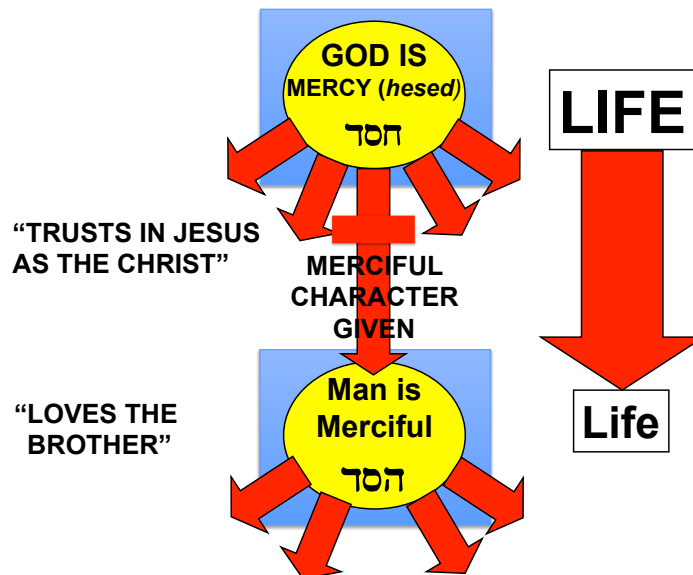


VI. **Application: Appropriate behavior in lieu of the Law (12--16).**

This section outlines the proper actions of a believer in light of God's righteousness (12:1-16:24), which he has received (the new heart) through the Spirit.

Now in light of the fact that these believers have been separated from the nation Israel and the Law, what should their life be? This is the subject of Paul's final chapters. In 12:1-15:13 Paul will speak theologically and in 15:14 to the end, Paul mentions specifics in the situation at the church at Rome.

It should be emphatically noted that these behaviors are not to increase one's relationship with God (which is established by Christ alone)¹²⁸, but are deeds when one sees the heart of God and realizes that he has it (God's sacrificial love) in himself. Thus the love of the brother (as Christ loved the brother) will be of great priority.



The subjection to Gentile Law is a response to the Times of the Gentiles in the plan of God. However, in Paul's removal from the Law, one would wonder if

¹²⁸ This is very important! Good deeds do not establish the relationship. It is the character of God in Christ that establishes the relationship. Sanctification is the realization (change of character) that the believer realizes through the renewing of his mind. In other words, it is not the performance of a husband for his wife that determines their relationship. It is the intimate knowledge of his wife and her knowledge of him that establishes the relationship and the personal response. His treatment of her (and vice-versa) comes from that relationship.

Jews had to respond to any Law. Thus Paul establishes that the law is in their hearts, the law of the love of God.

A. Generally (12:1-15:13).

1. Toward self (12:1-8).

Paul begins by showing the Jew how he makes an 'age of Grace' sacrifice. He gives¹²⁹ his 'dead' though 'living' body to God. This is in the same vein as 6:16 where Paul urged them not to present their bodies to the flesh to serve, but to present them to the Spirit. Paul then uses this presentation to tell each man to use the gift given him in the service of the church body. Also to recognize that each man has his own gift and that no gift is better than another.

2. Toward others in the body : Love within the body and do not show selfishness (12:9-16).

Now Paul expands on this theme. The Jew must love the others in the body, as must the Gentile. This is a universal unity. A basic teaching of God in the believer was to love one another.

3. Toward the apostate Israel: Having turned his audience against an admiration for the Jewish nation, Paul now tells him not to take vengeance against the Jew but to show him love (12:17-21).

Paul then in 12:17ff. deals with their attitudes toward their persecuting fellow Jews of the nation Israel. The reason that this can clearly be identified as the nation Israel is the use of the quotation from Deuteronomy to show that God is the one who will take vengeance on the unbelieving nation, and further the context shows that those who were holding the Law to be justification for themselves were persecuting those who had left the Law for the New Covenant.

4. Toward Gentile rulers: Show subjection to the rulers whom God has put over you (13:1-7).

What should a Jew's attitude be toward the Gentiles who are over him. In the Old Covenant there would be a yearning to return to the subjection under Jewish authority, and resist the Gentile rulers, longing for the promised Kingdom. Paul tells them

¹²⁹ The word is "present" as one who sacrifices would present his offering. It is contrasted with 6:13,16,19 where the believer is presenting his self-righteousness (in the old sacrifice).

to be subject to the Gentile authorities for God has established them as part of His purpose. This would specifically answer the question of the Jew who now has had the Law removed under Paul of what of the Gentile laws should he obey?

5. With respect to the New Covenant Commandments (13:8-15:13).

The question of what should they obey since the Law is gone. Paul explains that the heart of God that the Law represented is now in the New Covenant, based on representing Christ's love with the new heart affected by the revelation of the Spirit. Paul now shows them the Commandments of the New Covenant (based on the whole of the Law). It is "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Thus the believer should treat his brother accordingly. Further, since the body has died to the Law, he should make no provision for the flesh and its lusts. He should thusly love his brother, doing nothing to cause his brother to stumble. Since there is no Old Covenant Law to restrict the believer, he is to operate by the Law of faith. Thus whatever is of faith, that is positive in following Christ's example of love, is good. What is not of that type of lifestyle and positive living, is sin.

Paul points out that the ultimate good is not to please yourself, but to please your neighbor and glorify God (15:1-6). This will bring the Jews and Gentiles together to glorify God, which is a fulfillment of prophecy (15:7-13).

B. Specifically: God's righteousness in Paul's ministry and the church in Rome (15:14-16:27).

Paul now becomes specific to himself and to those in Rome in applying the principles that he has laid out. Paul now shows the reason that he has not come to them yet, in that he has been concerned about the Gentiles and ministering the gospel to them as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul points out his own problem with persecution as he attempts to walk the narrow line between the Jews of Judea and the saints in Jerusalem (15:30-33). Then Paul lists those who are to be accepted into the body as they accept both Jews and Gentiles. Paul finally lists his blessing, in which he mentions the gospel which has become known to all the nations.

Justification of actions:

1. Concerning the Romans: They have complete revelation as required to live a holy life.

- a. Full of goodness.
 - b. Filled with all knowledge.
 - c. Able to admonish each other.
2. Concerning himself: His boldness, boasting, and absence is defensible.
- a. Wrote them *boldly* because of the grace given to him (apostle) to preach gospel elsewhere.
 - 1) Minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles
 - 2) A priest to the gospel of God.
 - a) Offering the Gentiles to God.
 - (1) Sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Found reason for boasting with regard to Christ.
 - 1) Speaks nothing except what Christ has accomplished through him.
 - a) The obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed.
 - b) In the power of signs and wonders
 - c) In the power of the Spirit
 - 2) The gospel has spread from Jerusalem to Illyricum.
 - 3) Has fully preached the gospel of Christ.
 - 4) Desired to preach the gospel where it had not been preached.
 - a) This was the reason he had not come to them.
 - 5) He had completed carrying the gospel throughout the region.
 - 6) He had, for many years, been longing to come to see them.
 - 7) He hoped to see them on his way to Spain.
 - a) He hopes they will help him on his way.
 - b) He hopes to enjoy their company for a while.

- 8) But he is now on his way to Jerusalem.
 - a) Macedonia and Achaia have made a contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.
 - (1) They are pleased to do so.
 - (2) They are indebted to them.
 - (a) They shared in their spiritual things.
 - (b) They should share in their material things.
- 9) Pray for Paul
 - a) To be delivered from the disobedient in Judea.
 - b) That his service for Jerusalem might be acceptable to the saints.

3. Concerning those united under Paul's gospel¹³⁰ (16:1-27)

- a. Paul lists those who are to be accepted as part of the body, identified not by genealogy but by relationship to Paul and the Lord.(16:1-20).

Priscilla and Aquilla were Jews (Acts 18). Paul says the churches of the Gentiles give thanks for them.

- b. Paul urges them to stay away from the false teachers who oppose his teaching (16:17-20).
- c. Paul lists those who give greeting (16:21-24).
- d. Paul gives the benediction, the blessing according to the gospel that has become known to all the nations (16:25-27).

¹³⁰ Note here that the references are to those who are related to Paul and his gospel. Thus the church is to receive them, now having been convinced that Paul's message is true. They are to receive them as they would him. In addition the phrase "in the Lord" or other similar phrase is the identifying marker, not by genealogy or by any other means of elevation, but simply 'in the Lord.'