership was foreseen by God. This is made evident by what the Bible foretold about a number of rulers.

ROMANS

Study Notes—Chapter 12

12:1

Therefore: Paul apparently uses this expression to link what he discussed in the preceding part of his letter with what he is about to say. In effect, he is saying: “In view of what I just explained to you, I appeal to you to do what I will tell you next.” Paul had discussed the opportunity open to both Jews and Gentiles to be declared righteous before God by faith, not by works, and to be corulers with Christ. (Ro 1:16; 3:20-24; 11:13-36) Beginning in chapter 12, Paul urges Christians to be thankful and to demonstrate their faith and gratitude by obeying God and by living a life of self-sacrifice.

brothers: In some contexts, a male Christian believer is called “a brother” and a female, “a sister.” (1Co 7:14, 15) In this and other contexts, however, the Bible uses the term “brothers” to refer to both males and females. The term “brothers” was an accepted way of greeting groups that included both genders. (Ac 1:15; 1Th 1:4) The term “brothers” is used in this sense in most of the inspired Christian letters. In his letter to the Romans, Paul uses the term “brothers” several times when addressing fellow Christians in general.—Ro 7:1, 4; 8:12; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 15:14, 30; 16:17.

present your bodies: Under the Mosaic Law, the Israelites slaughtered animals and presented these dead animals as sacrifices. Such sacrifices could be offered only once. In contrast, a Christian continually presents his body, his whole being, **as a living sacrifice**. This “sacrifice” includes the person’s mind, heart, and strength—all his faculties. It is an act of total dedication involving every aspect of his life. Paul adds that a Christian’s sacrifice of himself must be **holy and acceptable to God**. This may allude to the fact that Israelites were never to offer unacceptable animal sacrifices, such as lame or deformed animals. (Le 22:19, 20; De 15:21; Mal 1:8, 13) Likewise, Christians must live a clean life in harmony with what God approves in order for their sacrifices to be acceptable.

a sacred service: Or “a worship.” The Greek word used here is *la-trei'a* and refers to acts of worship. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, this noun is sometimes used in connection with the Jewish system of worship based on the Mosaic Law. (Ro 9:4; Heb 9:1, 6) However, here Paul uses it in connection with Christian worship. The related Greek verb *la-treu'o* (“to render sacred service”) is used both with regard to worship according to the Mosaic Law (Lu 2:37; Heb 8:5; 9:9) and Christian worship (Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; Re 7:15). At Ro 1:9, Paul showed that an important feature of his sacred service was “in connection with the good news about [God’s] Son,” that is, the preaching of this good news.

with your power of reason: The expression “power of reason” is translated from the Greek word *lo-gi-kos'*. In this context, it conveys the idea of sacred service rendered in a “logical,” “rational,” or “intelligent,” manner. One lexicon defines it as “pert[aining] to being carefully thought through, *thoughtful*.” Christians are often called on to weigh Bible principles carefully. They need to understand how Bible principles relate to one another and to decisions under consideration. They can use their God-given power of reason, or thinking abilities, to make balanced decisions that will have Jehovah’s approval and blessing. This way of worship was a change for many Jews who had become Christians. They had previously lived their life following the many rules dictated by tradition.

12:2

stop being molded: The Greek word used here denotes “to form or shape according to a pattern or mold.” Paul addresses his fellow anointed Christians using a Greek verb tense that suggests stopping an action already in progress. The wording implies that some in the Rome congregation were still being influenced by that system of things. (Ro 1:7) For the Christians in Rome at that time, about 56 C.E., the **system of things** involved the standards, customs, manners, and styles that characterized the Roman world.—See study note on **this system of things** in this verse.

this system of things: The Greek word *ai-on'*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. In this context, it refers to the standards, practices, manners, customs, ways, outlook, styles, and other features characterizing any given time period.—See Glossary, “System(s) of things.”

be transformed by making your mind over: The Greek verb for “be transformed” is *me-ta-mor-pho'o*. (Many languages have the term “metamorphosis,” which is derived from this Greek word.) The Greek word for “mind” used here basically denotes the capacity to think, but it can also refer to a person’s way of thinking or his attitude. The expression “making [the] mind over” indicates that a person changes his mental inclinations, innermost attitudes, and feelings. The extent of this change is illustrated by the use of the verb here rendered “be transformed.” The same verb is used at Mt 17:2 and Mr 9:2, where it says that Jesus “was transfigured.” (See study note on Mt 17:2.) This transfiguration was not a superficial change. Rather, it was a complete change in Jesus to the extent that he, the then future King of “the Kingdom of God,” could be described as “already having come in power.” (Mr 9:1, 2) This Greek word is also used at 2Co 3:18 regarding the spiritual transformation of anointed Christians. So when urging Christians to make their minds over, Paul was highlighting a continual inner transformation that would result in a completely new way of thinking that would be in harmony with God’s thoughts.

prove to yourselves: The Greek term used here, *do-ki-ma'zo*, carries the sense of “proving by testing,” often with a positive outcome. In fact, the term is rendered “approve” in some contexts. (Ro 2:18; 1Co 11:28) Some translations render it “verify; discern.” So Paul was not advising blind faith or skepticism. Rather, he was encouraging Christians to test, in a positive way, God’s requirements in order to understand them, to apply them, and to experience their goodness. The Christian thus proves to himself that doing the “will of God” is the good and perfect way.

12:8

encourages: Or “exhorts.” The Greek word *pa-ra-ka-le'o* literally means “to call to one’s side.” It is broad in meaning and may convey the idea “to encourage” (Ac 11:23; 14:22; 15:32; 1Th 5:11; Heb 10:25); “to comfort” (2Co 1:4; 2:7; 7:6; 2Th 2:17); and in some contexts “to urge strongly; to exhort” (Ac 2:40; Ro 15:30; 1Co 1:10; Php 4:2; 1Th 5:14; 2Ti 4:2; Tit 1:9, ftn.). The close relationship between exhortation, comfort, and encouragement would indicate that a Christian should never exhort someone in a harsh or unkind way.

encouragement: Or “exhortation.” The Greek noun *pa-ra'kle-sis*, literally “a calling to one’s side,” often conveys the meaning “encouragement” (Ac 13:15; Php 2:1) or “comfort” (Ro 15:4; 2Co 1:3, 4; 2Th 2:16). As the alternative rendering indicates, this term and the related verb *pa-ra-ka-le'o*, used in this verse, can also convey the idea of “exhortation,” and it is in some contexts rendered that way in the main text. (1Th 2:3; 1Ti 4:13; Heb 12:5) The fact that these Greek terms can convey all three meanings—exhortation, comfort, and encouragement—would indicate that a Christian should never exhort someone in a harsh or unkind way.

distributes: Or “contributes.” The Greek verb used here has also been rendered “impart” (Ro 1:11; 1Th 2:8) and “share” (Lu 3:11; Eph 4:28).

the one who presides: Or “the one who takes the lead.” The Greek word *pro-i'ste-mi* literally means “to stand before (in front of)” in the sense of leading, conducting, directing, showing an interest in, and caring for others.

12:9

Abhor: The Greek term *a-po-sty-ge'o* occurs only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It is the intensive form of a Greek verb meaning “to hate” and thus means “to hate intensely (strongly).” This term expresses a strong feeling of horror and repulsion.

cling to: The Greek verb literally meaning “to glue” is here used figuratively. A Christian who has genuine love is so firmly glued, or attached, to what is good that it becomes an inseparable part of his personality. The same Greek word is used to describe the strong bond that is to unite a husband and wife.—See study note on Mt 19:5.

12:10

brotherly love: The Greek term *phi-la-del-phi'a* literally means “affection for a brother.” Paul uses it three times—at Ro 12:10, at 1Th 4:9, and at Heb 13:1. Peter uses this term three times in his letters (once at 1Pe 1:22 and twice at 2Pe 1:7), where it is rendered “brotherly affection.” The use of this term by Paul and Peter indicates that relationships among Christians should be as close, strong, and warm as in a natural family.

have tender affection: The Greek word used here, *phi-lo'stor-gos*, is a compound word composed of two terms that denote love and affection. The root word *ster'go* denotes a natural affection, as between family members. The second term is related to *phi'los*, a close friend. (Joh 15:13-15) The combination of these terms denotes a strong affection as shown in a family. In fact, both words used in this context (*phi-la-del-phi'a*, rendered “brotherly love,” and *phi-lo'stor-gos*, rendered “tender affection”) refer to affection that should naturally be shown among family members. Such is the level of love and affection that Paul is urging fellow Christians to show toward one another.—See study note on **brotherly love** in this verse.

take the lead: Or “take the initiative.” The Greek word *pro-e-ge'o-mai* appears only here in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It literally means “to go before,” and in this context, it denotes an eagerness to show honor to others. In first-century Greek, Jewish, and Roman society, people made every effort to gain honor for themselves. (Lu 20:46) Here Paul expresses a contrary view, namely, that Christians should make every effort to show honor and respect for others. In fact, some suggest that this expression implies trying to outdo one another in showing **honor** to others.

12:11

Be industrious: Or “Be diligent.” The Greek *spou-de'* used here literally means “swiftness of movement or action; haste; speed.” (Lu 1:39) However, in many contexts, it denotes an “earnest commitment in discharging an obligation; eagerness; earnestness; willingness; zeal.” This Greek word appears at Ro 12:8 in the expression “let him do it *diligently*.” It is rendered “industriousness” at Heb 6:11 and “earnest effort” at 2Pe 1:5. The related verb *spou-da'zo* has been rendered “be . . . diligent” (2Pe 1:10) and “do your utmost” (2Ti 2:15; 4:9, 21; 2Pe 3:14).

Be aglow with the spirit: The Greek word rendered “aglow” literally means “to boil.” Here it is used metaphorically to convey the idea of one overflowing with or radiating zeal and enthusiasm as a result of the influence of God’s “spirit” (Greek, *pneu'ma*), or active force. This spirit can

motivate and energize a person to do things in accord with Jehovah's will. (See study note on Mr 1:12.) Being "aglow" with God's holy spirit would also affect the impelling force that issues from a person's figurative heart, filling him with zeal and enthusiasm for what is right. While some feel that this Greek expression is simply an idiom for great eagerness and enthusiasm, the rendering in the main text favors the idea that "the spirit" here is God's holy spirit.—For a discussion of some principles of Bible translation exemplified by the rendering of the Greek phrase discussed here, see App. A1.

Slave for: Or "Serve." The Greek verb (*dou·leu'o*) used here refers to working as a slave, that is, someone owned by and taking orders from a master. The same Greek verb appears at Mt 6:24 (see study note), where Jesus explains that a Christian cannot slave for both God and Riches. In the *Septuagint*, this verb is sometimes used to render similar Hebrew exhortations to "serve Jehovah," where the Tetragrammaton appears in the original Hebrew text.—1Sa 12:20; Ps 2:11; 100:2 (99:2, *LXX*); 102:22 (101:23, *LXX*).

Jehovah: Available Greek manuscripts read "for the Lord" (*toi Ky·ri'oi*) here, but as explained in App. C, there are good reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.—See App. C3 introduction; Ro 12:11.

12:13

Follow the course of hospitality: The Greek term for "to follow the course of" could literally be rendered "to hasten; to run." Paul here uses the term to encourage Christians to do more than show hospitality when called on to do so. Rather, he urges them to pursue hospitality, to take the initiative to show this quality regularly. The Greek word for "hospitality," *phi·lo·xe·ni'a*, literally means "love of (fondness for) strangers." This would indicate that hospitality should be extended beyond one's circle of close friends. Paul also uses this term at Heb 13:2, apparently alluding to accounts in Genesis chapters 18 and 19 about Abraham and Lot. When these men showed hospitality toward strangers, it resulted in their unknowingly entertaining angels. At Ge 18:1-8, Abraham is described as running and hurrying to take care of his guests. The related adjective *phi·lo·xe·nos* occurs three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures in other contexts where showing hospitality is encouraged.—1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:8; 1Pe 4:9.

12:17

from the viewpoint of all men: Or "in the sight (eyes) of all people." Here the Greek word *an'thro·pos* (man; human) refers to both men and women.

12:19

yield place to the wrath: That is, to God's wrath, according to the context. Paul goes on to quote God's words in Deuteronomy: "Vengeance is mine, and retribution." (De 32:19-35) Although the Greek text at Ro 12:19 does not include the expression "of God," many Bible translators insert it in order to convey the correct idea. So the sense of the verse seems to be: 'Leave wrath to God. Let him determine when and on whom vengeance is to be brought.' This admonition agrees with Scriptural warnings to avoid giving vent to anger. (Ps 37:8; Ec 7:9; Mt 5:22; Ga 5:19, 20; Eph 4:31; Jas 1:19) The need to control one's anger is repeatedly emphasized in the book of Proverbs.—Pr 12:16; 14:17, 29; 15:1; 16:32; 17:14; 19:11, 19; 22:24; 25:28; 29:22.

says Jehovah: Paul is quoting from De 32:35, and the context makes it clear that the words Paul quotes were spoken by Jehovah.—De 31:16, 19, 22, 30; 32:19-34; compare study note on Mt 1:22; see App. C1 and C3 introduction; Ro 12:19.

12:20

if your enemy is hungry: Paul here continues his discussion by quoting from Pr 25:21, 22.

heap fiery coals on his head: This expression is part of wording that Paul draws from Pr 25:21, 22. The proverb that Paul points to as well as his application of it apparently refers to an ancient method used for smelting metal ores. Ore was heated on a bed of coals, and some coals were also heaped on top of the ore. This process melted the ore and caused the pure metal to separate from any impurities. Likewise, showing kindness even toward hostile individuals will tend to soften their attitude and bring out the good in them. This counsel to do good to one's enemies finds many parallels in the Scriptures. (Ex 23:4, 5; Mt 5:44, 45; Lu 6:27; Ro 12:14) This understanding is further supported by the context of the proverb Paul quoted from, which adds that "Jehovah will reward" the one acting in this way. (Pr 25:22; ftn.) Scholars have different views on the meaning of this metaphor. However, considering the context of Romans, Paul clearly did not mean that the illustrative coals were to inflict punishment on or shame an opposer.

ROMANS Study Notes—Chapter 13

13:1

person: Or "living person." Here the Greek word *psy·khe'*, rendered "soul" in some Bible translations, refers to a person.—See Glossary, "Soul."

the superior authorities: That is, the secular governing authorities. The term here rendered "authorities" is the plural form of the Greek word *e·xou·si'a*. Readers of the Greek *Septuagint* may have been familiar with the way this word was applied to rulerships or dominion. (See Da 7:6, 14, 27; 11:5, where *e·xou·si'a* is used to render Hebrew and Aramaic words meaning "authority to rule; rulership; ruling power.") At Lu 12:11, it is used in the expression "government officials, and *authorities*." The Greek term rendered "superior" is related to a word used at 1Ti 2:2 in the expression "kings and all those who are *in high positions* [or "in positions of authority," ftn.]." In some contexts, it refers to being in a controlling position, having power or authority over others, but it does not imply being "supreme." This is shown by the usage at Php 2:3, where Christians are urged to consider others "superior" to themselves, not supreme.

stand placed in their relative positions by God: Lit., "having been set in order they are by God." That is, by God's permission. The Greek word *tas'so* used here is defined in various lexicons as "to bring about an order of things by arranging; to put in place; to draw up in order; to set in a certain order; to appoint." The term is rendered "arranged" in some contexts. (Mt 28:16; Ac 15:2; 28:23) At Lu 7:8, Luke uses the same Greek word when rendering an army officer's words: "I too am a man *placed* [form of *tas'so*] under authority [form of *e·xou·si'a*, the same word rendered "authority; authorities" at Ro 13:1-3], having soldiers under me." This army officer had someone placed over him, and he had "soldiers under" him; so his "authority" was relative in relation to others. This indicates that the Greek word *tas'so* does not always simply mean "to put in place." It can also refer to a certain order in which someone is placed in relation to others. Many translations of Ro 13:1 use such expressions as "ordained of God" or "instituted (established; appointed) by God," which might give the impression that God is ultimately responsible for installing secular rulers. However, based on the meaning of the Greek word, the immediate context, and what the Bible teaches elsewhere (Pr 21:1; Ec 5:8; Da 4:32; Joh 19:11), the *New World Translation* uses the expression "stand placed in their relative positions by God." God

allows the secular governments to have “relative” positions of authority, greater or lesser in relation to one another, but always inferior to his own supreme authority as Sovereign of the universe.

13:2

the arrangement of God: “The superior authorities” are part of a temporary arrangement permitted by God. (Ro 13:1) The Greek expression used here denotes what God has ordered or directed. These secular authorities are God’s temporary means of maintaining order in human society. But there would be no human authority if God did not permit it. (Joh 19:11) In that sense, the superior authorities have a relative position within God’s purpose. When Paul wrote this letter, the superior authorities affecting Christians were primarily the government of Rome under Emperor Nero, who ruled from 54 to 68 C.E. Paul clearly recognized the need for and the superiority of God’s way of governing. (Ac 28:31; 1Co 15:24) He was simply saying that as long as Jehovah allows human rulership to exist, Christians should respect and accept it as “the arrangement of God.”

13:3

it: That is, “the authority.”

13:4

it is God’s minister: This refers to “the authority” mentioned at Ro 13:1-3. This human authority is God’s “minister,” or servant (Greek, *di-a’ko-nos*), in a particular sense. The Bible sometimes uses this Greek word to refer to “servants; those serving” others. (Mt 22:13; Joh 2:5, 9) The related verb *di-a-ko-ne’o* (to serve; to attend to; to minister) is also used to describe people performing various personal services for others. (See study note on Lu 8:3.) It is in this sense that the secular authorities can be called a “minister,” or servant. They are *God’s minister* because he allows them to continue for a time. They render certain services for the **good** of the people, providing a measure of order and protection against lawlessness. Additionally, the Bible shows that secular authorities have sometimes served as God’s minister in other ways. For example: King Cyrus of Persia called on the Jews to go out of Babylon and rebuild God’s house in Jerusalem. (Ezr 1:1-4; Isa 44:28) Persian King Artaxerxes sent Ezra with a contribution for the rebuilding of that house and later commissioned Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. (Ezr 7:11-26; 8:25-30; Ne 2:1-8) The Roman authority delivered Paul from the mob in Jerusalem, protected him after he was shipwrecked, and allowed him to stay in a rented house while a prisoner until his case could be heard by Caesar.—Ac 21:31, 32; 28:7-10, 30, 31.

the sword: Here referring to the right or power of secular authorities to inflict punishment on those **practicing what is bad**. When authorities use this power properly, it can be a strong deterrent to crime, contributing to order in society. However, they are responsible to God for how they use this authority. For example, King Herod Antipas had John the Baptist beheaded, abusing this symbolic sword. (Mt 14:1-12) Likewise, King Herod Agrippa I misused his authority by putting “James the brother of John to death by the sword.” (Ac 12:1, 2) If secular rulers try to make Christians act in violation of the Scriptures, they would not be acting as **God’s minister**.

to express wrath: When a person violates a human law that does not contradict God’s laws, the punishment meted out by the “rulers” is an indirect expression of God’s wrath **against the one practicing what is bad**. (Ro 13:3) In this context, the Greek expression for “to express wrath” could also be rendered “to bring punishment.”

13:5

There is . . . compelling reason: Or “It is . . . necessary.” The Greek word *a-nag'ke* used here literally means “necessity.” This verse shows that the compelling reason for Christians to obey Caesar’s laws and to pay taxes should be the Christian **conscience** rather than fear of Caesar’s “sword” of punishment. (See study notes on Ro 13:4.) Therefore, a Christian submits to human governments when a command does not contradict God’s laws.

13:6

public servants: The Greek word *lei-tour-gos'* (public servant, or worker) used here and the related words *lei-tour-ge'o* (to render public service) and *lei-tour-gi'a* (public service) were used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to refer to work or service for the State or for civil authorities that was done for the benefit of the people. (The above-mentioned Greek words are derived from *la-os'*, “people,” and *er'gon*, “work.”) Here the secular authorities are called God’s “public servants” (plural form of *lei-tour-gos'*) in the sense that they provide beneficial services for the people. However, in the Christian Greek Scriptures, these Greek terms are frequently used in connection with the temple service and the Christian ministry. For this usage, see study notes on Lu 1:23; Ac 13:2; Ro 15:16.

constantly serving this very purpose: Or “devoting themselves to this very thing.” The secular authorities fulfill their duties as described in the preceding verses, and as “God’s public servants,” they provide beneficial services for the people.

13:7

Render: Lit., “Give back.” The same Greek verb (*a-po-di'do-mi*) is used at Mt 22:21; Mr 12:17; and Lu 20:25 in the expression “Pay back . . . Caesar’s things to Caesar.”—See study note on Mt 22:21.

13:9

commit adultery: That is, commit marital sexual unfaithfulness. In the Bible, adultery refers to voluntary acts of “sexual immorality” between a married person and someone who is not his or her mate.—Compare study note on Mt 5:32, where the term “sexual immorality,” rendered from the Greek word *por-nei'a*, is discussed, and study note on Mr 10:11.

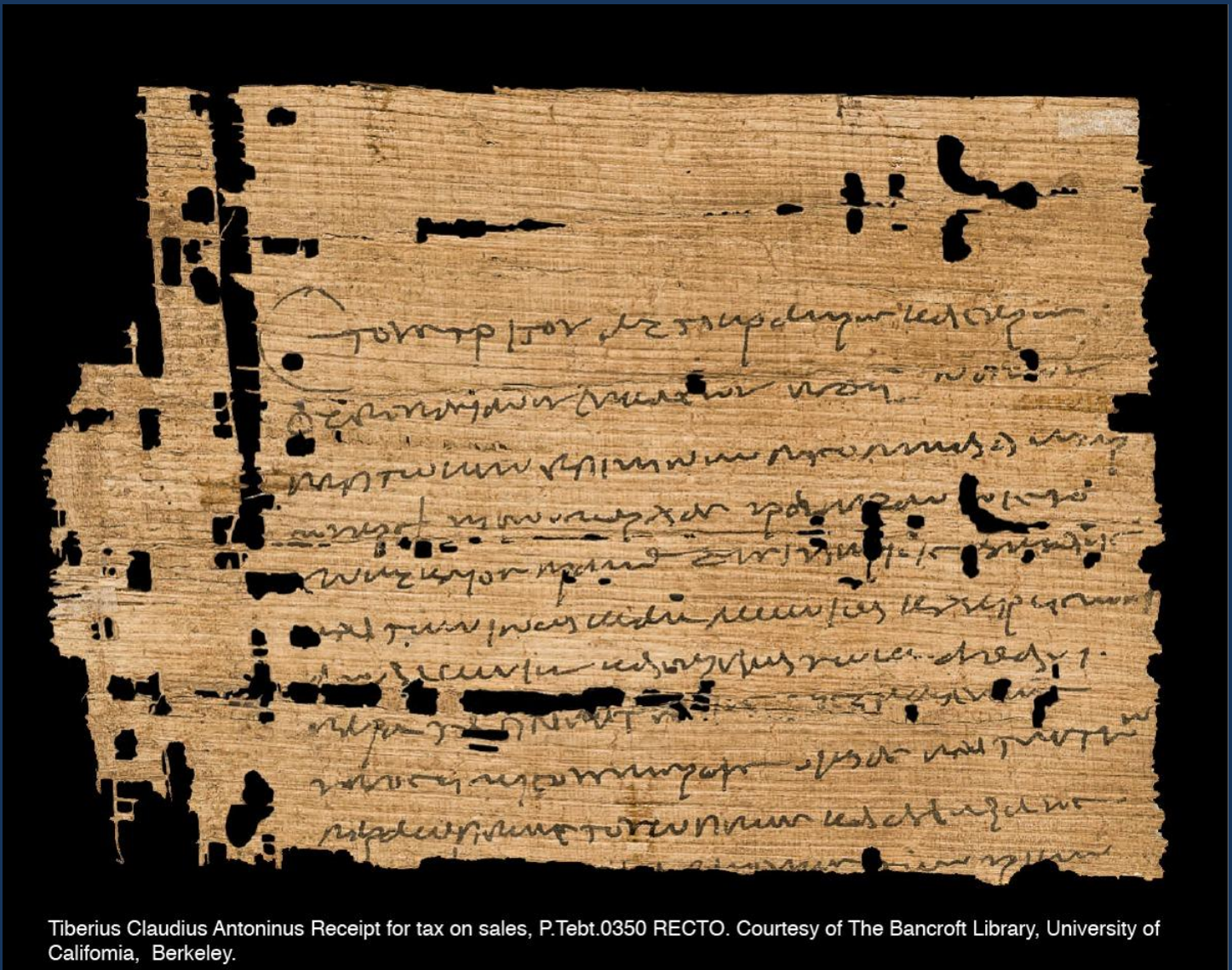
13:13

wild parties: Or “revelries.” The Greek word *ko'mos* occurs three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures and always in an unfavorable sense. (Ga 5:21; 1Pe 4:3) It has been defined as “drinking parties involving unrestrained indulgence in alcoholic beverages and accompanying immoral behavior.” In ancient Greek writings, the word was used in connection with riotous festal street processions that honored pagan gods, such as Dionysius (or Bacchus), the God of wine, with singing until late at night. Such processions and licentious conduct were common in Greek cities of the apostles’ time, including cities of Asia Minor. (1Pe 1:1) Peter addressed his letter to Christians there who had “carried on in acts of . . . unbridled passions, overdrinking, wild parties, drinking bouts, and lawless idolatries” before becoming Christians. (1Pe 4:3, 4) Paul included “wild parties” among “the works of the flesh,” adding that those who indulged in such behavior would “not inherit God’s Kingdom.” (Ga 5:19-21) In verses where the expression “wild parties” occurs, Paul and Peter also list such behavior as drunkenness, immoral intercourse, sexual immorality, uncleanness, brazen conduct, and unbridled passions.

brazen conduct: Or “acts of shameless conduct.” Here the plural form of the Greek word *a·sel'gei·a* is used. This Greek word denotes conduct that is a serious violation of God’s laws and that reflects a brazen or boldly contemptuous attitude.—See Glossary.

13:14

put on the Lord: Or “imitate the qualities (manners) of the Lord.” The Greek word for “put on” literally means “to clothe (dress) oneself.” (Lu 15:22; Ac 12:21) It is here used figuratively in the sense of taking on the characteristics of someone. The same Greek word is used at Col 3:10, 12 in the expression “clothe yourselves with.” Paul’s admonition at Ro 13:14 means that Christians should follow Jesus closely, figuratively clothing themselves with his example and his disposition, striving to be Christlike.



Tiberius Claudius Antoninus Receipt for tax on sales, P.Tebt.0350 RECTO. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Taxation

Shown here is a sales-tax receipt from the first century C.E. It records a property-tax payment made to an official bank in the Roman province of Egypt. The Roman Empire levied several taxes, and provinces exacted local taxes. Findings like this illustrate how some tax payments were recorded. Paul's counsel encouraging Roman Christians to pay taxes follows the pattern set by Jesus, who told his followers: "Pay back . . . Caesar's things to Caesar."—Mt 22:21; Ro 13:6, 7.

Related Scripture(s) Ro 13:6

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“What It Means to Show Christian Love”:** (10 min.)
 Ro 12:10—Have affection for fellow Christians (it-1 55)
 Ro 12:17-19—When wronged, do not retaliate (w09 10/15 8 ¶3; w07 7/1 24-25 ¶12-13)
 Ro 12:20, 21—Conquer evil with kindness (w12 11/15 29 ¶13)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Ro 12:1—What does this verse mean? (lvs 76-77 ¶5-6)

Ro 13:1—In what way are the superior authorities “placed in their relative positions by God”? (w08 6/15 31 ¶4)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ro 13:1-14 (10)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Use of Questions*, and then discuss study 3 of the *Teaching* brochure.
- **Talk:** (5 min. or less) w11 9/1 21-22—Theme: Why Should Christians Pay Taxes Even if These Are Used to Support Unscriptural Activities? (3)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 77
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 57
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 57 and Prayer


ROMANS 12-14 | What It Means to Show Christian Love



12:10, 17-21

When someone wrongs us, Christian love requires that we go beyond simply not retaliating. “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by

doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head.” (Ro 12:20) The kindness that we show to someone who has mistreated us may even cause that person to regret his or her actions.

 **How did you feel when someone you inadvertently hurt responded kindly?**

3

Use of Questions



Matthew 16:13-16

SUMMARY: Ask tactful questions to arouse and maintain interest, to reason with your listeners, and to emphasize important points.

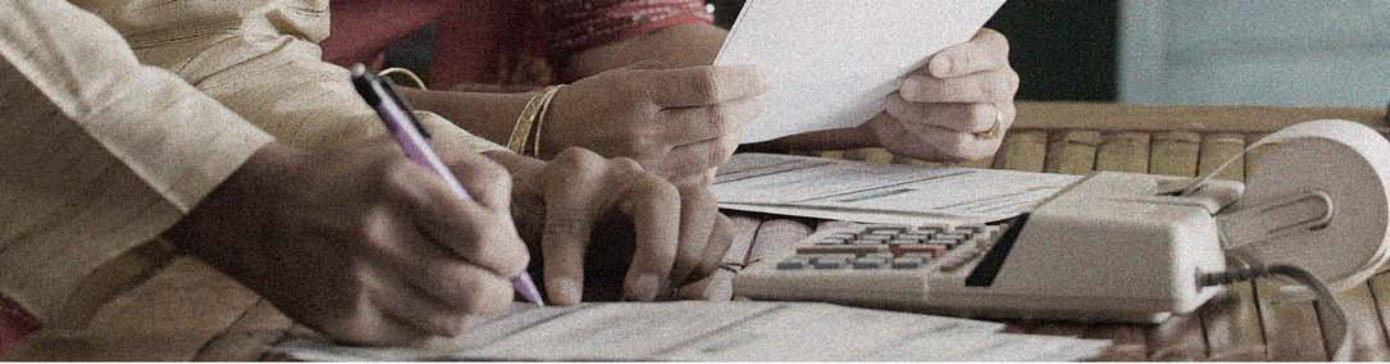
HOW TO DO IT:

- **Arouse and maintain interest.** Ask rhetorical questions that stimulate a mental response or curiosity.
- **Reason on a subject.** Help your listeners to follow the logic of an argument by posing a series of questions that lead to a reasonable conclusion.
- **Emphasize important points.** Ask an intriguing question to introduce a key thought. Use review questions after discussing an important point or when concluding your presentation.



After reading a scripture, use questions to emphasize the key idea of the verse(s) you just read.

IN THE MINISTRY: Ask your listener to express his viewpoint on a topic. Listen attentively to his response. Use discernment to determine when and how to ask tactful questions.



TAXES MUST YOU PAY THEM?

FEW people enjoy paying taxes. Many feel that their tax money is wasted by inefficiency, misappropriation, or outright fraud. Some, though, object to taxation on moral grounds. Explaining their decision to withhold payment of their taxes, residents of one Middle Eastern town stated: “We will not finance the bullets that kill our children.”

Such sentiments are neither isolated nor new. The late Hindu leader Mohandas K. Gandhi expressed his conscientious stance this way: “He or she who supports a State organized in the military way—whether directly or indirectly—participates in the sin. Each man old or young takes part in the sin by contributing to the maintenance of the State by paying taxes.”

Similarly, 19th-century philosopher Henry David Thoreau cited moral grounds to defend his refusal to pay taxes used to support war. He asked: “Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then?”

This issue concerns Christians, for the Bible clearly teaches that they should maintain a clean conscience in all matters. (2 Timothy 1:3) On the other hand, the Bible also acknowledges the authority of governments to collect taxes. It states: “Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities [human governments], for there is no authority

except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. There is therefore compelling reason for you people to be in subjection, not only on account of that wrath but also on account of your conscience. For that is why you are also paying taxes; for they are God’s public servants constantly serving this very purpose. Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax.”—Romans 13:1, 5-7.

For this reason, first-century Christians were well-known for readily paying taxes, even though a substantial amount went to the support of the military. The same is true of Jehovah’s Witnesses in modern times.* How can this apparent conflict be explained? Must a Christian suppress his conscience when the tax man calls?

Taxes and Conscience

Significantly, a portion of the taxes that first-century Christians were instructed to pay went to the military. This is the very issue of conscience that later moved Gandhi and Thoreau to withhold taxes.

Notice that Christians obeyed the command in Romans chapter 13 not merely because they wanted to avoid punishment but also “on account of [their] conscience.”

* For information on the record of Jehovah’s Witnesses as taxpayers, see *The Watchtower*, November 1, 2002, page 13, paragraph 15, and May 1, 1996, page 17, paragraph 7.

(Romans 13:5) Yes, a Christian's conscience actually *requires* him to pay taxes, even if these are used to support activities that he personally rejects. To understand this seeming paradox, we must recognize a key fact about our conscience, the inner voice that tells us whether our actions are right or wrong.

Everyone has such an inner voice, as Thoreau observed, but it is not necessarily trustworthy. In order for us to please God, our conscience must conform to his moral standards. We often need to adjust our thinking or viewpoint to align with God's because his thoughts are superior to ours. (Psalm 19:7) We should therefore endeavor to understand God's view of human governments. What is his view?

We note that the apostle Paul called human governments "God's public servants."

We need to adjust our viewpoint to align with God's because his thoughts are superior to ours

(Romans 13:6) What does that mean? Basically it means that they maintain order and perform valuable duties for society. Even the most corrupt governments often provide such services as mail delivery, public education, fire protection, and law enforcement. Although God is fully aware of the defects of these man-made authorities, he tolerates their existence for a time and mandates that we pay taxes out of respect for his arrangement, that is, his permitting such governments to rule mankind.

God's allowance of rule by human governments, however, is only temporary. It is his will to replace all of them with his heavenly Kingdom and ultimately undo all the damage that human rulership has inflicted upon



*"Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar,
but God's things to God"*

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mankind through the centuries. (Daniel 2: 44; Matthew 6:10) In the meantime, though, God has not authorized Christians to engage in civil disobedience by refusing to pay taxes or by any other means.

What if, like Gandhi, you still feel that paying taxes that support war is sinful? Just as our view of an area is improved if we climb to higher ground, we can more readily adjust our thinking to match God's by reflecting on how much higher his viewpoint is than ours. Through the prophet Isaiah, God said: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah 55: 8, 9.

Absolute Authority?

The Bible's teaching on the paying of taxes does not imply that human governments can claim absolute authority over their subjects. Jesus taught that God grants only limited authority to these governments. When asked whether it was proper in God's sight to pay taxes to the then ruling Roman government, Jesus responded with this profound statement: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God."—Mark 12:13-17.

Governments—represented by "Caesar"—mint or print money and help establish its value. So in God's view, they have the

right to ask that it be paid back in the form of taxes. Yet, Jesus showed that “God’s things”—our life and worship—cannot be claimed by any human institution. When human laws or requirements clash with God’s laws, Christians “must obey God as ruler rather than men.”—Acts 5:29.

Christians today may be disturbed by how some of their taxes are spent, but they do not attempt to interfere with or influence government actions by resisting them or refusing to pay taxes. That would betray a lack of trust in God’s solution for mankind’s woes.

By obediently paying taxes, Christians hold a good conscience before God and demonstrate that they trust him to meet their needs



Instead, they patiently wait for God’s due time to intervene in human affairs through the rule of his Son, Jesus, who said: “My kingdom is no part of this world.”—John 18:36.

Benefits From Following the Bible’s Teaching

You can gain several benefits by following the Bible’s teaching regarding the paying of taxes. You will avoid the punishment reserved for lawbreakers as well as the fear of being caught. (Romans 13:3-5) More important, you will keep a clean conscience before God and honor him by your law-abiding conduct. Even though you may experience some financial loss compared with those who withhold payment or even cheat on their taxes, you can rely on God’s promise to care for his loyal servants. The Bible writer David put it this way: “A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread.”—Psalm 37:25.

Finally, understanding and following the Bible’s command to pay taxes will give you peace of mind. God does not hold you responsible for all governmental actions supported by your taxes, just as the law does not hold you responsible for what your landlord does with the rent you pay. Before learning Bible truth, a man named Stelvio sought political change for years in southern Europe. Explaining why he abandoned his efforts, he said: “I had to admit that man is unable to bring justice, peace, and brotherhood into the world. Only God’s Kingdom can truly bring about a different and better society.”

Like Stelvio, if you loyally ‘pay back God’s things to God,’ you too can enjoy that assurance. You will see the time when God brings righteous rule to all the earth, undoing the damage and injustice brought by human rulership.

Light in a Darkened World

(2 Corinthians 4:6)

Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C Ab/C Gm/C Fm/C

In these days, dark and law-less days,
Those who sleep need a wak-en-ing

Bb/C Ab/C Gm/C Eb/C F/C Bb/D

Shines a light we can see.
As the time ebbs a-way.

Ab/Eb Bb/Eb Ab/Eb Bb/Eb Ab/Eb Bb/Eb

Like the dawn of an-oth-er day
We give hope and en-cour-age-ment.

D7ma7 Eb/Db Bbm7 Eb/Bb Cm7

That will soon come to be.
For their fu-ture we'll pray.

Light in a Darkened World

Chorus
Fm D♭ma7 Ab

Shin - ing through the dark - ness, Ours is a

B♭ Fm E♭/G Ab E♭sus4

mes - sage so bright. It of - fers hope and light-

B♭ Fm D♭ma7 Ab

Spar - kling like the day - light, Bring - ing to -

B♭ Fm E♭/G Ab E♭sus4 B♭

mor - row in sight- So ends the night.

(See also John 3:19; 8:12; Rom. 13:11, 12; 1 Pet. 2:9.)

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“What It Means to Show Christian Love”:** (10 min.)
 Ro 12:10—Have affection for fellow Christians (it-1 55)
 Ro 12:17-19—When wronged, do not retaliate (w09 10/15 8 ¶3; w07 7/1 24-25 ¶12-13)
 Ro 12:20, 21—Conquer evil with kindness (w12 11/15 29 ¶13)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Ro 12:1—What does this verse mean? (lvs 76-77 ¶5-6)

Ro 13:1—In what way are the superior authorities “placed in their relative positions by God”? (w08 6/15 31 ¶4)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ro 13:1-14 (10)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Use of Questions*, and then discuss study 3 of the *Teaching* brochure.
- **Talk:** (5 min. or less) w11 9/1 21-22—Theme: Why Should Christians Pay Taxes Even if These Are Used to Support Unscriptural Activities? (3)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 77
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 57
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 57 and Prayer


ROMANS 12-14 | What It Means to Show Christian Love



12:10, 17-21

When someone wrongs us, Christian love requires that we go beyond simply not retaliating. “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by

doing this you will heap fiery coals on his head.” (Ro 12:20) The kindness that we show to someone who has mistreated us may even cause that person to regret his or her actions.

 **How did you feel when someone you inadvertently hurt responded kindly?**

JESUS CURES A GIRL AND A DEAF MAN

MATTHEW 15:21-31 MARK 7:24-37

Having denounced the Pharisees for their self-serving traditions, Jesus leaves with his disciples. He heads for the regions of Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia, many miles to the northwest.

Jesus finds a house to stay in but does not want people to know that he is there. Yet, even here he cannot escape notice. A woman of Greek descent who was born in this area finds Jesus and begins begging: “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David. My daughter is cruelly demon possessed.”—Matthew 15:22; Mark 7:26.

After a while, Jesus’ disciples urge him: “Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us.” In response, Jesus explains his reason for ignoring her: “I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” The woman does not give up, though. She approaches and falls down before Jesus, pleading: “Lord, help me!”—Matthew 15:23-25.

Apparently to test her faith, Jesus alludes to the Jews’ negative view of people of other nationalities: “It is not right to take the bread of the children and throw it to the little dogs.” (Matthew 15:26) In speaking of “*little dogs*,” or puppies, Jesus reveals his tender feelings toward non-Jews. His facial expression and compassionate voice must also convey those feelings.

Rather than taking offense, the woman picks up on the reference to Jewish prejudices and humbly observes: “Yes, Lord, but really the little dogs do eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their masters.” Jesus recognizes her good heart condition and says: “O woman, great is your faith; let it happen to you as you wish.”

(Matthew 15:27, 28) And it does, even though the girl is not right there! When the woman returns home, she finds her daughter lying on the bed, completely healed—“the demon was gone”!—Mark 7:30.

From the region of Phoenicia, Jesus and his disciples head across the country toward the upper Jordan River. They apparently cross the Jordan somewhere north of the Sea of Galilee and go into the region of the Decapolis. There, they go up on a mountain, but the crowds find them. The people bring to Jesus their lame, maimed, blind, and speechless. They lay these sick ones at Jesus’ feet, and he cures them. Amazed, the people glorify the God of Israel.

Jesus gives special attention to one man who is deaf and has a speech problem. You can understand how he must feel in a large crowd. Perhaps noting how nervous this man is, Jesus takes him away from the crowd. When they are alone, Jesus indicates what he is going to do for him. He puts his fingers into the man’s ears and, after spitting, touches the man’s tongue. Then looking toward heaven, Jesus utters a Semitic expression that means “Be opened.” At that, the man’s hearing is restored, and he is able to speak normally. Jesus does not want this publicized, preferring that people believe in him based on what they personally see and hear.—Mark 7:32-36.

Jesus’ power to perform such cures has a deep effect on the observers, who are “astounded beyond measure.” They say: “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the speechless speak.”—Mark 7:37.



- ◇ Why does Jesus not immediately heal the Phoenician woman's daughter?
- ◇ After leaving the region of Phoenicia, where do Jesus and his disciples go?
- ◇ How does Jesus show compassion when dealing with the man who is deaf and speechless?

Preaching to All Sorts of People

(1 Timothy 2:4)

A Bm/A A A Bm A/C#

We real - ly want to im - i - tate our God, To be im -
 It does - n't mat - ter where they may be found Or what at
 Je - ho - vah wel - comes all who make the choice To leave the

D F#m7 E D E/D

par - tial, as we know he is. To save all
 first they might ap - pear to be. What real - ly
 world and all its ways be - hind. This we have

C#m7 F#m

sorts of peo - ple is his will; He wel - comes
 counts is what they are at heart - The in - ner
 learned, and this we want to share, And so we

D Bm D/E Chorus E

all to come and to be his.
 self, the one Je - ho - vah sees. It's the
 preach to peo - ple of all kinds.

Preaching to All Sorts of People

A D/A E A D/A

per - son, not the place; It's the heart and not the face. God's

The first system of music features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar chords are A, D/A, E, A, and D/A. The lyrics are "per - son, not the place; It's the heart and not the face. God's". The bass line consists of quarter notes and eighth notes.

A D Esus4 E

mes - sage to all peo - ple we ex - tend. So be -

The second system of music features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar chords are A, D, Esus4, and E. The lyrics are "mes - sage to all peo - ple we ex - tend. So be -". The bass line consists of quarter notes and eighth notes.

A Bm7 A/C# D

cause we real - ly care, We keep preach - ing ev - 'ry - where: "All sorts of

The third system of music features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar chords are A, Bm7, A/C#, and D. The lyrics are "cause we real - ly care, We keep preach - ing ev - 'ry - where: "All sorts of". The bass line consists of quarter notes and eighth notes.

A/E Bm/E C#m/E A

peo - ple can be - come God's friend."

R.H.

The fourth system of music features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar chords are A/E, Bm/E, C#m/E, and A. The lyrics are "peo - ple can be - come God's friend."". The bass line consists of quarter notes and eighth notes, with a right-hand (R.H.) instruction above the final chord.

JANUARY 2019

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MARCH 4–APRIL 7, 2019

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How to Control Your Anger

Giving in to anger can damage your health, but so can suppressing it. How can you control your anger in explosive situations?

(Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > MARRIAGE & FAMILY.)

THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

The Streets Became My Home

Antonio's experiences with violence, drugs, and alcohol abuse led him to feel that life had no purpose. What changed his mind?

(Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > PEACE & HAPPINESS.)

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Jehovah, Our Strength

(Isaiah 12:2)

C G/B C G7/D C/G G C C° C

Gra - cious Je - ho - vah, our strength and our might,
 We who now serve you re - joice in your light;
 Glad - ly, O God, we keep do - ing your will.

G7 C/G G C G/B Am G/D C/D D G

You are our Sav - ior, in you we de - light.
 Eyes that are o - pened now see truth and right.
 Though Sa - tan mocks us, we're trust - ing you still.

C G/B C G7/D C/G E7/G# Am E7/G# Am

We are your Wit - ness - es bear - ing your news,
 Search - ing the Scrip - tures, we hear your com - mand;
 Though he may slay us, oh, help us to be

E/B Am/C G/D B7/D# Em A7 D7 G Chorus G7

Wheth - er men hear or they proud - ly re - fuse.
 Mak - ing our choice, for your King - dom we stand. Je -
 Firm to the end for your grand Sov - 'reign - ty.

Jehovah, Our Strength

C F/C C C/E F C/E F C

ho - vah, our Rock, Our strength and our might,

This system of musical notation features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

G B° Am/C E7/B Am G/D D7 G

Your name we make known Both day and night.

This system of musical notation features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

C G7/F C/E G7/D C G/F C/E G7/D C F

Glo - rious Je - ho - vah, Al - might - y in pow'r,

This system of musical notation features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

F#° C/G C#° Dm C/G G C

You are our hid - ing place; You are our Tow'r.

This system of musical notation features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3, G2, B2, C3. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

(See also 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 18:2; Isa. 43:12.)

SONG 7

Jehovah, Our Strength

PREVIEW

The yeartext selected for 2019 gives us three reasons why we can remain calm even when bad things happen in the world or in our personal life. This article will examine those reasons and help us to feel less anxious and more inclined to trust in Jehovah. Meditate on the yeartext. Memorize it if you can. It will strengthen you for the challenges that lie ahead.

“Do Not Be Anxious, for I Am Your God”

“Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be anxious, for I am your God. I will fortify you, yes, I will help you.”

—ISA. 41:10.

A FAITHFUL Christian sister named Yoshiko received bad news. Her doctor said that she had only a few months to live. How did she react? Yoshiko recalled a favorite Bible verse, **Isaiah 41:10. (Read.)** She then calmly told her doctor that she was not afraid, because Jehovah was grasping her hand.* The comforting message found in that verse helped our dear sister to trust in Jehovah completely. That same verse can help us remain calm when dealing with severe trials. To understand how it can do so, first let us examine why God gave that message to Isaiah.

² Initially, Jehovah had Isaiah record those words to comfort the Jews who would later be taken to Babylon as exiles. However, Jehovah had that message preserved for the benefit of not only the Jewish exiles but also all his people since that time. (Isa. 40:8; Rom. 15:4) Today, we live in “critical times hard to deal with,” and more than ever, we need the encouragement found in the book of Isaiah.—2 Tim. 3:1.

³ In this article, we will focus on three of Jehovah’s

* See *The Watchtower*, July 2016, p. 18.

1-2. (a) How did the message recorded at Isaiah 41:10 affect a sister named Yoshiko? (b) Jehovah had that message preserved for whose benefit?

3. (a) What promises are found at Isaiah 41:10, the yeartext selected for 2019? (b) Why do we need the assurances that these promises give us?

faith-building promises recorded at Isaiah 41:10: (1) Jehovah will be with us, (2) he is our God, and (3) he will help us. We need these assurances* because, like Yoshiko, we face trials in life. We must also deal with pressures from world conditions. Some of us are even enduring persecution from powerful governments. Let us consider the three assurances one at a time.

“I AM WITH YOU”

4 Jehovah first assures us with the words: **“Do not be afraid, for I am with you.”**[#] Jehovah shows that he is with us by giving us his full attention and his

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** An **assurance** is a truthful statement or a promise that something is definitely going to happen. The **assurances** that Jehovah gives us can make us feel less worried about the problems that may arise in our lives.

FOOTNOTE: The expression “Do not be afraid” is mentioned three times, at Isaiah 41:10, 13, and 14. The same verses frequently mention the word “I” (referring to Jehovah). Why did Jehovah inspire Isaiah to use “I” so frequently? To highlight an important fact—we can calm our fears only by trusting in Jehovah.

4. (a) What is the first assurance we will consider? (See also footnote.) (b) In what ways does Jehovah express his feelings for us? (c) How do God’s expressions affect you?

warm affection. Note how he expresses his tender and deep feelings for us. “You became *precious* in my eyes,” says Jehovah. “You were *honored*, and I have *loved* you.” (Isa. 43:4) No force in the universe can make Jehovah abandon his love for those who serve him; his loyalty to us is unshakable. (Isa. 54:10) His love and friendship fill us with courage. He will protect us today, just as he protected Abram (Abraham) his friend. Jehovah said to him: “Do not fear, Abram. I am a shield for you.”—Gen. 15:1.

5 We know that Jehovah is interested in helping us with our personal trials because he promises his people: “When you pass through the waters, *I will be with you*, and through the rivers, they will not flood over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame singe you.” (Isa. 43:2) What do these words mean?

6 Jehovah does not promise to remove the challenges that make life difficult, but he will not allow “the rivers” of

5-6. (a) How do we know that Jehovah is interested in helping us with our personal trials? (b) What lesson can we learn from Yoshiko’s example?

With Jehovah’s help, we can pass through any floodlike and flamelike trials that we face

(See paragraphs 5-6)



problems to drown us or “the flame” of trials to do us any permanent damage. He guarantees that he will be with us, helping us to “pass through” those challenges. What will Jehovah do? He will help quiet our fears so that we can maintain our integrity to him, even if we face death. (Isa. 41:13) Yoshiko, mentioned earlier, found that to be true. Her daughter says: “We were impressed with how calm Mom was. We truly saw that Jehovah gave her inner peace. Until the day she died, Mom spoke to nurses and patients about Jehovah and his promises.” What do we learn from Yoshiko’s example? When we trust in God’s promise “I will be with you,” we too will be courageous and strong as we endure trials.

“I AM YOUR GOD”

⁷ Note the second assurance recorded by Isaiah: “**Do not be anxious, for I am your God.**” What does this statement about anxiety mean? In this verse the original-language word for “be anxious” has the idea of having “to look over your shoulder in anticipation of an unknown threat” or “to look about as one does in a state of alarm.”

⁸ Why did Jehovah tell the Jews who would be exiles in Babylon not to “be anxious”? Because he knew that the inhabitants of that land would become afraid. What would cause that fear? Toward the end of the 70-year period of the Jewish exile, Babylon would be attacked by the mighty armies of Medo-

7-8. (a) What is the second assurance we will consider, and what does it mean? (b) Why did Jehovah say to the Jewish exiles: “Do not be anxious”? (c) What words found at Isaiah 46:3, 4 must have calmed the hearts of God’s people?

Persia. Jehovah would use this army to free his people from captivity to Babylon. (Isa. 41:2-4) When the Babylonians and people of other nations living at the time knew that their enemy was approaching, they tried to maintain their courage by saying to one another: “Be strong.” They also made more idol gods, hoping that these would protect them. (Isa. 41:5-7) Meanwhile, Jehovah calmed the hearts of the Jewish exiles by saying: “You, O Israel, [unlike your neighbors] are my servant . . . Do not be anxious, for I am your God.” (Isa. 41:8-10) Note that Jehovah said: “I *am* your God.” With those words, Jehovah reassured his loyal worshippers that he had not forgotten them—he was still their God, and they were still his people. He told them: “I will carry you . . . and rescue you.” Those reassuring words no doubt strengthened the Jewish exiles. —**Read Isaiah 46:3, 4.**

⁹ Now more than ever, people around us are anxious about worsening world conditions. Of course, we too are affected by those same problems. But there is no need for us to become afraid. Jehovah tells us: “I am your God.” Why is that statement a powerful reason for remaining calm?

¹⁰ Consider this illustration: Two passengers, Jim and Ben, are on an airplane that is being rocked by strong winds. As the plane lurches up and down, a voice comes over the loudspeaker: “Keep your seat belts fastened. We will be flying through turbulence for some time.” Jim

9-10. Why is there no need for us to become afraid? Illustrate.



No weapon will be successful against Jehovah's strong arm of protection
(See paragraphs 12-16)

becomes very worried. But then the pilot adds: "Do not be anxious. This is your pilot speaking." At that point, Jim shakes his head, saying, "What kind of assurance is that?" He notices, though, that Ben does not look anxious at all. Jim asks him: "Why are you so calm?" Ben smiles and says: "Because I know this pilot very well. He is my father!" Then Ben says: "Let me tell you about my father. I'm sure that when you know him and his abilities, you too will be calm."

¹¹ What lessons can we learn from this illustration? Like Ben, we are calm because we know our heavenly Father, Jehovah, very well. We know that he will guide us safely through the stormlike problems we face during the last days of this system. (Isa. 35:4) We trust in Jeho-

11. What lessons can we learn from the illustration about the two passengers?

vah, so we can remain calm while the rest of the world is gripped by fear. (Isa. 30:15) We also act like Ben when we share with our neighbors reasons for having confidence in God. Then they too can be sure that no matter what challenges they face, Jehovah will support them.

**"I WILL FORTIFY YOU
[AND] HELP YOU"**

¹² Consider the third assurance that Isaiah recorded: "**I will fortify you, yes, I will help you.**" Isaiah had already described how Jehovah would fortify, or strengthen, his people, saying: "Jehovah will come with power, and *his arm* will rule for him." (Isa. 40:10) The Bible often uses the word "arm" symbolically to signify power. So the statement

12. (a) What is the third assurance we will consider? (b) The reference to Jehovah's "arm" reminds us of what fact?

that Jehovah’s “arm will rule” reminds us that Jehovah is a powerful King. He used his unbeatable strength to support and defend his servants in the past, and he continues to strengthen and protect those who trust in him today.—Deut. 1:30, 31; Isa. 43:10, fn.

¹³ Especially when enemies persecute us, Jehovah keeps his promise: “I will fortify you.” In some parts of the world today, our enemies are trying hard to stop our preaching work or ban our organization. Even so, we are not overly anxious about such attacks. Jehovah has given us a guarantee that fills us with strength and confidence. He promises us: “No weapon formed against you will have any success.” (Isa. 54:17) That statement reminds us of three important facts.

13. (a) When especially does Jehovah keep his promise to fortify us? (b) What guarantee fills us with strength and confidence?

¹⁴ First, as Christ’s followers, we expect to be hated. (Matt. 10:22) Jesus foretold that his disciples would be severely persecuted during the last days. (Matt. 24:9; John 15:20) Second, Isaiah’s prophecy forewarns us that our enemies will do more than hate us; they will use various weapons against us. Those weapons have included subtle deception, blatant lies, and brutal persecution. (Matt. 5:11) Jehovah will not stop our enemies from using these weapons to wage war against us. (Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12:17) But we do not need to be afraid. Why not?

¹⁵ Consider the third fact we need to remember. Jehovah said that “no weapon” used against us would “have any suc-

14. Why are we not surprised that enemies of God attack us?

15-16. (a) What is the third fact we need to remember, and how does Isaiah 25:4, 5 support this? (b) How does Isaiah 41:11, 12 describe the outcome for those who fight against us?

We can deepen our trust in Jehovah by regularly reading about him in the Bible

(See paragraphs 17-18)



cess.” Just as a wall protects us from the force of a destructive rainstorm, so Jehovah protects us against “the blast of the tyrants.” (Read **Isaiah 25:4, 5.**) Our enemies will never succeed in causing us any lasting harm.—Isa. 65:17.

¹⁶ Jehovah further fortifies our trust in him by describing in detail the outcome waiting for those who are “getting enraged against” us. (Read **Isaiah 41:11, 12.**) No matter how hard our enemies fight against us or how intense the war becomes, the outcome is the same: All enemies of God’s people “will be brought to nothing and perish.”

HOW WE DEEPEN OUR TRUST IN JEHOVAH

¹⁷ We deepen our trust in Jehovah by getting to know him better. And the only way we can really know God well is by reading the Bible carefully and then meditating on what we read. The Bible contains a reliable record of how Jehovah protected his people in the past.

17-18. (a) How can reading the Bible deepen our trust in God? Give an example. (b) How can meditating on the yeartext selected for 2019 help us?

That record gives us confidence that he will care for us now.

¹⁸ Consider an example of the beautiful word picture Isaiah uses to illustrate how Jehovah protects us. He refers to Jehovah as a shepherd and to God’s servants as lambs. Isaiah says of Jehovah: “With his arm he will gather together the lambs, and in his bosom he will carry them.” (Isa. 40:11) When we sense Jehovah’s strong arms wrapped around us, we feel protected and calm. To help us remain calm despite the problems we face, the faithful and discreet slave has selected Isaiah 41:10 as the yeartext for 2019, “***Do not be anxious, for I am your God.***” Meditate on those reassuring words. They will strengthen you as you face the challenges that lie ahead.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS **Page 3:** Members of a family face trials at work, with their health, in the ministry, and at school. **Page 5:** A meeting of Witnesses held in a private home is raided by the police, but the brothers and sisters do not panic. **Page 6:** Regular Family Worship sessions strengthen us to endure.

HOW DO THESE ASSURANCES FROM JEHOVAH STRENGTHEN YOU?

■ “I am with you.”

■ “I am your God.”

■ “I will fortify you [and] help you.”

He Will Make You Strong

(1 Peter 5:10)

D Bm G A D

There was a rea - son why God brought the truth to you And
God gave his own be - lov - ed Son in your be - half; On

G A Bm Em7 Asus4 A

called you from the dark - ness to the light. With - in your
this ac - count, He wants you to suc - ceed. If He did

D Bm G Em/G F#sus4 F#

heart, he saw the long - ing that you had To
not with - hold the gift of His dear Son, Then

Bm9 Bm Bm9/A Bm/A G

search for him and prac - tice what is right. You
nev - er doubt He'll give the strength you need. He

He Will Make You Strong

G D/F# Em Em/D

prom - ised him in prayer to do his will; He
won't for - get the faith and love you've shown; He

Em/C# F#7+5 Bm D/A G Dma7/F# Em11 A7sus4 *Chorus*

helped you then, and he will help you still. With
will not fail to care for all His own.

D Em11 D/F# G D/F#

Je - sus' blood He bought you, to God you now be - long. So

Em/C# F#7 Bm D/E E7 G/A A7

he will make you firm, and he will make you strong. He'll

He Will Make You Strong

D A/C# Bm7 D/A A/G G Dadd9/F#

guide you and pro - tect you, as he has all a - long. Yes,

Gadd9/B Gm/Bb D/A A7sus4 A7

he will make you firm, and he will make you

D

strong.

