

5 practical

AUTHORITY

Let every soul be in subjection to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. Therefore he who resists the authority withstands the ordinance of God; and those who withstand will receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Do that which is good, and you will have praise from the authority, for he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he doesn't bear the sword in vain; for he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to him who does evil. Therefore you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

For this reason you also pay taxes, for they are servants of God's service, continually doing this very thing. Therefore give everyone what you owe: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if customs, then customs; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love doesn't harm a neighbor. Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

Do this, knowing the time, that it is already time for you to awaken out of sleep, for salvation is now nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far gone, and the day is near. Let's therefore throw off the deeds of darkness, and let's put on the armor of light. Let's walk properly, as in the day; not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and lustful acts, and not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, for its lusts.

WEAK in FAITH

Now accept one who is weak in faith, but not for disputes over opinions. One man has faith to eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Don't let him who eats despise him who doesn't eat. Don't let him who doesn't eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you who judge another's servant? To his own lord he stands or falls. Yes, he will be made to stand, for God has power to make him stand.

One man esteems one day as more important. Another esteems every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks. He who doesn't eat, to the Lord he doesn't eat, and gives God thanks. For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord. Or if we die, we die to the Lord. If therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died, rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

For it is written,

" 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'to me every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess to God.' "

So then each one of us will give account of himself to God.

Therefore let's not judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way, or an occasion for falling. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself; except that to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Yet if because of food your brother is grieved, you walk no longer in love. Don't destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. Then don't let your good be slandered, for God's Kingdom is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

So then, let's follow after things which make for peace, and things by which we may build one another up. Don't overthrow God's work for food's sake. All things indeed are clean, however it is evil for that man who creates a stumbling block by eating. It is good to not eat meat, drink wine, nor do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who doesn't judge himself in that which he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because it isn't of faith; and whatever is not of faith is sin.

Please read the above text and complete the below in preparation for class. Give priority to the text!

1. How are we to act in regards to higher authority? What are some reasons giving for why we are to act this way?
2. What if a higher authority is bring terror to those that do good and praise to those that do evil, how do we respond then (note this is the opposite of the text)?
3. Explain how all commandments can be summed up in “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”.
4. What is the fulfillment of the law? How is this true?
5. How does Paul instruct believers to handle differences of opinions regarding disputable matters?
6. What are some things we should consider when determining the balance between our liberties and consideration for weaker believers?
7. How do we reconcile Paul indicating all of the following to the saints in Rome “repay no one evil for evil”, “[authority] is an avenger of wrath for [God]” and “let us not judge one another”?