

26-0920sc - Detailed Summary

26-0920sc - *The Book of Romans*, Steve Cain

See the transcript: [Transcript HTML](#) - [Transcript PDF](#)

26-0920 - The Book of Romans, Ch 13:1-14

Summary of Transcript (0:05 - 44:22), Teacher: Steve Cain

(0:04-1:10) Opening Prayer and Class Thanks

Steve opened the class by leading a prayer to the Heavenly Father. He thanked God for the day and for the opportunity to gather together on the first day of the week. He expressed gratitude for the government under which they live, describing it as one that provides safety and allows them to meet unmolested, and he called that privilege something for which they are very grateful. He thanked God for divine love and for providing Scripture. He asked for wisdom so the class could know how to apply Paul's writings, and for understanding and insight to comprehend what the Holy Spirit is communicating through Paul. He asked God to bless them in every way and closed the prayer in Jesus' name.

(1:23-3:56) Law Versus Grace and Abraham Promise

Steve said that in his eighty-five years he has found that the material Paul presents in Romans 13, 14, and 15 is the kind of teaching people try to rationalize or adjust. In his view, rationalizing means trying to get out of doing what is being asked because it goes against human nature or "skin." That difficulty is intensified by how people were raised, so the class must work to understand what God actually wants. While rereading Romans he was struck again by the statement that believers have been removed from the law and are now under grace. He asked what that change means and treated it as a blessing. He connected it to God's promise to Abram that through his seed the world would be blessed. Jesus is recognized as that promised seed of Abraham; through him the blessing comes, and through him people are taken out from under the law and given God's grace. Steve asked the class what actually transpired in that shift and what the blessing of now living under grace is. After a brief exchange in which he invited help with his thinking and confirmed that he was understandable, discussion of the meaning of that blessing continued.

(4:03-7:16) Righteousness Doctrine and Elementary Faith

The explanation turned to Romans 1, where Paul says he is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God to take away sin and because in it the righteousness of God is revealed. The first eight chapters of Romans develop the doctrine of righteousness. That theme was linked to Hebrews 5, where the author rebukes Christians who know only the elementary principles and therefore remain infants, unacquainted with the doctrine of righteousness even though they may know words such as grace and faith. Paul culminates the argument of Romans 1–8 with the declaration

that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Chapter 4 brings in Abraham. Two statements associated with David were treated as making a decisive difference. The first is that the person is blessed whose sin God takes away; that describes becoming a Christian, and it is where most believers stay. They then live in the cycle described by John: if they walk in the light their sins are forgiven, and they ask for forgiveness when they fail. That cycle produces anxiety about dying after a sin such as losing one's temper without having had time to ask forgiveness. Such questions belong to the elementary teachings—hope, belief, the resurrection, and eternal judgment. The second part of David's statement, as Paul uses it, is that God does not go on charging sin against the person. Believers remain sinners, yet something has changed.

(7:16-10:51) Credited Righteousness and Walking in Light

After Romans 3, God has given believers his own righteousness. Righteousness means being right with the law; God makes the believer right with the law. Abraham was credited with righteousness because the debt had not yet been paid. That is why chapter 3 says God was justified in the death of Jesus: previously he had passed over sins committed beforehand. The difference for Christians is that God now gives them his righteousness. He does so for those who have died with Christ in the likeness of his death and have been raised, as Romans 6 describes. When a person is free from sin, God gives righteousness; a person is right with the law when there is no sin. Walking in the light means earnestly trying to discern what God wants. The opposite is claiming to love God while walking in darkness, which many Christians still do. After baptism the believer continues on the path, is transformed from the world, and is conformed more and more to the likeness of Christ, which is what Romans teaches. That process is walking in the light, and those who live that way are the blessed people God has chosen.

(10:51-13:58) Judging Under Law Contrasted With Grace

Steve agreed with the preceding remarks and said they were on the right track. He then asked what primary concept Paul is developing as he comes into chapters 13 and 14. The answer given was judging. The law judges; grace does not judge. Grace gives room to grow and to know better, after which a person will do better. Ephesians 4 was cited: Christ gives various gifts so that the church may grow, be united, and increase in the faith. Believers are asked not to judge. In order not to judge they must set the law aside, because the law is what supplies the power to judge. Everyday activities that require judging—dog shows, car shows, and fairs where livestock is exhibited—operate by a standard or law. Christians have been taken out of that kind of law, the law designed to judge. Paul says the law brings wrath. The average person who comes to the assembly is not coming in order to be judged or condemned. There is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, because they are no longer under the law and are no longer being judged. Jesus himself refused to condemn. When the woman caught in adultery was brought to him and he was asked to cast the first stone, they were asking him to judge; he declined. He did not come to condemn the world, as John 3:16–17 states: God loved the world and sent the Son not to condemn or judge it. He was giving people a period in which to grow. That is liberty.

(13:58-16:40) James Chapter One on Doers of Freedom

Steve turned to James for instruction on how Christians should deal with one another. He read James 1:19–27 from the New International Version. Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, because human anger does not produce the righteousness of God. Believers are

to put away remaining filthiness and wickedness and in humility receive the implanted word that is able to save their souls. They must prove themselves doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. That, Steve said, is what Scott had been talking about: the necessity of growing and of actually doing what God expects. A hearer who is not a doer is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and immediately forgets what he looks like. The one who looks intently into the perfect law, the law of freedom—which Steve identified with life under grace rather than under the old law—and continues in it, becoming an active doer rather than a forgetful hearer, will be blessed in what he does. Anyone who thinks himself religious yet does not bridle his tongue deceives his own heart and has a worthless religion. Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is to visit orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world. The point of the reading is that Christians are not to condemn themselves, and no one else can condemn them either.

(16:40-19:21) No Condemnation and the Unforgiving Servant

Paul asks who will condemn the believer. It will not be God, who created the person, and it will not be Jesus, who died on the cross to save the person. Those two are the Supreme Court to whom issues are taken. A person therefore must not condemn himself or allow himself to be condemned. Steve recalled the parable of the servant who owed his master a huge debt and was forgiven, then went out and demanded payment from a fellow servant. That is a picture of Christians judging others: exacting from others after having been forgiven an enormous debt. Believers should forgive others as they themselves have been forgiven. God is no longer judging his people in order to condemn them. He does judge them with respect to obedience. He told David that his descendants would sit on the throne, yet if they sinned they would be punished; the promise would not be forgotten, but discipline would still come. That arrangement leaves room for God to punish while remaining Father. The relationship is parent to child. God deals mercifully, under the umbrella of grace, and that is why he gives room to grow.

(19:21-21:16) Fatherly Discipline and the New System

As long as believers walk in the light as God is in the light, the blood of Jesus continues to cleanse them. The practical test is whether they are still striving and presenting themselves as living sacrifices, the appeal Paul makes in chapter 12. That same concern appears in the present discussion. God is bringing people out of the law and placing them in a new system. They are no longer subject to the old system. The system into which every person is born is the default, a term Steve confirmed with Gene as computer language. A person is under the law by default until a decision is made to become a disciple of Jesus, to be baptized for the remission of sins, and to become a member of his church. Sins are then forgiven because Jesus has paid the cost. Christians are therefore no longer in that former system; they live in a brand-new system.

(21:16-23:44) Grace Loves and Fulfills the Law

Steve returned to the question he had asked earlier: what is the difference between grace and law? Law condemns. Grace loves and gives room for love. That is why Paul points out in Romans that love fulfills the law. If believers can bring themselves to love one another and really understand what that love means, they fulfill the law because they will not be committing the sins the law names. Steve said that is the whole point from Adam all the way to the present: how people who are not righteous become righteous. Until Christ, everyone tried to do it themselves. Through Christ

they discover they cannot; they can receive righteousness only from God. The point of being made right with the law is that God can now use people who are free from sin and cleansed. The ultimate purpose is love—loving one’s neighbor as oneself, not sinning against the neighbor, and being conformed more and more to God and to Jesus, whose epitome is truly loving one another.

(23:44-26:51) God Tests How We Approach Trials

As the class moved into chapter 13, Steve restated a point from the previous week: the Holy Spirit searched the mind of God and gave that information to Paul, who wrote under inspiration. This is how God wants believers to interact with the world, regardless of circumstances. God challenges and tests them to see whether they will actually do it. Steve compared that to Judges chapter 3, where God, after bringing Israel into the promised land and finding them unwilling to do his will, began to test them. God tests Christians as well, to see whether they will approach trials and tribulations the way he has told them to approach them. The Ten Commandments are not suggestions. He wants people to try their level best to do things his way, and he assures them that if they do, it will come out right. That requires faith that they are no longer being judged under the law and that they are being given room to grow. They must believe there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. In Romans 8 Jesus condemns sin in the flesh and gives strength to do things God’s way. Believers can say no to sin; sin no longer has the same power to entice them, and the Holy Spirit helps them get past that enticement. Feeling guilty after sin is appropriate, but the desire is to conform more to God.

(26:51-30:51) New Covenant Remembers Sins No More

Once people understand that righteousness does not come from anything they do, God has given them his righteousness and asked them to grow in a kind of penalty-free environment. They are allowed to make mistakes, and those mistakes are not counted against them. At that point they no longer have to worry whether they are righteous; they are righteous because God gave them his righteousness. The aim is to please him and conform to his ways, asking for help, but not as people who lack righteousness. Steve then turned to the Hebrew writer’s treatment of Jeremiah 31:31, the new covenant, especially in Hebrews 8 and also in chapter 10. He read from Hebrews 8, including the promise “I will be their God, and they shall be my people,” that all will know the Lord from the least to the greatest, and “I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings, and their sins I will no longer remember.” When God spoke of a new covenant he made the first obsolete; what is becoming obsolete and growing old is about to disappear. That promise—that God will be merciful and will remember sins no more—is the new covenant under which Christians live. God promises to forget sins, especially when they are confessed. Steve connected that to 1 John: as long as believers walk in the light as God is in the light, the blood continues to cleanse them; if they make mistakes they ask forgiveness and he forgives.

(30:51-35:46) Subject to Authorities God Has Ordained

Steve admitted he chases rabbits, a phrase his teachers used, and then returned to Romans 13. God is sharing how he wants people to deal with fellow human beings. The world has many kinds of governments, and Christians must survive under those conditions. God promises they will survive and explains the purpose those governments serve: every one of them is ordained by God and exists because he wills it. Steve said he himself cannot justify some of them, but justification belongs to God. He then read Romans 13:1–7: every person is to be subject to governing authorities,

for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist are established by God. Whoever resists authority opposes the ordinance of God and receives condemnation. Rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior but for evil. Do what is good and receive praise; the ruler is God's servant for good. Do evil and be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain; it is God's servant, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Subjection is necessary not only because of wrath but also for conscience. Taxes are paid because rulers are servants of God devoted to this work. Pay to all what is due: taxes, custom, respect, and honor. Steve recalled men's classes in Nashville, Ohio, and Jerry City where someone would say a text means what it means. He stood on that: it says what it says and means what it means. God does not want argument or rationalizing. Rationalizing, in Steve's view, is a sin—an attempt to justify a position against what God wants. People can argue, but God will not change it.

(35:46-40:42) Love Neighbor and Sanctified Purpose

Verse 8 says to owe nothing to anyone except to love one another. The one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Paul quotes part of the Ten Commandments—do not commit adultery, murder, steal, or covet—and says any other commandment is summed up in “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. God's expectation is that believers become Christ-like. Steve referred to a Wednesday night discussion on how to engage people who are hard to reason with and on God's end game. Redemption and cleansing are large, but they are not the final result God wants. If the only goal were to save people, why not take them immediately after they are saved? He alluded to Isaiah's unclean lips touched by a coal from the altar so that he was clean. God saves and cleanses for the works he prepared beforehand. Being saved is the beginning. At baptism people are justified because Jesus dies on their behalf and pays the debt. The next reality is sanctification: being set apart for a particular purpose. Steve used the collection plate as an illustration. The plate has been sanctified; it is not used for eating or for any other purpose than collecting money. Believers likewise are set aside as children of God. They are not to let conversation, thoughts, or anything else become an instrument of Satan—no cursing, no dirty thoughts, clean thoughts, and love of neighbor. That is what they have been sanctified for.

(40:42-44:22) Put On Christ as Day Approaches

With a few minutes left, Steve finished the chapter, reading verses 11–14. Do this knowing the time: it is already the hour to awaken from sleep, for salvation is nearer than when they first believed. The night is almost gone and the day is near. Therefore rid yourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, sexual promiscuity and debauchery, strife and jealousy. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. He explained “properly as in the day” by noting that dastardly deeds are generally done at night, while the day provides light and calls for openness. He connected that to the opening of John's Gospel: the Word was the light, came into the world, and people did not recognize him, yet light reveals darkness. One reason Jesus was put on the cross was that he was revealing the sins of the Israelites, especially the leaders, and they repelled him. Steve remarked that something similar can be seen in government today. He then recounted a discussion with fellow preachers in Medina about the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man pleaded that Lazarus be sent back to warn his brothers. Abraham's response was that they have Moses and the prophets; if they will not hear them, they will not listen even if someone comes back from the grave. Steve said Abraham was right, then noted that his time was up.

Verses Steve Covered in this class

Steve's class was titled **Romans 13**. He said they had started the chapter the week before and this session picked up at verse 1 and ran through the end of the chapter.

Romans 13 (read and taught through)

- **13:1–7** — subjection to governing authorities, authorities established by God, resistance, the sword, wrath, conscience, taxes, custom, respect, and honor
- **13:8–10** — owe nothing except love; the commandments against adultery, murder, theft, and coveting; love your neighbor as yourself; love does no wrong; love fulfills the law
- **13:11–14** — wake from sleep, salvation nearer than when you first believed, night almost gone and day near, put off deeds of darkness, put on the armor of light, behave as in the day, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, make no provision for the flesh

Other passages he read or worked through at length

- **James 1:19–27** (NIV, read as a block) — quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; doers of the word; the perfect law of freedom; pure religion
- **Hebrews 8** (with the Jeremiah 31:31 quotation; he also pointed to Hebrews 10) — new covenant, “I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings, and their sins I will no longer remember,” first covenant made obsolete
- **Romans 8:1** — no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (repeated several times)
- **John 3:16–17** — God sent the Son not to condemn the world
- **Romans 1** — not ashamed of the gospel; righteousness of God revealed
- **Romans 6** — died with Christ, free from sin
- **Romans 12** — present yourselves as living sacrifices

Passages he cited or retold without reading a full block

- Hebrews 5 (elementary principles vs. the doctrine of righteousness)
- Hebrews 6 themes (resurrection and eternal judgment as elementary)
- Romans 3–4 (Abraham credited righteousness; God justified in passing over former sins)
- Psalm 32 / David's blessing as used in Romans 4
- 1 John (walk in the light; blood continues to cleanse; asking forgiveness)
- Ephesians 4 (gifts for growth and unity)
- Romans 4:15 (the law brings wrath)
- John 8 (woman caught in adultery)
- Matthew 18 (unforgiving servant)
- Judges 3 (God testing Israel in the land)
- Romans 8 (Jesus condemned sin in the flesh)

- Isaiah 6 (unclean lips touched and cleansed; he first said Jeremiah, then corrected)
- John 1 (the Light coming into the world and revealing darkness)
- Luke 16 (rich man and Lazarus; Moses and the prophets; they will not listen even if one rises from the dead)

The sermon's spine was **all of Romans 13**. The other texts were used to explain grace vs. law, no condemnation, the new covenant, sanctification, and why love fulfills the law.