

The Main Thing

Romans 13:8-14

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Amplify

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

Every day of our lives is a series of choices, and the quality of our lives depends on the kinds of choices we make and the priorities we set up in our lives - so we have to make sure we've kept the main things, the main things. When we prioritize our lives in the way God designed us to, we move from optimizing on the margins, to entering the full and abundant life Jesus promises us! Join us this Sunday as we embrace the simplicity of the beautiful life God created us for.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. It's simple - L.O.V.E.

- **Romans 13:8-10**
- **Leader Notes**
 - The way we live out our faith in Jesus is to love God and people. Paul says love is the fulfillment of the law. Why? When we make choices based on what is loving toward God or others, we automatically won't walk in sin. We can't love God / people and do something that is harmful to others.
 - It's easy to over-complicate life with Jesus and make all sorts of theological or social positions the driving ethic of our lives. Those things are important, but ultimately love has to be the over-arching ethic of how we live.
- **Reflect on the last week of your life. Was love the over-arching ethic of how you lived? If so, share an example of how you lived that out. If not, what change do you need to make so love is the main way you live in the world?**

2. It's almost time.

- **Romans 13:11-12**
- **Leader Notes**
 - We believe in what's called the doctrine of imminency: Jesus' return is imminent. He told his disciples he would be back sooner than they could imagine, and the same is true for us today. Jesus could return at any time.
 - When Jesus returns, we don't want to be caught off guard. If we are doing everything within our power to live righteously, in love, in the world today, then we'll be ready whenever he comes back. Living as a follower of Jesus means living in love, as we just discussed. However, love isn't just the absence of harm. Love is proactively doing what's good for other people. We

need to make decisions about our daily lives based on whatever best exemplifies the love of Jesus.

- **Describe a time you not only avoided doing the wrong thing, but you proactively did good for another person. Is there a step you can take to proactively live that way every day?**

3. Put on Christ.

- **Romans 13:13-14**
- **Leader Notes**
 - As we walk in love and follow Jesus, the characteristics of our lives should naturally change. God cares about the motives of our hearts - but he also cares about our bodies and how we live physically in the world.
 - Just like we have to take off one set of clothes to put on another, we have to take off old patterns of living so we can put on the characteristics of our new lives in Christ. In these verses, Paul specifically brings up things like partying, drinking and sexual immorality - things that feel really good, but actually aren't good when we engage them outside of God's intended design. What Paul is saying is God has a greater plan for our bodies than just whatever feels good. Our bodies are not just for pleasure. This discussion will require some vulnerability as look at specific behaviors we either need to stop doing or start doing.
- **What characteristic of the flesh (something that doesn't line up with Jesus), do you need to take off, and what characteristic of Christ do you need to make a conscious effort to put on? How can you practically take off your "old clothes" and put on the "new clothing" of Christ?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?