

# Session 9: Community.

## How can we live together in love?

ROMANS 13–14

**KEY VERSE:**

**‘For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit ...’**

ROMANS 14.17 (NIV)

## Part I: How to be a godly citizen in a secular society

### RESPECT THOSE IN AUTHORITY (ROMANS 13.1–5)

‘Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.’

ROMANS 13.1 (NIV)

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### CONTRIBUTE TO THE GOOD OF SOCIETY (ROMANS 13.6–10)

‘Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continual debt to love one another ...’

ROMANS 13.8 (NIV)

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### LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST (ROMANS 13.11–14)

‘The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.’

ROMANS 13.12 (NIV)

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## Discussion time

READ ROMANS 13.1–5

1. What do you make of the idea that secular authorities are 'God's servants'? In what ways do we find it challenging to 'submit' to those in authority in our context?
2. Under what circumstances might forms of civil disobedience be justified for Christians? Try to think of some specific examples.

READ ROMANS 13.6–14

3. What might it mean practically for us to:
  - Contribute to the good of society
  - Live in the light of Christ

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## Part II: How to be a positive member of Christ's Church

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### GOD'S GOAL FOR THE CHURCH IS UNITY NOT UNIFORMITY

'Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.'

ROMANS 15.7 (NIV)

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### WE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MATTERS

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#### THOSE WITH A 'STRONG' CONSCIENCE MUST BE CONSIDERATE

'It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.'

ROMANS 14.21 (NIV)

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#### THOSE WITH A 'WEAK' CONSCIENCE MUST ACT WITH CONVICTION

'... whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.'

ROMANS 14.23 (NIV)

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#### WE MUST PROTECT OUR UNITY IN CHRIST

'Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.'

ROMANS 14.19 (NIV)

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## Part II: Reflection time

READ ROMANS 14.17–19

Think of someone you know who is a channel of peace and unity without compromising the gospel. What can we learn from their example?

How does this passage challenge the way we treat one another? In what areas may this be necessary today?



### PRAYER

Pray for God to make you a channel of peace and unity by accommodating differences without compromising the gospel.

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### READING ROMANS:

Before the next session, read the following passages in Romans:

- READING 1:  
**Romans 15.1–7**
- READING 2:  
**Romans 15.8–21**
- READING 3:  
**Romans 15.22–33**
- READING 4:  
**Romans 16.1–16**
- READING 5:  
**Romans 16.17–27**



### READING SUGGESTIONS:

- Chapter 9 of  
*Romans: A Letter That Makes Sense of Life*  
by Andrew Ollerton