

**Romans 13:11-15:13**  
**“Paul’s Heart – Part one”**  
**8/15/12**

**Introduction**

- The Content of Romans is not hard to understand
  - As long as you remember it is helpful to compare the content of Romans to a great theological city

**The Book of Romans – The Great Theological City**

**#1 – The Courthouse – Romans 1-5**

- Paul introduces the concept of righteousness by faith, but in order to show us our great need of salvation he spends the first five chapters, showing we are all guilty before God

**#2 – The Power Plant – Romans 6-8**

- Chapters 6-8 help us understand there is power to live out this Christian life God is calling us to – Pastor Rob is doing an in-depth series from these three chapters on our weekend services, but we will cover them as well, just at a much more rapid pace

**#3 – The Synagogue – Romans 9-11**

- in chapters 9-11 Paul shares with us how Israel fits into God’s plan now that there is this new thing called the church and answers the questions, has the church replaced Israel, where do they fit into God’s plan and how does God’s sovereignty fit with man’s free will – great stuff in this section

**#4 – The Church – Romans 12-16**

- in Paul’s final section of this book we will study how the church is practically supposed to operate in light of the all the amazing truths about God in this book – Paul ends all of his letters very practically, Romans is no exception

**Now tonight we continue in the fourth and final section of the book of Romans**

- as Paul begins to exhort the church to live in light of what they have learned, he encourages them to see his heart

**Again I think we can learn a lot from the Apostle Paul**

- he was one of the most effective evangelists and church leaders in church history – you know?
  - we may want to pay attention to what made his heart tick
  - so over this week and next we are going to see Paul’s heart

**Romans 13:11-16:27 – Paul’s Heart**

**#1 - Paul’s heart toward the world – Romans 13:11-14**

**#2 - Paul’s heart toward the weak – Romans 14:1-15:13**

**#3 - Paul’s heart toward the work – Romans 15:14–33**

**#4 - Paul’s heart toward the workers – Romans 16:1-27**

- lets consider the first two of these tonight

**Paul’s heart toward the world – Romans 13:11-14**

- when I say Paul’s heart toward the world, I do not mean his heart toward lost people in the world
  - What Paul is talking about is his heart toward the things of the world, things of a worldly nature

- And his heart toward this is simply stated – we need to wake up!!!!
  - We need to wake up out of the sleep we are in

**Now – why is it so important that we wake up?**

- Paul tells us there – because our salvation draws near
  - Paul states that the reason we need to wake up is - Jesus is coming again

**Now understand – I believe this is true for the church as a whole**

- you know for a believer in the first century church, after the destruction of Jerusalem – the promise of Jesus’ soon return for His church was one with some problems
  - Bible prophecy was clear that some things had to take place before Christ came for His church
  - Israel being a nation in their land being the biggest
- After 70 AD the Jews were dispersed all over the world
  - In fact in the year 1900 there were more Jews living in New York than anywhere in the Middle East
  - So to those in that time, Christ’s return was promised but not necessarily imminent

**But that all changed May 14<sup>th</sup> 1948 – the Jews against unbelievable odds once again became a nation.**

- and you take that with so many other things the Bible speaks about (a united Europe), Islamic Coalitions and friends the scene is set for the Lord to return at any moment
  - Now for some of us there could be no better news
  - But for some of us that is scary – and maybe, just maybe that is because you are living for the world and as Paul is saying to you and me – we need to wake up

**Paul is saying we need to wake up because our redemption draws near**

- and as we just consider that is certainly true when it comes to the church as a whole
  - But consider this

**Though I believe it is true that Jesus is coming back soon for His church, you may disagree, and that’s fine, I don’t mind that you’re okay with being wrong**

- You may think, this is not the generation Jesus is coming back for the church
  - Okay – whatever – this is the generation He is coming back for you – do we understand
  - The Lord is coming in the next 70 years for you
- At best man is given 70 or 80 years
  - And we try to pretend that is not the case
  - We don’t think about it when we are young
  - When we are 50, we call ourselves Middle aged – that would be awesome if I knew more 100 year olds
  - I don’t have a relative that made it past 72, so I’m middle aged – some of you – well you are in the fourth quarter
    - Let’s be honest – the time is drawing near

**Jesus could come back for His church at any time**

- Jesus will come for you in the next 70 years or much less for most of us
  - The time is approaching when we will see our King
  - And Paul – one who God used so radically – he is sharing with us his heart and letting us know we need to wake up

### **But what does it mean to wake up?**

- Paul gives you two things to do, note them

### **So what do we do???**

#### **#1 – Cast off the works of darkness**

- Take spiritual inventory of what your life is involved in, and those things that are of the world, (Paul gives us a list)
  - Revelries – wild parties
  - Lewdness – sexual promiscuity

### **Those things are darkness, friends**

- and Paul's heart is that we would wake up and cast those things off
  - well, how??
  - Well, as we do the next thing Paul tells us to do
- And they will be cast off as we do the second thing

### **So what do we do???**

#### **#1 – Cast off the works of darkness**

#### **#2 – Put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

- We have talked about this many times before, so often we do just step one – we decide I am not walking there anymore – but then we do not put on Jesus – by spending time with Jesus, and it doesn't work

### **Paul's heart toward the world**

- Jesus is coming for you, you will be before Him
  - Therefore – cast off the darkness
  - Put on Jesus
- And Make no provision for the flesh
  - You that is the problem – we leave the door open for sin – we leave a little place to run back to just in case we need to
  - But in doing that you are creating the opportunity, a provision for your flesh – Paul says wake up

### **You know I don't know about you, but my flesh can live on a saltine cracker**

- I read 165 chapters in the Bible, (that's hyperbole of course), spend two hours in prayer, but if I give my flesh just the little second look, just dwelling on that jealousy for a minute – my flesh starts to act like King Kong
  - That is why Paul does say, give your flesh a little, it says, make no provision for the flesh

### **In Genesis 21 we have a picture shown to us. Abraham has two sons, two ladies – Sarah and Isaac is the wife of his youth and the son of promise – and they are a picture of doing things God way**

- but Hagar and Ishmael – are the bondwoman and the product of the flesh
  - they are a picture of going against God, walking in the flesh

### **And there comes a day when Ishmael is picking on Isaac and Sarah says enough – send this Ishmael and the bondwoman away**

- and Abraham does – but when he does, read it later, he gives to them a little bread and skin of water
  - now you say so what – so what – Abraham is wealthy – and he gives what is his son and his quasi-wife – some crackers and a canteen – and then sends them off into the wilderness – it was a death sentence

### **That's horrible**

- Friends – Romans 15, we will get to it tonight – the things that were written before (speaking of the OT) they were written for our learning
  - It is to speak to us about dealing with the flesh
- We need to wake to this reality
  - Make no provision, Cast off the works of darkness
  - And put on the Lord Jesus Christ
  - And keep Him on the whole day
- You know our clothes cover up our flesh
  - We put them on most days early in the morning and we keep them on all day, glory hallelujah
  - Friends – it's the same way with Jesus – I put Him on, early in the morning, and I better keep Him on all throughout the day

Maybe Exodus 29, Wave offering – Keep Jesus between you..

### **Romans 13:11-16:27 – Paul's Heart**

#### **#1 - Paul's heart toward the world – Romans 13:11-14**

#### **#2 - Paul's heart toward the weak – Romans 14:1-15:13**

- we are going to do some reading and then we will come back and unpack this together, but I want you to get the whole sweep of what Paul is saying as he shares his heart concerning the weak brothers and sister in Christ – [read the verses](#)

### **The first thing we need to understand as we are reading is that Paul in his ministry is dealing with the crashing together of two totally different world views**

- As Paul would enter a city, a Gentile city, like Rome or Corinth, the first thing he would do, almost without fail was go to the Jewish synagogue
  - And He would preach Christ – now this normally resulted in riots in the city, and then Paul would move on to the Gentiles
  - But without fail, his first converts in every town were Jews
- So what you had in these Gentile towns that Paul was ministering in, was a mix of former Jews, who were very legalistic in their thinking
  - And what I mean by that, is up to the point they heard the gospel, they related to God through a series of rules – if they obeyed, they were blessed and if they didn't they were cursed
  - The Jewish world was really black and white and they took that into their Christianity, this thing is either right or wrong

### **Now mixed in with the Jews that were being saved of course was a bunch of Gentiles**

- now they were former pagans with all kinds of liberty
  - hey, eat, drink and be merry, didn't you hear the man, you legalistic Jews – grace brother!!! Glug!

### **So you understand the tension in all of Paul's letters as we saw in chapters 6 and 7 of Romans to the different ways people would respond to grace**

- some would think it meant they could live however they wanted
  - and that was a misunderstanding of Grace
- others would think they were going to perfect themselves in the flesh
  - and that was just as much and egregious error

**Paul here is not dealing so much with their understanding of grace, he had already done that again in Chapters 6-8, but here is sharing his heart on how we deal with one another, especially concerning the weak brothers**

- and weak brothers and sisters here doesn't mean one who is wimpy, wimpy, wimpy
  - but one whose conscience is more bothered by the liberties other Christians enjoy

**Now again when I say liberties let's be very clear, I am not talking about things that are clearly laid out in Scripture as sin**

- getting drunk is not a liberty you are free to partake in
  - none of you have the liberty to sleep with your boyfriend or girlfriend before marriage
  - that is not a liberty, that is sin and it needs to be repented of

**Now there is way we are to determine what is a liberty for ourselves personally and what is a weight**

- you see, sin is laid out in Scripture – there are things that we need to cast off at all times in every case
  - but there are others – that we need to pray, prayerfully, not pridefully, prayerfully consider – is this a liberty or a weight

**How would we know?**

- Well I think the Word should inform us and Paul deals with this in I Corinthians 6

**“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” – I Corinthians 6:12**

- and Paul says again in chapter 10 of the same letter...

**“All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. (build you up) Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.” – I Corinthians 10:23-24**

**You see with something not clearly laid out in Scripture, for example, should Christians watch TV, should we go to movies or dances or listen to secular music???**

- there are things clearly laid out in Scripture – we are not to put anything impure before our eyes
  - if that show and that movie shows sexual intimacy, I don't think it's a liberty, I think it's sin that you need to repent of
  - but what about movies that don't???
- I think if you are listening to something that blasphemes God, glorifies sin, that is not a liberty, that is a sin that you need to repent of
  - But what about Johnny Cash????
  - What about the Beach boys???

**Well what does Paul say, for those things not clearly called sin in the Scripture, man they are lawful, there is liberty, but I need to prayerfully consider, is this**

**helpful for me and my family, or is it a weight, is it weighing down my walk with God**

➤ you see as it says in Hebrews 12...

**“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” – Hebrews 12:1-2**

**With something in our life, not addressed in Scripture, I am free, but I need to pray, “is this thing weighing me down?”**

- and you may not even know until you pray and try life without it for a few days
  - if it's not – hey – lawful!!!
  - If it is, I don't care that it is not addressed clearly in Scripture – you need to lay it down
  - But we need to have the heart of God on these things, the heart of the apostle Paul, the most effective man that ever lived apart from Christ
- But it's the Lord who as you seek Him, makes the determination
  - You see I don't want to be the referee in your Christian life – this is foul, this is fair
  - You already have a referee, He is called the Holy Spirit and the peace of God that guards or literally referees our heart

**And as Paul said in chapter 14, it is before the Lord you and I stand**

- you don't have to answer to me
  - and I don't answer to you – it's before the Lord we stand
  - and we are not all the same

**With some issues, you may be a weak brother or sister**

- there may be some TV shows the Lord for you and your personal struggles, the Holy Spirit says “foul”, “but its only the biggest loser”, nothing wrong – but the Spirit is saying ‘foul’ for you but for me or someone else He is saying fair, in fact do some of those exercises

**You see we all stand before our own master, that is what is Paul is saying for us personally as it relates to liberties**

- and what God has been really ministering to me that I would like to share with you, is so often we think someone must be right and the other wrong
  - but what the Scripture is saying is that is not necessarily true

**God generally excepts people on both sides and we need to realize that – again when we are not dealing with a biblically defined issue, which is the first important question, then I need to realize, it may be wrong for me, because of how I am made, the temptations I have, based on upbringing and exposure and DNA, but that doesn't mean it is for someone else, like the other person is wrong – No - God is for both of you**

- do you see what I mean – it is not an either or issue, both are right
  - I will give you a great example - secular music for me, is wrong, my response is not good, it weighs down my walk with Jesus and leads to real biblically defined sin – yes Johnny Cash and Beach boys included
- Now I realize that with that issue, that makes me a weaker brother
  - Absolutely – I am personally open to temptation through that media – I have recognized it, prayed through it, it is true for me

- Now, I have the tendency to think you should think as I do, “don’t you realize anything that is conceived of a heart that is not inspired of the Lord but of the god of this age, must be dangerous, what is wrong with you - but that is not necessarily true

**Nor is it true, as I occasionally get accused of, or you are just wrong and legalistic Pharisees, why don’t you wake up and smell the grace**

- not true either – It is before our Master we individually stand and fall
  - God is for both of us, you see

**Now listen, this is key, this is the most important thing I have said yet tonight – this is true for your individual liberties**

- things not defined in Scripture, we take them to the Lord and let the Holy Spirit and the peace of God referee our hearts
  - fair – foul – amen

**But then it changes slightly in how we treat one another, and this is the point of chapter 14, into 15**

- you see, if I am come to an issue in my life where I have God given liberty, that does not then give me a right to flaunt my God given liberty in front of weaker brothers or sisters
  - again weaker meaning – those who have prayed an issue through and because of their make up, susceptibility to sin and upbringing, exposure – say – that is not okay for me
  - it is not okay for me to then say, you legalist, why don’t you just grow up in grace

**Now for the audience here in Paul’s day those hot button issues were meat that had been sacrificed to idols and what day you would worship on**

- those coming out of strict Judaism – Saturday, the Sabbath, that was the only day to worship
  - but to the Gentiles who had no such custom, we can go to church on Sunday to commemorate the raising of Jesus from the dead or Wednesday or Monday for that matter, doesn’t matter

**With the meat issue....**

- in their day when you go to the market, usually the cheaper meat had been originally part of a sacrifice to a false god
  - and the free Gentile, and or the penny pinching Jew would say – praise the Lord, what a deal I got on these Rib eyes

**But the weaker brother couldn’t get it passed his mind that this meat had been given in worship to a false god and so to him it was wrong to eat**

- and what Paul is saying is before the Lord each brother each sister stands
  - the Lord plays referee
- But if eating meat is going to stumble my brother in Christ
  - Then I will never eat meat again
  - That is what Paul says dealing with this issue with the Corinthian Church in chapter 8 that we read on Monday in the one year Bible

**“Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.” – I Corinthians 8:13**

- or as Paul says in verse 14

**“I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.” – Romans 14:14-15**

**You see, the point is there is a more important law that whether or not I have a personal liberty, there is now a law of love that I need to look out for my brother, for my sister in Christ**

**For example when I was younger and first doing Youth ministry I was adamant that secular music as long as it wasn't blasphemous, or sensual was fine**

- and I was surrounded by people who believed otherwise
  - my wife being one of them
  - my friends – Danny Williamson and Phil McKay were so on me for this issue back in the early 2000's that we were riding in my car and they opened my CD case – you see young people in the olden day, like 10 years ago, we used to have to keep our music in these huge folders called cases, because we had no idea what a digital download was
  - they opened my CD case and began throwing CDs out the window – what is this – oh, secular – out the window, what is this, no, not the Beatles, out the window
- And I would think proudly – listen you Pharisees – you guys used to struggle with drugs, alcohol, other stuff
  - I never did – I'm glad God freed you from those things –put down the White Album
  - I was adamant

**Until one day, I was hanging out with one of the kids in the youth group, one you would all know if I said his name, God is using Him in such great ways today, and he saw my CD case and looking through it said, you listen to this???**

- I know he did too, so I gave him a puzzled – yeah?? – to which he responded – I don't know what to think about that – I thought when I grew in the Lord this stuff wouldn't have the hold on me it does now
  - I dropped him off, drove away and I sensed the Lord challenging me

**Is your liberty in this more important to you than Me? Is it more important than your ability to minister to kids and be something radically different than everything else they are around – and I had to admit – yes, yes it is**

- and God showed me, that for me, not for you, for me, that was an ugly idol, that had to go
  - so I started chucking them out the window
  - and an interesting thing began to happen over the next few months
- I began to realize that Lord orchestrated all of this for me to learn a lesson
  - I began to realize how that liberty was really a weight that led to sin in my heart, things clearly defined in Scripture
  - And I began to experience freedom in many issues that I had previously been in bondage to



- And what I learned for me, not for you, but for me, that is an issue where I am weak

- But I learned it by what Paul is teaching here, that our liberties can never be more important than the love we have for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ

**Martin Luther said, “A Christian man is the most free lord of all, subject to none, a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, subject to all” – Martin Luther, On the Freedom of a Christian Man**

- His point is, God’s grace has made us free
  - We are no longer working our way to heaven
  - We are no longer under the Law
- But my love for my weaker brothers should really play into what I do, especially openly
  - Because if by my liberty I stumble my weaker brother or sister, I am no longer walking in love and that is not okay

**Saint Augustine said it best..**

**“In essential things we must have unity, in non essentials we must have liberty, but in all things we must have charity”**

**“In essential things we must have unity”**

- those things laid out in Scripture we need to stand for and hold each other accountable

**“In essential things we must have unity; in non essentials we must have liberty”**

- we must give each other room to be who they are in Christ, and to let them grow, we need to get away from I am right and you are wrong on these non biblically defined issues

**“In essential things we must have unity, in non essentials we must have liberty, but in all things we must have charity”**

- which of course means love
  - the caveat is I need to live by the law of love first and foremost
  - because that is what Jesus did, and He is our primary example

**Next week we will wrap up the book of Romans in our chapter by chapter study, and look at Paul’s heart toward the work and the workers, hope you can be with us**