

A JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

ADDRESSING THE ROMANS



Lesson 15: Addressing the Romans

Welcome

Choose one of the following to answer:

- **Does pineapple belong on pizza? Why or why not?**
- **If you had to live in a different country for a year, where would you go and why?**

Don't skip past the WELCOME section as it prepares your group for the ideas in Romans.

The first question about pineapple on pizza highlights how people can have strong opinions about non-essential issues. Romans addresses this exact dynamic in chapters 14 and 15, where Paul discusses "disputable matters." In Rome, Christians disagreed about food laws, special days, and cultural practices. Paul encourages them to avoid judging one another and to show grace even when they disagree. A lighthearted question about pineapple on pizza opens the door to talk about unity, humility, and loving others despite differences, which is one of the major themes in Romans.

The second question about living in a different country invites people to think about culture, belonging, and what it feels like to enter a place that is not their home. Romans speaks powerfully to these ideas, especially in chapters 1-3 and 9-11. As you read in the introduction and some questions/prompts to the WORD section, the early church in Rome was a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile Christians trying to understand how they fit together as God's people. Paul emphasizes that in Christ, all nations are welcome, and God forms a united family from every background.

Worship

As a Life Group, choose a worship song to play on YouTube, Spotify, etc. After the song, pray as a group. Ask God to dwell in each of you more fully—and to use your group as His people to reflect His presence in the world.

Budget about 7-10 minutes for this section of your Life Group time

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There are 10 questions/prompts in the WORD section. Your Life Group doesn't have to cover every question below. Life Group Leaders may select the ones that best fit your group. You can also use the remaining questions as personal reflection throughout the week.

Word

Please watch the video lesson and read as much of Romans as you can before your Life Group meets.

The Book of Romans was written by the Apostle Paul around A.D. 57, likely while he was staying in Corinth during his third missionary journey. Unlike many of his other letters, Romans was not written to a church Paul had planted or even visited. Instead, he wrote to a growing community of believers in Rome—a mix of Jewish and Gentile Christians—who were living in the heart of the powerful Roman Empire. No one is sure who planted the church in Rome, but [Acts 2:10](#) lists people from Rome as being present on the Day of Pentecost. There's a good chance that one or more of those people returned to Rome from the events of [Acts 2](#) and the church in Rome launched just because of their community.

In any case, Paul had wanted to visit them for a while and hoped to use Rome as a launching point for future missionary work in Spain ([Romans 15:23-24](#)). Before doing so, he wanted to make sure the Roman church had a strong theological foundation, especially in light of the cultural pressures and persecution they were facing under Roman rule.

At its core, Romans is a thorough explanation of the gospel. Paul addresses humanity's universal need for salvation, the sufficiency of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. A key pain point Paul tackles is the tension between Jewish and Gentile believers—who had different religious backgrounds, practices, and assumptions about righteousness. Paul confronts spiritual pride and division by making it clear: all have sinned and all can be justified by grace through faith ([Romans 3:23-24](#)). The letter unpacks deep theological truths while offering practical instruction for how to live a Spirit-empowered life of love, unity, and faithfulness in a hostile culture. Romans isn't just a theological treatise—it's a heartfelt plea to live fully for God in response to His incredible mercy.

1. What is Paul's main point in [Romans 1:16](#) and why does he emphasize this point in the beginning of the letter?

Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."

- **Gospel:** The good news that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection saves us!

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Paul's main point in Romans 1:16 is God's powerful means of rescuing and restoring anyone who responds with faith. The focus is not on our strength, morality, or personal achievements, but on God's own power at work through the message about Jesus.

- The Greek word for "power" is *dunamis* (δύναμις), from which we get the word "dynamite." The word *dunamis* is often used to communicate an explosive and life-transforming force.

More than anything, Paul wants readers to understand that the gospel is not merely good advice but God's power breaking into the world.

The reason this statement is placed near the beginning of the letter is because it lays the foundation for all of the principles and discussion that follows. In Romans, Paul addresses a mixed church of Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome who were navigating theological tensions, cultural differences, and questions about how salvation works. By announcing that the gospel brings salvation to "everyone who believes," Paul levels the playing field:

- No group has a spiritual advantage
- No group is better than the others
- No tradition can save
- No heritage can save

Paul begins with this truth, so the rest of his discussions in this letter (about sin, faith, righteousness, the law, the Spirit, and the people of God) stands firm.

Some mistakenly believe the phrase "first to the Jew, then to the Gentile" is about ranking people. That phrase is a reflection of salvation history:

- God revealed His covenant promises first to Israel
- The Messiah came through Israel

Paul echoes this salvation history to emphasize God's faithfulness while making it clear that Gentiles are fully included in God's family through Christ. The early Roman church needed this reminder because divisions easily arose between Jewish Christians returning to Rome after being expelled years earlier and Gentile Christians who had become the majority and led the church in their absence.

Yet, Romans 1:16 still speaks powerfully today. Many times, we feel pressure to define our worth through accomplishments, spiritual performance, cultural identity, etc. Paul redirects our attention to the gospel as God's power to save and transform anyone regardless of background, brokenness, or baggage. Romans 1:16 invites us to trust that God's power brings true and lasting life change. It also challenges today's Christians to be confident that the gospel has the same life-giving power that it had in the first century.

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2. Read *Romans 2:1-5* and count how many times Paul uses the words *you*, *your*, and *yourself*. What point is Paul making? How might this apply to us?

In the NIV 2011...

- "You" is used 11 times
- "Your" is used 2 times
- "Yourself" is used 2 times

The number of times these words appear in Romans 2:1-5 might vary depending on the Bible version, but these words should be used around 15 times.

These 3 words refer to the readers. Obviously, the repetition is intentional as Paul uses the three words 15 times in 5 verses! In other words, Paul aims a spotlight directly at the reader, especially those who considered themselves morally superior. By addressing them so personally, he makes it impossible to dodge the force of his argument. Romans 2:1-5 follows Romans 1:18-32, where Paul described the sinful behaviors of the Gentile world. Many Jewish readers would have nodded along in agreement, so Paul immediately turns the mirror around in Romans 2 and confronts the Jewish readers with their own guilt.

Paul's point is that judging others while committing the same sins exposes a person to God's judgment.

- The Greek word for "judge" is *krinō* (κρίνω), which carries the idea of "evaluating or passing a verdict."

Again, anyone who condemns others while practicing the same behavior ends up condemning themselves. God's judgment is based on truth instead of appearances or religious identity. For Jewish readers in the first century, this was a crucial reminder because many of them relied on their heritage, Moses' Law, or their moral reputation as protection. However, Paul insists that everyone is equally guilty and equally accountable before God.

Paul also challenges the misuse of God's kindness. Verse 4 explains that God's patience is meant to lead people to repentance, not to give them the impression that their sin is tolerable. The repeated "you" and "your" helps expose the human tendency to excuse personal failures while magnifying the failures of others. Paul reminds the audience that stubbornness and an unrepentant heart only store up future judgment. In other words, self-righteousness is just as spiritually dangerous as obvious sin. And verse 4 begs the question that if God's kindness leads people to repentance, shouldn't kindness from Christians lead people to God?

Fast forward to 2025 and little, if anything, has changed. Our culture often encourages quick criticism of others, especially when their faults are public. Nothing has highlighted this in recent times more than social media and cancel culture. Paul's words call for humility, self-examination, and honest repentance. The focus should not be on comparing mistakes, but on responding to God's kindness with a softened heart.

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3. What do *Romans 3:23-24* and *Ephesians 2:8-9* teach about grace and faith? How do these verses change or confirm how you see yourself and others?

Romans 3:23-24 and Ephesians 2:8-9 give two of the clearest explanations of grace and faith in the entire New Testament. Romans 3:23-24 says, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” Such reminds readers that every person shares the same spiritual condition.

- The Greek verb “justified” is *dikaioō* (δικαίω), meaning “to be declared righteous or in right standing with God.”

Paul explains that this righteousness is not earned but given freely through grace because of Jesus’ redeeming work on the cross. In its original setting, this was a powerful message to Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome who often viewed each other with suspicion. Paul reminds both groups that no one stands before God on the basis of personal merit.

Ephesians 2:8-9 reinforces the same truth: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.” Paul tells the Ephesian church that salvation is God’s gift.

- The Greek word for “grace” is *charis* (χάρις), meaning “unearned favor.”
- The Greek word for “faith” is *pistis* (πίστις), meaning “trust or reliance.”

We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Salvation comes through trusting in what Jesus has done, not through human effort or religious performance. In the first century, this truth dismantled the pride that often arose from heritage, religious rituals, or economic status, reminding Christians that no one has grounds for boasting.

Together, these passages paint a picture of a God who rescues people not because they “measure up,” but because of His kindness (once again, Romans 2:4). They also reveal that every person stands on equal footing before Him. This was both radical and transformative for the early church because social divisions, ethnic differences, and past failures often defined people. Paul’s teaching on this matter paved the way for people to comprehend a new identity rooted in grace rather than heritage or personal successes.

In a world where people often compare, compete, or label one another, Romans 3:23-24 and Ephesians 2:8-9 demand that we take a different posture. Worth is not based on personal perfection, past mistakes, educational degrees, economic status, occupational positions, childhood experiences, personal accomplishments, addresses, political values, etc. As followers of Jesus, we must work to increase our capacity for humility, compassion, and patience toward those who struggle because everyone depends on the same grace—God’s grace!

4. In the video lesson, Kira talked about how moving across the country was a step of faith for her family. What was your last step of faith and how did it go?

This is a question that asks Life Group members to give subjective and personal answers. The point is for Life Group members to see their faith in action. As people share, affirm their step of faith and thank them for sharing.

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5. In *Romans 7:15-23*, how does Paul describe the frustration of knowing what's right while battling sin? Think about a time when you felt torn between following God and giving into temptation... How did that tension impact your faith?

Romans 7:15-23 is one of the most authentic descriptions of the inner struggle with sin found anywhere in Scripture. Paul explains that he often does what he hates and fails to do what he knows is right. These verses capture the tension between our desire for godly morality and sinful human weakness. He proves the problem is not a lack of knowledge. Instead, Paul argues the struggle comes from a consistent inward gravitational pull toward sin that works against our desire to honor God. Such tension helps us to embrace the fact that the Christian life involves a lifelong battle, not a quick escape from temptation.

Paul also explains that this struggle reveals the reality of sin living within him.

- The Greek word for "sin" is hamartia (ἁμαρτία), which means "sin or moral failure." Paul uses hamartia to describe the sinful force at work in the human heart.

Sin is not just an action but a power that influences a person's will. In verses 21-23, Paul says even though he wants to do good, there is another law at work inside him that wages war against the law of his mind. The "war" language shows how intense and exhausting the conflict can feel. In the first century, both Jewish and Gentile believers would have recognized this tension.

- Jewish Christians knew the goodness of God's Law
- Gentile Christians knew the difficulty of leaving old habits behind

Paul unites both groups with a shared experience of spiritual conflict.

When writing Romans 7:15-23, Paul also highlights the limits of human strength. He doesn't blame the law, because the law reflects God's character and goodness. Instead, Paul points to the sinful brokenness of human nature. The inner battle reveals our need for a power greater than moral determination. The tension of Romans 7 prepares us for the hope that unfolds in Romans 8 (where the Spirit enables us to live in freedom).

As the Life Group leader, guide your fellow group members through the last two questions in this prompt by:

- Reminding them that they can share their struggles without fear of judgment
- Sharing that everyone experiences the tension Paul describes in Romans 7
- Recognizing this struggle is often a sign of spiritual growth rather than failure
- Asking them to consider how God used that moment to deepen humility, strengthen resolve, and reveal areas where support and accountability are needed

By encouraging members to reflect on a specific moment when they felt pulled between obedience and temptation, you help them explore how that tension shaped their trust in God, their dependence on Him, and their understanding of His grace.

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6. Share about a time when you experienced/felt the freedom that Paul describes in *Romans 7:24-25; 8:1-4*.

It might be helpful to give your Life Group some background on Romans 7:24-25 and 8:1-4, because you are about to ask them to share a time from their life that echoes what Paul wrote. You don't have to give them all the detail that you are about to read, but it's up to you as to how deep you want to go with this prompt. The main goal is to have them share about a time when they felt the kind of freedom that Paul writes about in these passages.

Whereas Romans 7:15-23 reveals the struggle between wanting to live for God and being tempted by our sinful desires, Romans 7:24-25 and 8:1-4 form a powerful bridge between human struggle and God's solution. In Romans 7:24, Paul cries out, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?" This is a watershed moment in the Book of Romans in that it highlights the despair and frustration that Paul described earlier.

- The word "wretched" translates the Greek term *talaipōros* (ταλαίπωρος), meaning "deeply troubled or exhausted."

Paul is not making a dramatic statement for effect. He is expressing the weight of the inward battle with sin. In verse 25, the answer comes: "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord." Deliverance is not found in personal resolve but in the work of Jesus. Paul summarizes the conflict by acknowledging that, on the inside, he desires God's law, yet sin still works against him. This prepares readers to understand the freedom described in the next chapter.

Romans 8:1 opens with one of the most reassuring statements in the entire Bible: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

- The Greek word for "condemnation" is *katakrima* (κατάκριμα), meaning a "legal sentence or verdict of guilt."

Paul teaches that those who belong to Christ are no longer under the penalty their sins deserve. This would have been especially meaningful to believers in Rome who struggled under the weight of guilt or the pressure of legalistic systems. Paul shifts the focus from human failure to God's verdict of grace.

Romans 8:2-3 explain how this freedom becomes reality. Paul writes that "the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death." The Spirit breaks the power that sin once held. Paul adds that what the law was powerless to do, "God did by sending his own Son." The law could diagnose sin but could not cure it. Jesus, however, came "in the likeness of sinful flesh" and became a sin offering.

Here's how The New Living Translation translates the second half of verse 3: "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."

Look at that again: "He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have." This means Jesus became a human and experienced human weakness (yet without sin) and took the penalty that sin brings upon Himself. Through His sacrifice, the power of sin is broken in a way the law could never accomplish. As such, 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9 promise that Christians will never experience the wrath of God because Jesus took that wrath upon himself on the cross.

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Verse 4 concludes with the purpose of this work: “in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

- The phrase “righteous requirement” comes from the Greek word *dikaïōma* (δικαίωμα), referring to the just demands of God’s law.

These demands are fulfilled not by human effort but by the Spirit living within believers. Paul shows that life in Christ means more than forgiveness—it means transformation. Through the Spirit’s power, Christians can live in a new way that reflects the heart of God.

7a. Read *Romans 8:31–39*. Below is a two-column chart. The left side of the chart lists the things that threaten or oppose us, along with the verse references from *Romans 8*. Fill in the right side—“What God Does”—based on the corresponding verses. Write down the promises God makes or how God responds to each threat.

WHAT THREATENS US
Opposition (v. 31)
Accusation (v. 33)
Condemnation (v. 34)
Trouble, hardship, persecution (v. 35)
Famine, nakedness, danger, sword (v. 35)
Death or life, angels or demons (v. 38)
Present or future, powers (v. 38)
Height or depth or anything in creation (v. 39)

WHAT GOD DOES

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7b. What stands out to you as you compare the two columns? How does this deepen your confidence in God's love during hardship?

The goal of this prompt is two-fold: to get your Life Group members to dig into Romans 8:31–39 and to help them understand that God is with them during difficult seasons because He loves us!

Invite your Life Group to slowly read Romans 8:31–39 together, either out loud or silently. Encourage them to notice the contrast between the threats listed and the repeated assurances of God's love and protection.

Explain that the left column lists the threats Paul mentions, and the right column captures what God does in response. Encourage members to examine each verse and identify the promise, truth, or reassurance God offers. This helps them see the “threat vs. promise” contrast that Paul is intentionally drawing.

Make it clear that answers do not need to be deeply theological. The goal is for Life Group members to see that God is with them because of the overwhelming power of His love compared to the things that oppose them. If needed, you can ask guiding questions like:

- What does this verse say God is doing?
- How does this promise speak directly to the threat listed?

After each chart has been filled out, invite your Life Group members to share which promise currently means the most to them. Help them connect Paul's teaching to their own hardship, uncertainty, and/or spiritual battles.

8. Paul writes in *Romans 12:1* that we are to “offer our bodies as living sacrifices.” What does that look like in practical terms (work, relationships, decisions)?

In Romans 12:1, Paul calls believers to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.” He describes this as a person's “true and proper worship.” The language would have immediately reminded 1st century readers of the sacrificial system, where animals were offered on an altar. The difference is found in the Greek phrase that Paul uses:

- The Greek phrase, *zōsan thysian* (ζῶσαν θυσίαν), means “living sacrifice” or “an ongoing, daily surrender of one's whole self” instead of a one-time offering.

Paul is showing that worship is not limited to songs, ceremonies, or gatherings. It involves presenting one's entire life to God in gratitude for His mercy, described in Romans 1–11.

In practical terms, this affects all aspects of our lives. Allow Life Group members to share how they see Romans 12:1 impacting our jobs, relationships, decisions, and other areas of life. However, if needed, the following are some examples you could give specifically for our jobs, relationships, and decisions...

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When it comes to our job, offering our bodies as a living sacrifice can be thought of in terms like:

- We approach work and the workplace with integrity, diligence, and a desire to honor God rather than seeking approval, status, or personal advancement alone.
- We realize how we treat coworkers, bosses, employees, and customers shapes their view of Jesus and His church.
- We are compelled to resist the temptation to cut corners, gossip, or compromise values for convenience.
- We desire for our workplace to become a place where God's character is reflected through honesty, patience, and humility.

The living sacrifice from Romans 12:1 also shapes relationships. It involves using words, actions, and attitudes to bring life rather than harm. Paul's call encourages forgiveness, service, and love even when those responses feel costly. The idea is not self-neglect but self-giving. Like our modern world, the ancient world saw honor, reputation, and power determining one's personal behavior. Yet, the kind of sacrificial love we read about in Romans 12:1 sets Christians apart.

It means:

- Choosing grace when offended
- Listening before reacting
- Treating others with dignity because they bear God's image

Adopting a Romans 12:1 posture also guides decisions. Offering oneself to God means allowing Scripture, prayer, and the Spirit to shape choices rather than to impulse, fear, or cultural pressure. It involves asking whether a decision reflects God's values and draws a person closer to Him. Paul presents this as a response to God's mercy, not as a requirement to earn His love. Being a "living sacrifice" means aligning daily choices with God's purposes, recognizing that every moment offers an opportunity to honor Him.

9. In *Romans 12:9-18*, Paul gives a list of ways to live for God. Which one is the most natural for you and which one is the most difficult for you?

For this prompt, set aside a minute or two to read Romans 12:9-18 (either quietly or ask someone to read the verses aloud). Try to get Life Group members to identify which way feel most natural in this season of life and which is most difficult. Encourage them by saying that while one way of living for God might feel natural in this season of life, it may not have felt as natural in a previous season or it might not feel natural in a future season.

Romans 12:9-18 gives one of the clearest snapshots of what "love in action" looks like in a transformed life:

- Paul begins by saying that love must be sincere (aka, being without hypocrisy). This kind of love is genuine instead of being performative or selective.
- Then, he calls Christians to hate what is evil and cling to what is good, showing that Christ-centered love includes moral clarity.
- He urges the church to be devoted to one another, to honor others above themselves, and to serve the Lord with spiritual zeal. These verses challenge Christians to move away from self-centered attitudes/selfish habits and toward a life that builds others up.

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- Paul also focuses on how Christians should respond to hardship. He encourages Christians to bless those who persecute you, be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer. Such attitudes show how much we trust God even when life is difficult.
- Additionally, Paul pushes the church toward generosity and hospitality, inviting them to share their resources and open their homes. In the ancient world, offering hospitality required sacrifice and vulnerability, yet Paul treats it as a central part of Christian living.
- Finally, Paul describes how Christians should relate to difficult people. He says to live in harmony with others, to avoid pride, and to associate with people of low position. He teaches Christians not to repay evil for evil, overcome evil with good, serve your enemies (vs 20), and, as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. When we do such things, we reflect the peace-making heart of Jesus (Matthew 5:9). Instead of reacting with anger or revenge, Christians respond with humility, kindness, and grace.

10. How would you explain *Romans 13:8-10* to someone who had never read that passage before?

Before explaining Romans 13:8-10 to someone, it's helpful to know exactly what Paul means in these verses. So, first you'll be given an explanation of Romans 13:8-10 and then you'll find some examples of how Life Group members might explain Romans 13:8-10 to someone who has never read those verses. Please know that as a Life Group leader, you aren't required to give any explanation of Romans 13:8-10, but the details are below just in case you want to provide some explanation. If you don't plan on giving any explanation, you can skip past this section to the next section, "Explaining Romans 13:8-10 to Others."

Explanation of Romans 13:8-10

Romans 13:8-10 teaches that love is at the core of God's commandments and is the guiding principle for how believers should live. In Romans 13:8, Paul writes, "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law."

The idea of a "continuing debt" means that love is never something a person finishes giving. It is a constant responsibility rooted in God's own character. Paul isn't speaking about financial debt but about the ongoing obligation believers have to reflect God's love in their relationships. In the first century, Roman society was deeply structured by status, power, and reciprocity, so Paul's instruction cut against cultural expectations by calling Christians to a lifestyle of humble, sacrificial love.

Paul continues in Romans 13:9 by listing several commandments, such as "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," and "You shall not covet." Then he adds, "whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" This last phrase comes from Leviticus 19:18.

- The Hebrew word for "love" is *ahav* (אהב), meaning "a committed, loyal, covenantal love."

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Paul shows that the Jewish law was always pointing toward a way of life grounded in love for God and others.

- The Greek verb for “love” is *agapaō* (ἀγαπάω), which refers to “a self-giving, purposeful love that seeks the good of others.” This kind of love has come to be known as *agape* love or God’s love.

By linking Hebrew and Greek concepts, Paul highlights the continuity between the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus (who also identified love as the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:37-40).

Finally, Romans 13:10 explains Paul’s conclusion: “Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.” When Christians act in ways that protect, honor, and bless others, they naturally obey God’s commands. The law’s purpose was always to shape a community defined by justice, compassion, and righteousness, and love accomplishes this far better than legalism or rule-keeping alone.

Paul writes something similar in Galatians 5:14, “For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Some people may ask, “Why did Paul say to just love your neighbor and not to say love God and love your neighbor as yourself?” A simple yet powerful answer might be: “How do Christians love God with all of our strength, mind, and heart? One of the primary ways we love God with everything we have is to love our neighbors as ourselves.”

Explaining Romans 13:8-10 to Others

Let Life Group members give their own answers and only use the examples below if people are having trouble of thinking of how they would explain Romans 13:8-10 to someone.

• Loving people fulfills what God wants from us

Romans 13:8-10 basically says that every command God gives can be summed up in one big idea: love others. If you truly love people, you won’t harm them, lie to them, steal from them, or betray them. Love naturally leads to doing what is right.

• Focusing on love is doing what God asks

These verses teach that Christians don’t have to memorize hundreds of rules to please God. When someone genuinely loves others the way God calls them to love, they automatically do the things God desires. Love protects, respects, and cares for others.

• God’s commands are really instructions on how to love well

Romans 13:8-10 shows that the commandments like ‘do not steal’ or ‘do not commit adultery’ are not random rules. They all point to one goal: loving people in a way that brings them help, not hurt. So, in a sense, the Bible is a manual on how to love others in the right way.

• Love is a debt we always owe

Paul says we should keep on loving people no matter what. Unlike money, this is a debt we’re meant to carry forever. Loving others is something Christians never finish doing because it reflects God’s heart toward people.

• To determine if an action honors God, ask, “Does it show love?”

Romans 13:8-10 explains that love is the filter for Christian behavior. If something hurts someone, uses someone, or dishonors someone, it breaks God’s commands. But if an action helps, supports, or blesses someone, it fulfills God’s will. Love is the test.

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Witness

Paul wrote to a church he had never met but whose faith was “being reported all around the world” (*Romans 1:8*). Their example was a witness to others. Take a few moments as a group to reflect on the following questions:

- Who’s watching your life of faith right now—at work, school, or in your family?
- How could your story of trusting God encourage someone else to take their next step with Him?

Ask God to give you courage, clarity, and compassion to share your story with someone this week.

Budget about 7-10 minutes to discuss and answer this prompt. Let your Life Group members know that next week you will give some time for them to tell the Life Group how it went when they shared their story.