

# Romans

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[ 0 : 00 ]     depending upon the Lord for his promised house. I will speak from the words in the 14th, sorry, the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans and the last verse.

The Epistle of Paul to the Romans at chapter 13 and verse 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

These epistles, the most part, and this one, were of course written to the churches of God, to those assemblies of people in those realms of old who had been called out from the world which lieth in wickedness and in darkness and had made a profession of the Lord's name and joined themselves together in the ordinances of his house.

So this letter is addressed to the Church of Rome. The Apostle says, Beloved of God, called to be saints.

And this is of course important because this is not an exhortation into any that are in a state of nature who are still dead in their sins.

[ 1 : 57 ]     such could not ever be expected to carry out this exhortation or commandment because they lack the vital life to do so.

But if we should be, any of us in such a condition, I would set before you the truth concerning this in the hope of the Lord and may lead you to see how desirable, how essential these things are for our eternal good.

But we may well be surprised at times to read how boldly the Apostle writes to the Church of God.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. We might suppose that this is a very hard thing to do. You might even begin to think that it is surely impossible to do this.

The Lord does not command his people to do those things that are impossible. In our own strength and in our own nature, this of course is utterly impossible.

[ 3 : 20 ]     Both parts of the exhortation, both to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, to make no provision for the flesh, these are far beyond, altogether beyond any natural powers that we have.

But the Apostle is writing to the people of God. And we might look at this in two ways. For one thing, as the Apostle constantly teaches, these people have a new life and a new power within.

As he says in the eighth chapter, they are all indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

He says, ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, and by no other means, it is possible, and it is most desirable and necessary, that these things should be carried out.

[ 4 : 47 ]     We might also look at it this way. There is a power in the Word of God.

It is the Word of God through his Apostle. And when he speaks, there is a power imparted with the Word.

When he speaks, that is, by the Spirit applying the Word. You may remember that the Lord Jesus in his life spoke in this kind of way, in a natural sense, where there were those who needed help.

And there was, for instance, a man who lay on a bed, who was sick of the palsy and could not rise. It was absolutely impossible for him to get up.

And the Lord Jesus says, I say unto you, Arise, take up thy bed and walk. And he did so. There was that power imparted as the Lord spoke.

[ 6 : 01 ] And so also with one who had a withered hand, a withered arm. It was entirely impossible, by any natural cause, for this man to stretch out his arm.

But the Lord said to him, Stretch out thy hand. And he did so. There was power in the Word of the Son of God. And is there no longer this power?

May the Lord himself, as we read such words as this, impart by his Spirit unto us that power to carry out his commandment.

Now there are here both a positive and a negative exhortational command.

There is the positive, Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. And we might look at this as having various applications.

[ 7 : 10 ] I would rather regard it as a summary of what has gone before. There is much exhortation in these chapters.

And this seems to summarize all that has gone before. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is summarized in this, To be more like him as he lived.

This would include, I suppose, all of those previous things that have been spoken of. And also the very important negative injunction, To make a not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Now first of all, there's a positive exhortation. It means, in the first place, as we can see, it is closely connected with the word a couple of verses before, Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light.

I might just say this, that this way of speaking is quite common with the apostles. He frequently speaks to the churches in this way.

[ 8 : 34 ] telling them to put off certain works of the flesh and to put on those things that become those who profess the gospel.

He says through the Ephesians that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful love, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and a true holiness.

Which is very much akin to the passage that we have before us. It means to put on righteousness. put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ in his righteousness.

We know that a part of the armor of light, as we have it in the last chapter of the Ephesians, is described there as the breastplate of righteousness.

Having on the breastplate of righteousness, which you so much need in every battle with the evil one. Now this is most important, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ in this way.

[ 10 : 10 ] every believer is a partaker of that righteousness. That is that, the perfect life, the perfect obedience to the whole law of God that the Lord Jesus executed in his wonderful life and death.

in his life he fulfilled in perfection that holy law of God which each one of us has so failed to do.

And in his death he bore the supreme penalty of the law. He bore the punishment of, due to his people's sin, that load of anguish and agony that he bore was for that purpose.

And so it is written to these people that he was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification in his perfect life and death.

There was that obedience for all to the entire will of his father. so that it is written of him that it hath pleased the father that in him should all fullness dwell.

[ 11 : 46 ] And his father spoke of that work which he had done almost at the end of his life when he said on the mount this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

This was not for himself. That righteousness which he spent his life and gave his life to the percher this was for his own people that is to every believer who is in need of it and flies to it.

Every one who is convinced by the spirit of the utter folly and the complete lack of merit in his own righteousness as to give up all attempts to purchase it in that way as it is written in this epistle that to him that worketh not but believeth in him that justifies the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness that is the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to him it is upon him as a robe of righteousness now this of course is absolutely essential before God the best obedience of my hands and theirs not appear before thy throne but the faith can answer all demands by pleading what my

Lord has done his righteousness is sufficient but there is none other that will do dear friend are you clothed in this righteousness righteousness have you have you believed and put your trust in that righteousness that Jesus Christ has wrought it is then essential as a wedding garment to be clothed in this before the throne of God is an essential matter for our soul but more here we are concerned with its value as a breast plate the apostle says putting having on the breast plate of righteousness and he is there of course using a figure of the soldier fighting in a battle a personal and intense battle in which he needs that breast plate to protect his chest his heart and feelings that is in the sense of it a breast plate of course protects a very vital part of the body a wound there is likely to be fatal and how much we need if we are engaged in that constant warfare with the powers of darkness how much we need that righteousness and how is this to be used we need to put on the

Lord Jesus Christ in this way that is to have on that breastplate of righteousness now what I mean to say is this the evil one will attack all the people of God in that way which concerns their feelings and affection he often aims at their hearts with his fiery darts and he will say look at your life look at all that sin that you have committed even since you believe that you were a child of God what answer is there to this we are guilty of these things often that he is accusing us of but the point is that the righteousness of Jesus Christ is sufficient if we have this on that is sufficient for every offense in his obedience to the law and subjection to its penalty the

[ 16 : 28 ] Lord Jesus Christ is on everything that's sufficient and suppose the devil comes like this and says look at all your failings your shortcomings how terribly short you come well the answer to all this is that the Lord Jesus Christ is our righteousness that in his life there is an abundance of merit there is all perfection here as the hymn so well puts it the terrors of law and of God with me can have nothing to do my saviour's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from the old so we need the breastplate of righteousness we need this perfect defense therefore the attacks of the evil one whenever and how often it is and how subtle he is whenever he attacks in this way and this is most necessary if we are to carry out these injunctions

I would speak very tenderly dear friends but if we are continually engaged in a matter of doubts and fears and such a warfare then we shall certainly lack some of these precious graces of the spirit in great measure while we are considering ourselves in our own personal space then we have that little occasion to consider these other matters and to walk in them and put you on the Lord Jesus Christ in that glorious righteousness that he has provided for every believer and also this there is to put on that holiness because these chapters also refer very much to the working out of those principles that the apostle has been speaking of in the earlier chapters the greater principles of the faith and especially that leading and essential doctrine of justification by faith only but here we have the working out of these things in practice and so these chapters here are full of exhortation or commandments to the people of

God that they should walk in these things now put you on the Lord Jesus Christ in this in his example here's a perfect example of life here below we have in the gospel the account of how he lived the way he acted in his earthly course and so we have also this that Christ also hath suffered for us leaving us an example that we should follow his death who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth who when he was reviled reviled not again when he suffered he threatened not but committed himself to him the judges righteously we have in that passage a wonderful example of the meekness of

Jesus Christ or a wonderful account of it he was accused of all these things of which he was entirely guiltless he was entirely innocent yet he answered not again he committed the whole matter to his father all these personal attacks made no impression how is it with us dear friends when we are subject to personal abuse and attacks whether they are whether we are guilty of them or not how do we react to these things we have the same spirit of meekness meekness is that attitude which in a sense is negative but very beautifully negative and it doesn't react in the usual human way to personal attacks as

Moses was the meekest man on all the earth because when he was constantly affronted by the children of Israel he took it so calmly so meekly for the most part he was not disturbed he was not angry by these personal attacks upon him and if we are in the right position before God we are low at his feet then the personal attacks of this kind can be met in the spirit of meekness to put you on the Lord Jesus Christ as regards his meekness and also his humility we are counseled to do this the apostle Peter says all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility and whose humility is that but that of the

[ 22 : 30 ] Lord Jesus that which he gives be clothed with humility that is have this precious garment always upon you a spirit of humility as we also read concerning it as it is in all of the epistles where he speaks somewhere here concerning it in honor preferring one another and as we have it in the epistle to the Philippians let this mind be in you put it on put you on the Lord Jesus Christ in his humble spirit let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God humbled himself and became and took upon him the form of a servant and was found in the likeness of men and being found in fashion of the man he humbled himself again he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross what humility was that what a an unexampled display of humility far beyond anything that we could ever display that the Lord himself the Lord of glory assured died on that cross now let this humble mind be in you and put you on the Lord Jesus

Christ consider what he has done and follow in his footsteps and put you on the Lord Jesus Christ also in the way of his example by way of love because his life was supremely a life of love he lived the life most holy his every thought of love and every action showed it to man and God above for how love shone in all of his life love to his disciples love to those who were a sheep not having a shepherd love in that way that outward way to all he came in contact with he fulfilled the law in that way love worketh no ill to his neighbor love is the fulfilling of the law and how perfectly he fulfilled it love is and if we are followers if we profess to be followers of him is it not meet that we should show something of the same love be kindly affectioned one toward another in brotherly love love or as the apostle says to the

Colossians above all these things good as they are these other graces above all these things put on the charity or love which is the bond of perfect oh put it on put on the Lord Jesus Christ in that wonderful garment of his love and dear friends whoever you are this is an exhortation to every one of the people of God is there anyone who has sufficient of this love is there anyone who has a heart always full of the love of God do we not come exceedingly short in this walk in love as Christ also has loved us and has given himself for us so do seek to put on this holy garment of love in all things one of the matter concerning this put ye on the

Lord Jesus Christ may be looked at in this way put on the Lord Jesus Christ by way of profession of his name the Lord Jesus Christ that is both Saviour and Lord Master if we are indeed followers of him that word applies ye are not your own ye are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are called have you put on the Lord Jesus Christ by that way of profession to glorify his name to display his goodness as far as you are able to do well if you have there is still an application of this we consider this enough does this profession not need to be so to speak renewed you may have been baptized many years ago but surely the same spirit needs to be constantly renewed we need to be reminded from time to time of what we have done in that solemn act what we have professed being buried with him in baptism and raised with him in his resurrection life to walk in newness of life oh dear friends you who may have put on the Lord

Jesus Christ openly many years ago so consider again what you did what a solemn act it is to profess his name and yes these things are according to his will this is the will of God even your sanctification it is certainly his will that his people should follow him and should walk in newness of life and should put on the graces of humility and love and will he not do this for them will he not do this if we seek it earnestly put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust of it this is a solemn word the flesh here refers to our natural man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust refers to our fallen nature which is wholly sinful and incapable of all that is good but very much capable of everything that is evil and this is in some respect reigned and restrained and controlled by various things there are of course the laws that are ordained of God as we read which do restrain people to a very great extent the evil that is in us does not always break out as it might do as it would do if those restraints were removed but the flesh is holy and in every believer it remains it is his very nature his fallen nature and will remain until the day in which it is put aside in death and so the apostle speaks earlier in this epistle concerning this and ends up by saying oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death my corrupt and fallen nature my sinful self my flesh for what a struggle it is against there you find it so dear friends this is the flesh and connected with the flesh the lusts thereof this fallen nature will be breaking out in these lusts now this word literally means a very strong desire and it is not necessarily a bad thing in some context but of course here it obviously is there may be strong desires which are natural and perfectly right but in this case the desires are from the flesh these strong desires or lusts are from the flesh breaking out in its real and hideous nature and this is the very nature of the flesh to do this from time to time when there is occasion for it in various ways that nature which is in all of us may break out in strong and evil desires

[ 32 : 32 ] I have no wish to go into this in any detail but we have something of it hinted at in the previous verse let us walk honestly as in the day not in rioting and drunkenness not in chambering and wantonness not in the strife and envying now that suggests very strong and evil desires that spring up in our hearts from time to time and often without very much warning now we are all capable of these things of the lust of the flesh and they will break out unless they are checked now the old man which is in us our own fallen nature will be there to the end of our day but it may be in a sense very much weakened by depriving it of the things that it needs for life now these lusts of the flesh these evil desires may be yielded to or they may be resisted as long as we yield to these things they increase now we all know that this sort of thing happens you yield to temptation it is easier the next time to yield again and soon it will be very easy indeed if we go on and the terrible things that we see around us and hear of in these days are due to this evil nature that is in man breaking out in fresh and stronger lusts and this is a very solemn thing rioting and drunkenness and all that kind of thing is often the result of this happening those evil desires are yielded to and not restrained now if these lusts are fed they will grow stronger if they are restrained and deprived of that which feeds them then in the nature of things they will be weaker so that we read in the epistle to the

Galatians I think they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts now that of course means very hard and painful work and to crucify the flesh with the affections of lust and lust to deny these desires of the flesh it may be very painful work so much so the Lord Jesus himself has spoken in this kind of way he said if thine eye offend thee pluck it out with thy right hand offend thee cut it off not that that necessarily need to be taken absolutely literally but the figure or the force of it is very plain it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye than having two eyes to pass into hellfire you see these lusts belong to that realm they belong to the old man and to the realm of evil spirits which prompt these things and so this is an exceedingly serious matter the lusts of the flesh need to be mortified the apostle says if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live the other part of that also if ye live after the flesh ye shall die now these lusts then very much need to be checked they need to be denied and so the epistles speak very strongly about them the apostle to Timothy says flee also youthful lusts flee give them no occasion whatsoever because this is such a serious matter and so damaging the effect can be on your soul and so the apostle

Peter says I beseech you as the strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul then do great damage and I suppose many of us if we were able to speak of these things could testify that this is verily so these lusts do war against the soul they do terrible damage they're yielded to now the exhortation here is to make no provision for the flesh that is to deny it any possible provision for the lust to feed upon I don't think I need to go into this the word is really very plain now you know whether these things affect you and which particular evil desires may influence your hearts at times and you know how easy it is to yield and what kind of things they are that feed and make provision for the lust of the flesh now we must make no provision for it we might speak of books there are certain books that are available in our day which it should never be so and obviously if we indulge in the sort of reading that is entirely opposed to the word of God then we are making provision for the lust of the flesh and in many other ways we may do the same we may encourage these things we may give them so to speak food to strengthen them or we may deny it now let us just briefly put these things together because they go together now it is most important and I trust it is to many of us most attractive this first part put ye on the Lord

Jesus Christ do not long to do this and desire very much to do it but don't forget that there is another part connected with it make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof now these must go together you cannot have Christ and feed your lust that is you cannot have the sensible presence of Christ you cannot grow in the grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ if you are making provision for the flesh because these are completely contrary to each other these injunctions go together and it is I suppose as necessary to make no provision for the flesh to deny the affections and lust and lust of the flesh it is necessary to do that by the spirit of God by the grace of his spirit as it is to put on the Lord

Jesus Christ because the things are so intimately connected the Lord Jesus Christ lived a most holy life these things were absolutely abhorrent to him the lust of the flesh and so we have that other exhortation in its two parts which we read abhor that which is evil cleave to that which is good the works of the flesh must be put off by relying entirely upon the spirit of God by watching and praying against them and by entirely relying upon the spirit of Christ for the strength to conquer them and then we may also hope to attain somewhat of this to put on the Lord Jesus Christ may the

[ 41 : 36 ] Lord bless to us his holy word and grant us that grace that we need to carry out these most important commandments to the benefit of our own soul and to the glory of his blessed name Amen Amen God m Perfect.

Amen