

26-1004sc Transcript

26-1004sc - *The Book of Romans, Steve Cain*

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26-1004 - The Book of Romans 14:1-23

Transcript of class (0:04 - 43:35), Teacher: Steve Cain

(0:04) Well, we're in Romans and 14th chapter. If we could start out with a prayer, (0:10) then we can go from there. Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you at this time (0:15) thanking you so much for the opportunity we have to get together here on the first day of the week (0:20) to worship and to commemorate Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, (0:27) and partake of the communion that he instituted for us on the first day of the week.

(0:37) We are also gathered today to study your word that you provided us through the Holy Spirit, (0:45) through word use, authors, and we're studying Paul's work now in Romans. We ask your (0:59) help in us understanding the things that he wrote. Give us the wisdom and insight, (1:06) and especially the comfort of knowing that we understand what is being taught, (1:13) and that we can use for application in our lives.

We ask your blessings upon us as students that (1:20) we'll be able to comprehend the words that Paul penned for us, and the interpreters, (1:29) those who interpreted the scriptures for us into English. We ask you have been (1:38) overseeing their particular work. This is a prayer off in Jesus' name.

Amen. (1:44) We've had our prayer, and we're getting into Romans, the 14th chapter, and as my practice, (1:53) I've read through Romans once more this week to prepare myself for the 14th chapter. (2:00) As I got into that, I got the thinking.

So as I point out, and as I try to remember, (2:10) that Paul's writing to an existing congregation. He did not establish it. We do not know who (2:17) established the church in Rome.

We don't know if there was any one particular apostle that (2:26) got there. We're pretty certain that because Rome is a place where many, many people travel to, (2:38) and it was well visited by other people, it was there. Some of the people that comprise the church (2:48) in Rome had been on the day of Pentecost in that crowd, and they took their faith to Rome (2:58) and established a church there.

And so many of the people in that congregation are going to be (3:11) converted Jews who were under the Jewish mosaic of law, and then (3:19) a good portion of them became Gentiles. They converted Gentiles. And so we have that (3:27) congregation is there.

And so when I look at this saying, now accept one who is weak in faith, (3:35) but not to have quarrels over opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, (3:44) but the one who is

weak eats only vegetables. The one who eats is not to regard with contempt (3:51) the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who does eat.

(3:58) For God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he (4:08) stands or falls, and he will stand for the Lord is able to make him stand. So as I'm reflecting on (4:16) that, you know, I'm sure that it was very difficult for, and it's difficult for a Jew today, (4:30) to think in terms of his dietary.

How does my diet going to change? He's got restrictions. (4:39) And so do you hold and maintain those restrictions even though you're no longer (4:46) practicing Judaism and you're now Christian? And so what we have then is an individual who (4:56) has been steeped in law, and thou shalt and thou shalt not. And you know how many people (5:05) love that type of lifestyle? They just love it.

And that's one of the reasons why I believe that (5:11) some of the denominations thrive because they do have very stringent rules and regulations. (5:19) And I don't know much about Islam and Muslim faith, but I do know that they have a dietary (5:29) rules and regulations themselves. I know that because when they find themselves in prison, (5:37) they're being fed prison food that doesn't give any concern about whether you're a Jew or Muslim (5:45) or not.

And so they're very concerned about what they're going to eat. And so they hold to it. (5:54) When I was in Amherst preaching there, one of the families had a farm where they raised (6:02) their family, the Ziegler's, I don't know if you're familiar with that name or not, (6:06) but they lived in Wellington and they came to Amherst for worship.

And they were big farmers, (6:13) and they raised pigs, and they raised sheep, and they had some cows, not many cows, but a lot of (6:21) sheep, a lot of pigs. Pigs was the primary thing. But they had Muslims come to them to buy sheep, (6:31) and they would literally slaughter that sheep right there after having purchased it from them, (6:37) right on the spot.

They would slaughter that sheep and cook it and eat it. And so that was (6:44) part of their dietary restrictions and some of the things that they had to go through. (6:51) So that's how I know that Muslims and Islamic have a very rigid diet too.

And so they're (6:59) requiring and requesting public people to honor their diet just as much as they do a Jewish diet. (7:10) So I'm thinking to myself, you know, when they became Christians, all foods became (7:21) edible. They no longer had to observe a strict diet.

So in this respect, I think that we're (7:31) looking at individuals who are still holding to their traditions that they have. And so as they (7:40) reflect upon those things, I'm thinking that they still are holding to some of the old, (7:52) some of the mosaic law. And so this is what I think is happening, that Paul is trying to help (8:01) them understand that a person who's converted to Christianity can eat anything as long as he (8:13) prays to God and asks God to bless it, you know, dedicated to God.

And that's what he's talking (8:19) about here in this particular scripture. So he's trying to help them make that transition from (8:27) Judaism to Christianity and the freedom that they have. They're no longer under law.

They're given (8:35) the freedom. And this is another thing that I think that is so important for us to realize, (8:41) that we don't have a thou shalt and thou shalt not. And that's another reason why a

lot of people (8:48) go to the denominations, because they still hold to a lot of thou shalt and thou shalt not.

(8:56) And the average person doesn't like to have the freedom to determine right from wrong. (9:03) You and I have the freedom to determine right from wrong. And we don't have to deal with that.

(9:11) What is the restriction that we have? He's pointing it out here, isn't he? What is the (9:16) restriction that we have? Love. Love is what is going to be the determining factor as to how we (9:27) interact with our fellow mankind. Love.

And that's the reason why he says down here in this (9:34) where it says, thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not have adultery, thou shalt not, (9:39) and any other commandment. He's referring to those of the Ten Commandments, isn't he? (9:45) And he says, what is the restriction? The restriction is we need to determine what (9:55) is love. Notice what he says down here at the end in this chapter.

He says, (10:03) and this is one of the things in verse 23, (10:09) but the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith. (10:16) Whatever is not from faith is sin. There's another phrase, he that knoweth to do good (10:26) and doeth it not is sin.

So what is he referring to? He's referring to the fact that we as Christians (10:38) don't have a thou shalt not. We need to be operating from concern about our fellow mankind. (10:45) We need to be operating from the concern about their well-being, because what is the word love? (10:52) I pointed out last week.

It's what describes God's affection. God is described as being agape. (11:01) Love.

We learn love. So what does John tell in 1 John? We learn to love because he first loved us. (11:17) So the word that describes God's love is agape, and this is the word that is translated for us, (11:28) that we need to have that concern for our fellow mankind.

And so that's the reason why he's talking (11:35) about give them freedom. Let them do what they want to do. What is the most important thing? (11:43) What is the most important thing to you? Are you going to go to heaven or not? And what your (11:53) relationship is with God? That's what you're concerned about, isn't it? And that's you.

(12:01) So are you going to stand still for someone to come and challenge your faith? Are you going to (12:09) stand still if someone comes along and tells you you're walking out of step? And that's what (12:16) Paul is saying. Let's give each other freedom, latitude, something to move in. Let's let them (12:26) have their thoughts.

Let's let them have their opinions. Don't fight over it. What accounts (12:33) is whether or not we believe there is a God that is extending to us through the gospel the right (12:40) to become reconciled to him? And how are we going to be reconciled to him? Through accepting Jesus as (12:48) our Lord and Savior, being baptized for the remission of our sin, to rise to walk in the (12:53) nearness of life.

As long as we've done that, what is our relationship with God? Our relationship (13:02) with God is, according to Paul, we automatically become God's children. And if we automatically (13:11) become

God's children, we are entitled to his heritage, inheritance. And what is his heritage? (13:25) Heaven! So you and I, as if we've been baptized for remission of sins, put Jesus on in baptism (13:33) and have the forgiveness of our sins to rise to walk in the nearness of life.

And what is that (13:37) nearness of life? Concern for our fellow mankind. And of course, if we have concern and love for (13:46) our fellow mankind, we will not cheat them. We will not lie to them.

We will, you know, (13:51) do all those things that are stipulated in the Ten Commandments, won't we? We don't need the (13:58) Ten Commandments to tell us how to interact with our fellow mankind. We don't need it. (14:08) So, as we give them latitude to believe what they want to believe—Easter, Christmas, so on.

So, (14:17) one of the reasons why I think that we are concerned about—have you ever talked to an (14:23) individual around Christmastime or Easter time, and they're Methodists or they're Baptists, (14:29) and they say, well, we're going to have the cantata tonight. We're going to have this (14:35) tonight. Oh, we don't observe that.

You don't? What kind of a Christian are you? (14:43) That's what they're saying, isn't it? What kind of a Christian are you? (14:49) So, why are they observing Easter and Sunday morning services, (14:59) the sunrise services? Why are they observing those things? (15:11) Yeah, yeah, because they are weak. But the main thing is, (15:16) don't you want to be known as a pious person? Sure. I'm pious.

I'm more Christian than you are. (15:30) And what is that? That falls under piety, doesn't it? (15:35) So, actually, I thought it was interesting that Paul identified—we would think that one that (15:47) adheres more closely to something like Jewish law would be the stronger Christian. But he's (15:56) not saying that.

No, he's not. He's saying the one that is freer is stronger, and the one (16:07) who has restrictions is weaker. Right.

And as I pointed out last week, (16:14) that's knowledge, isn't it? And what happens to knowledge, a person who has knowledge? It puffs (16:22) up. That's bad. We don't want to be puffed up.

We have knowledge. And so, what does Paul tell us (16:37) in Galatians, I believe it's the fifth chapter, the very first few verses? Take a look at that. (16:45) Galatians, the first chapter, or the fifth chapter—oh, let's go to the sixth chapter, (17:03) verse one.

I was hedging a little bit, because I know what the sixth chapter is all about, (17:14) because I didn't know whether it was found here or not. But what is he saying? Reading from the New (17:20) American Standard. Brothers and sisters, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are (17:30) spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness.

I don't know how many (17:41) times I heard somebody say, I pinned his ears to the wall. I've heard that so many times, (17:49) because I know my scriptures, and I told him. But we're supposed to do it in gentleness, aren't we? (18:00) So, each one looking to yourself so that you are not tempted as well.

(18:08) Bear one another's burdens and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks that

(18:16) he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, (18:24) and then he will have reason for boasting, but to himself alone and not to another, (18:33) for each one will bear his own love.

So, I'm boasting among myself. (18:47) And we're not supposed to compare ourselves with other people. (18:51) We are to compare ourselves with Christ, and we're to compare ourselves with the scriptures, (18:57) whether or not we're doing what God wants us to do.

And that's out of love, isn't it? (19:04) Any other comments? Let's go back to Romans then, (19:11) the 14th chapter. I'll just read through the first few verses, because we want to pick up with verse 18, I believe it is. 13.

(19:28) So, picking up with verse 5. One person values one day over another. (19:35) Another values every day the same. Each person must be fully convinced in his (19:41) own mind.

The one who observes the day observes it for the Lord, and the one who eats does so with (19:50) regard to the Lord. For he gives thanks to God, and the one who does not eat, it is for the Lord (19:59) that he does not eat, and he gives thanks to God. So, what's the thing? I give you all that latitude, (20:11) because I know you're godly people, and you thank God, and you're a God-fearing person.

(20:17) What pleases God? To believe that He is, and that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (20:25) And so, you want to be right in the sight of God, because you don't want to miss heaven. (20:34) And so, what is the thing? So, what is it? I believe it's John says, the thing is just escape (20:48) me now.

Make sure of your own salvation. Make sure of your own salvation. And so, (21:00) no matter who's in here, they're here for one reason, and that's to worship God, (21:06) and to observe Jesus' thing.

That's one of the points he's making is, (21:14) we need to be fully, whatever actions we take, we need to be fully convinced that it's the right (21:22) thing to do. And how are we going to do that? Well, we have to have some kind of justification (21:29) for what we're doing, from what we've seen in God's Word. You know, (21:37) all statements there again, that there is no law, there's no transgression.

So, (21:41) the only way we can be sinning is if there's something that is against us. And under the (21:48) law of Christ, we have a lot more freedom. And so, from that perspective, you have to be, (21:56) you need to be fully convinced. (21:58)

(21:59) And I'm not supposed to judge you based on my, (22:05) and you're not supposed to judge me based on yours. Because you're going to stand by your (22:13) master, and my master is going to stand by me. He's going to vindicate us.

So, that's what we (22:22) want. We want God to vindicate us. Who vindicated Jesus? Jesus was vindicated.

(22:33) The Holy Spirit vindicated Him. The Scriptures point out that the Holy Spirit said to God, (22:41) He is righteous. He is innocent.

The Holy Spirit vindicated Jesus. (22:51) And what are we waiting for? We're waiting for Jesus to

come to vindicate us. (22:58) On the day of resurrection, on the judgment day, He's going to come, and He's going to (23:04) vindicate us, and He's going to say to God, He is one of us.

He is my disciple. He is my God. (23:12) I've been praying for Him.

I've been interceding for Him. He is one of us. And that's what the (23:20) judgment today is going to be all about, is for us to stand there, and we're going to be judged, (23:26) and God, and Jesus is going to say, He's vindicated.

He's vindicated. She's vindicated. (23:34) Isn't that what Thessalonians tells us, 2 Thessalonians? When Jesus comes, (23:39) He's going to vindicate us.

Take a look at that. If you want to take a look at that, (23:48) take a look at 2 Thessalonians, where it talks about that. Let's pick up with, (24:07) let's read verse 6 ahead of it.

For after all, it is only right for God to repay with affliction (24:18) those who afflicted you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted, along with us. When the (24:26) Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels and flaming fire, dealing out (24:32) retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord (24:39) Jesus, these people will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the (24:46) Lord, from the glory of the power. When He comes to be glorified among His saints on that day, (24:53) and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

To this (25:02) end, we pray for you always, that our God will consider you worthy of your call, and fulfill (25:11) every desire for goodness, that the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus (25:19) will be glorified in you, and you in Him, in accordance with the grace of our God and Lord (25:26) Jesus Christ. So He's going to be vindicating us. He was right, and you were wrong.

That's what you (25:36) think. So we haven't been in Romans yet, have we? So let's get back to Romans. Any questions about that? (25:46) So when Jesus comes, and He's going to vindicate us, and I believe that's what Hebrews is pointing (25:53) out to the fact in the 11th chapter, that one of the reasons why those who have gone on before us, (26:00) the Christians and the saints who have gone on before us, have not been entered into heaven yet, (26:06) is because they're waiting for the judgment day to be vindicated, and He wants them to be (26:12) vindicated right along with us.

And so they're going to experience the same (26:23) things that we experienced, and He wants them to experience what we're going to be experiencing. (26:29) And I believe that's what the Hebrew letter is pointing, and He points that out in the very last (26:33) verse of Hebrews, the 11th chapter, points that out. So they're looking, they're longing.

So what (26:43) does John see in Revelation? He's permitted to see what's in heaven, and he sees the saints under (26:51) the altar who are pleased vindicators. When are we going to be vindicated? And so they're waiting (26:58) for that day, and He's holding them for that day so that they can all be vindicated on the same day (27:05) that you and I are at the same time. He doesn't want them to miss out on any of the blessings (27:12) that we're going to receive, and we're going to receive some blessings that they have been (27:18) longing for, been waiting for.

So let's go on. So verse 7, For not one of us lives for himself, (27:35) and not one of dies for himself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, (27:43) we die for the Lord.

Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end, (27:50) Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living. (28:02) So how is it going to be Lord of the dead? They can't say we didn't know.

(28:12) They can't say. It was impossible for us to know. But if it is impossible for them to know, (28:19) then God's going to allow them to come in if it's impossible.

That's one of the reasons why (28:28) we don't believe that the imbecile or the mongoloid, or not the mongoloid, but the (28:38) people who are born without understanding and knowledge, it's impossible for them to (28:44) know what they have to do in order to be Christians and the innocent children that died (28:56) at birth and so on. Okay. So verse 10, But as for you, why do you judge your brother or sister, (29:11) or you as well? Why do you regard your brother or sister with contempt? (29:17) For we will all appear before the judgment seat of God, for it is written, (29:24) As I live, says the Lord, to me every knee will bow, and every tongue will give praise to God, (29:31) so that each one of us will give in an account of himself to God.

(29:38) And that's the reason why I use the word pious, because individuals want to be better than (29:43) another. So we judge one another for one purpose, and that is to condemn them, to find some weak, (29:50) some fault in them to make us look better. So, and that's helping me be pious, because I observe (29:59) Easter, you don't.

Or I observe Christmas, and you don't, and so on. So there's an opportunity to (30:09) be proud and so on, pious. We're not to judge one another.

So he goes on and he talks about judging. (30:20) So what is the purpose of judging? To find fault. The Bible judges us.

(30:27) The Ten Commandments judged us, let's put it that way. And what was it looking for? It was either to (30:35) find fault or to pronounce us as righteous, to condemn us or to vindicate us, one or the other. (30:47) And so judging, when you put anything up for judging, what are you asking that judge to do? (30:55) To compare it with other items.

My mother was an artist, so she would put her pictures (31:03) and her paintings in what would be the setting where they would judge them. And so the judge (31:14) would come and look at various, and he would condemn that picture because of the brush strokes. (31:21) He would condemn this picture because of the colors.

He would condemn this picture for subject (31:28) matter, so on. So what is he doing? He's comparing it to what he has perceived to be right. (31:38) So when you put an animal in for judging, what is that judging doing? He's looking for (31:44) particular qualities of that particular animal.

So he's condemning, and he's condemning and saying (31:50) you're not right. So we're not supposed to judge one another. We're not to condemn.

We're not to (31:58) do these things. Therefore, let's not judge one another anymore, but rather determine, (32:05) to determine this. Here's where love comes in.

Not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block (32:16) in a brother's or sister's way. I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is (32:26) unclean in itself, but to the one who thinks something is unclean, to that person it is unclean. (32:37) For if because of food your brother or

sister is hurt, you are no longer walking in accordance with (32:44) love.

See, that's the determining factor. We need to be operating under love. That is, (32:53) you're not walking in accordance with love.

Do not destroy with your choice of food that person (33:01) for whom Christ died. Therefore, do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil. (33:12) For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy (33:21) in the Holy Spirit.

For the one who serves Christ in this way is acceptable to God (33:30) and approved by other people. So if you read the Gospels, and you're studying the Gospels, (33:36) and you're wanting to see how Jesus worked while on the face of this earth, notice (33:45) how he's dealing with one another. He's dealing with them out of the love that he's asking us to (33:52) have, and he wants us to be able to deal with sin the way Jesus did.

So think in terms. What (34:06) was Jesus condemned about? What did they find with Jesus? Many things, but the primary one (34:18) was he ate and drank with sinners. Now, what do we do with sinners? (34:33) So how do we look upon them? That's the main thing, isn't it? How do we look about them? (34:40) And Jesus says, I did not come to save, what? The righteous, I came to save the sinner, the lost.

(34:54) Seek and save the lost. And so that's his whole purpose in life, and that's how we are to (35:03) deal with our brothers and sisters, or our fellow mankind. Let's put it that way.

(35:08) And with our brothers and sisters, we're supposed to give them leeway, latitude, and believe that (35:13) they are worshiping God, and they're concerned about their relationship with God just as much (35:17) you and I are. We're concerned about our relationship with God. (35:24) So he goes on and says, let's pick up with verse 18.

For the one who serves Christ in this way is (35:36) acceptable to God and approved by other people. So then, we pursue the things which make for peace (35:45) and the building up of one another. Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food.

(35:54) All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the person who eats and causes offense. (36:03) It is good not to eat meat, or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother or sister (36:11) stumbles. The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God.

Happy is the one who (36:20) does not condemn himself in what he approves, but the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, (36:32) because his eating is not from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin. So there's a lot. (36:43) The way I've been on YouTube would be these cases where somebody would say, (36:57) don't use these coffees because of the quality of it, or don't use these dishwashing lotions, (37:08) and don't eat this kind of food.

And I look at that and I say, I think they're worse than the (37:19) people that were advertising these products. Because if there are all these products out there, (37:29) we've got the freedom to choose what we want, the individual. (37:36) It doesn't matter to anybody to say you don't use certain things you know, if you buy it, (37:42) you want it, you buy it.

But that's the thing, and I thought, well if they don't want to eat that (37:57) stuff, don't eat it, don't buy this particular product, but let the other person have the (38:07) freedom to choose what to do

with it. Right. I hesitate to use this illustration, but (38:17) it's important to talk about it.

My time is up, so this is your time. (38:26) All my life I've been raised to abstain from alcohol in any size, shape, form. I've never (38:35) had a beer, never had anything as an alcoholic, and so when I'm looking and going up, I'm looking (38:44) to see if the person that I'm visiting is a beer drinker, or a whiskey drinker, or whatever, (38:50) and oftentimes I see evidence that they are.

What is that doing to me? I've been raised (38:57) with the thought that that's wrong. That's wrong. But is it wrong? Is it wrong? (39:07) According to the scriptures here, I keep seeing where it says, (39:12) do not judge them by what they drink.

So if I'm not to judge them by what they drink, (39:21) so am I supposed to say, don't drink? The scriptures also point out to me that you (39:27) don't want to drink it, especially the Psalms and the Proverbs tell you don't drink. (39:34) And Paul says, I will not be (39:39) chained down by what I do. In other words, if I'm a drinker, I'm not going to be an alcoholic.

I'm (39:46) not going to allow it to convince me. That's what he's saying. And so here's an illustration.

(39:56) Suppose you're an elder, and I'm using this very loosely, and you have this conviction that it's (40:07) wrong to drink. And you have a brother or sister in Christ who has really no problem of drinking (40:18) an alcoholic beverage, whether it's a martini or a shot or whatever, or a beer, (40:26) and he does it by himself. And that's what I think Paul is telling us.

If you really believe (40:31) that it's okay, do it in secret, do it at home, do it someplace else. Well, (40:41) this is the truth. This is an actual case. That brother is off somewhere in Timbuktu. He's a (40:53) traveler. And somebody is taking videos for Facebook, and they're going to post it on (41:01) Facebook. He's at a celebration or a festivity, like a wedding, where they toast. And he's got (41:09) his alcoholic beverage, and it is an alcoholic beverage in his hand, and he's shown drinking it. (41:18) That elder goes up to him when he sees him and says, you cannot (41:24) any longer announce, make announcements from the pulpit.

We won't use you as an announcer, (41:29) or we will not use you to offer prayer and worship service, because until you repent. (41:41) What are you supposed to happen? His wife says, you're not going there anymore. Just shut the door, (42:02) and he has yet to darken the door of any church, let alone the church of Christ.

(42:13) What is Paul saying? I'll leave that with you. You can put a judgment on that one. (42:23) But just reading what we've just got through reading, where's the Christian love? Where is (42:37) that love? Just close the door on that person, and he's not going to come back again.

(42:45) So what does the scripture say about drinking? (42:52) All my life I was raised, I have never had an alcoholic beverage in my life, period. (43:00) Because, well, there's several reasons why I haven't, but I know that the church teaches, (43:06) don't be a drinker, be a teetotaler, total abstinence. So that's basically what I've been (43:13) holding to.

Think about that. Like I said, I bring this for you for (43:26) fear and trembling. I don't know what to think, okay? (43:29) Yes, it does.

So, okay, my time is up. (43:35)