



THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD

CHRIST THE LORD PARISH (LAGOS PROVINCE 20)

THEME: Open Heavens

TOPIC: Unifying the Church through love and forgiveness

DATE: Tuesday, June 18, 2024

TEXT: Romans 13 and 14

Introduction: A transformed life in Christ results in the application of righteousness and love in all areas of behaviour – social, civil, and moral. God wants the church to be unified in love (Eph 4:1- 6). A unified body is a functional body. A peaceful body is a healthy body. God charged us to keep and preserve the unity of the body not through human efforts or organisation but by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we were called. Spiritual unity is maintained by being loyal to the truth and by walking after the spirit.

Submission to Authorities: Rom 13:1-7

There are different types of authorities – Filial, Social, Civil, Spiritual, etc. The Christian is commanded by God to obey authorities. God has instituted governments because we need restrains and authority to protect us from the chaos and lawlessness arising from the fall of man and sin. The civil government stands under the law of God. God ordained the state to be an agent of justice, to restrain evil by punishing the wrong doer, and to protect the good in our society.

- 1 Peter 2:13-14
- Titus 3:1
- Eccl 8:1

Our passage describes government in a normative form according to the standard of God. When it abandons its proper function, it is no longer according to the purpose of God. Example, when the authorities require something contrary to the word of God, a believer must obey God rather than man.

- Acts 5:29
- Dan 3:15-18
- Dan 6:6-10
- Jer 35:5-6

Love fulfills the Law (Torah). Rom 13:8-14

The Christian must not engage in deceitful borrowing. Love for one another is the only debt from which there is no release. The first evidence of Christian love is that we turn away from sin and anything that brings sorry and hurt to others.

- Gal 5:14
- Ex 20:1-17
- Matt 22:37-40
- Eph 5:11

Show grace to each other. Rom 14:1-6

We have a huge responsibility towards others. It is not enough that your conscience is clear. It is not enough that your faith is strong. We must consider the spiritual state and wellbeing of other believers in whatever we do. The passage highlights that “eating”, in itself, is not a moral matter but our attitude about what to eat could lead to unjustly judging or condemning others. We must not put a stumbling block on the way of other Believers.

- 1 Cort 8:9
- 1 Cort 10:25-26
- Rom 14:13
- Rom 14: 16-17, 21

Conclusion. One key purpose of the book of Romans was to correct certain problems in the church occurring because of wrong attitudes of Jews towards Gentile believers. Are some of those attitudes not present in the church today? At the garden of Eden there was no secular government but when man sinned, he was driven out of the presence of God. To maintain order, God instituted authorities and allowed men to oversee the affairs of others. Israel even demanded for a King and God granted it (1Sam 8:1- 10).

Our attitude towards Authorities and our attitude towards our fellow Believers reflect on our faith. You shall know them by their fruits (Matt 7:16, 1Cort 15:34)

The Believer is restrained, not only by the law of God, but also by the law of Christian love (Rom 14:21, 2Cort 5:14).