



Title	"Love" and "Righteousness" in Uchimura Kanzo's A Study of Romans
Author(s)	La Fay, Michelle
Citation	Journal of the Graduate School of Letters, 5, 99-105
Issue Date	2010-03
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/42868
Type	bulletin (article)
File Information	JGSL5_007.pdf



[Instructions for use](#)

“Love” and “Righteousness” in Uchimura Kanzo’s *A Study of Romans*

Michelle LA FAY

Abstract: In order to uncover if Uchimura Kanzo’s *A Study of Romans* is primarily about righteousness or about love, I carried out an analysis of three key words: love, righteousness, and faith. The results were intriguing. Uchimura considered the most important messages of “Letter to the Romans” to be in chapters 1–8, and he uses the key words righteousness and faith at a high frequency in the sections of *A Study of Romans* in which he addresses those chapters. However, the key word love occurs in the highest frequency in the sections about chapters 9–16 of Romans, precisely those chapters that Uchimura termed an “appendage” to the first half of Romans. In addition, in *A Study of Romans*, Uchimura considers love to be included in and dependent on righteousness, which in turn is completely dependent on faith. Therefore Uchimura’s emphasis on righteousness and faith is internally consistent. His thoughts on love, however, are concerned with human relationships, are mainly moralistic and lack the transcendental quality of Christian love. Love, seen as a moral by Uchimura, is consistent with the findings of the previous research. Based on the above factors, the author concludes that *A Study of Romans* is mainly a book of faith and righteousness, not of love.

Key Words: righteousness, faith, love, morals, Letter to the Romans

(Received on November 1, 2009)

I Introduction and Previous Research

Uchimura Kanzo’s use of the word “love” and his thoughts on the meaning of “love” has held my interest over the past few years. In two previous papers, I investigated Uchimura’s idea of “love” respectively from a cultural and a linguistic point of view. As the third paper on this topic, I would like to take into account the content and context of his works, mainly *A Study of Romans*. The reviewer of my second paper suggested that in *A Study of Romans*, I might find Uchimura’s fundamental concept of love, which rises above any cultural or linguistic issues. This comment became the starting point for this paper.

First, I would like to give a brief summary of these papers, and then throughout this paper, I will refer to the previous two papers¹ as necessary. In “Uchimura Kanzo’s Use of Japanese

Thoughts and Ideas in his Faith,” I analyzed the qualities that Uchimura respected in whom he termed *Representative Men of Japan*.² In a list of admirable qualities, such as loyalty, obedience, honesty, he did not include “love,” but did include an interesting phrase “arts of love.” In Japanese it is 「仁術」“jinjutsu,” a quality he attributed to Ninomiya Kinjiro. In conclusion, for Uchimura “arts of love” denotes a moralistic quality which involves the idea of how humans should treat each other. In “Uchimura Kanzo’s Love-Hate Relationship with the Word ‘Love,’” I found that Uchimura’s use of the word “love” lacked a transcendental element, which is necessary for the Christian ideal of love. Therefore, Uchimura’s concept of love is mainly concerned with human relations, which is consistent with his inclusion of “arts of love” in a list of qualities that was primarily moralistic. This point will also prove to be pivotal in this paper.

II The Structure and Characteristics of *A Study of Romans*

A Study of Romans is said to be Uchimura’s masterpiece. It was originally a 60-part lecture series called “Lectures on Romans” which he began in January 16, 1921 and ended on October 22, 1922.³ At its peak, there were more than 500 participants. Since it was a series of lectures, Uchimura made a script for himself, but the installations of *A Study of Romans* that were published in Uchimura’s magazine *The Biblical Study* were recorded and written by hand by Azegami Kenzo. However, Uchimura found Azegami’s rendition of his lectures to be insufficient. Consequently, in 1922, Uchimura wrote and published “Romans Lecture Supplement.” In *Uchimura Kanzo Complete Works, A Study of Romans* is a massive work of 431 pages, and “Romans Lecture Supplement” is 93 pages long.

The structure of *A Study of Romans* is related to the discussion of content later in this paper, so I would like to explain about its special characteristics here. It goes without saying that *A Study of Romans* is written about Paul’s “Letter to the Romans” but Uchimura denies that it is a biblical commentary: “Leaving the detailed verse-by-verse explanation of Romans to the commentators, let us be satisfied with an explanation of the overall spirit, the main area, the marrow of the thoughts, unfortunately for us, that is all that time will allow.”⁴ Looking at the content, the fact that Uchimura’s *A Study of Romans* is not a commentary becomes clear. An ideal commentary would analyze all parts of a work equally, but Uchimura’s *A Study of Romans* does not treat all parts of “Letter to the Romans” equally. Uchimura puts most of his energy and interest into discussing Romans 1-8, approximately the first 315 pages of *A Study of Romans*, but Romans 9-16 only take up the remaining 115 pages. In “Romans Lecture Supplement,” the comments begin with lecture 29, roughly corresponding to chapter 6 of “Letter to the Romans.”

III Method and Results of Analysis of “Letter to the Romans” and *A Study of Romans*

For this analysis, I have chosen three key words that appear in “Letter to the Romans,” and compared the rate of appearance of these words to the rate of appearance in *A Study of Romans*. The three words are “righteousness,” “love,” and “faith.” In “Letter to the Romans” righteousness appears at a rate about three times that of love.⁵ Therefore, I hypothesized that the rate of

use would be similar in Uchimura’s *A Study of Romans*, but surprisingly the three key words appeared in roughly equal numbers.

“Righteousness” appeared 529 times and “love” was used 443 times.⁶ However, the most surprising result was that the word with the highest number of uses was not righteousness nor love, but faith instead. Faith was used 546 times. Uchimura himself stated, “The first thing that you notice when you look at Romans as a whole is that it is a work of faith.”⁷ Just by looking at the raw numbers, it is clear that for Uchimura, “Letters to the Romans” was exactly that, “a work of faith.”

However, as I pointed out in the introduction, as Uchimura did not intend to write a commentary, he emphasized certain parts of “Letter to the Romans” and treated other parts very briefly, and accordingly a variation can be seen in the use of the three key words. This variation sheds light on a very interesting phenomenon. In the first 315 pages of *A Study of Romans* which is about Romans 1–8, Uchimura uses “righteousness” 497 times, “faith” 446 times, but love only 144 times. Conversely, in the last 115 pages about Romans 9–16, Uchimura uses “righteousness” only 32 times, “faith” only 100 times, but “love” 299 times. In other words, the word “love” is used mostly in the sections about the last eight chapters of Romans, which Uchimura did not emphasize. Obviously this raises some doubts as to how important the concept of love is in *A Study of Romans*. Consequently, it is necessary to look beyond the numbers at the content of *A Study of Romans*.

IV The Most Important Verses of Romans According to Uchimura

To begin the content analysis of *A Study of Romans*, I would like to first introduce the parts of “Letter to the Romans” that Uchimura himself felt were the most important. In the first lecture of “Lectures on Romans” titled “The Subject of Romans” Uchimura explains that in the first half of “Letter to the Romans,” namely chapters 1–8, there are “two famous parts.” The first is chapter 1:16–17.

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”⁸ Uchimura felt that these two verses contained the essence of “Letter to the Romans.” As is obvious, the key words “righteousness” and “faith” appear in these two verses, as well as the phrase “the one who is righteous.”⁹

Uchimura called the second of the “two famous parts,” not only the center of “Letter to the Romans,” but also the center of the entire New Testament. Uchimura translates chapter 3:21–26 as follows:

All people who have sinned and cannot receive the glory of God, without any achievements, with God’s blessing, according to the atonement of Jesus Christ, are made righteous, namely God has overlooked the sins of the past, God made Christ rise and made him by his blood, the atonement of the sacrifice through faith, in order to make his righteousness appear.¹⁰

In these verses, the words “righteousness” and “faith” appear. However, in what Uchimura considers to be the two most important sections of “Letter to the Romans,” the fact that the word

“love” does not appear stands out. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate some other parts of *A Study of Romans*, in order to get a sense of how righteousness, faith and love are connected in Uchimura’s thoughts.

V The Connection between Righteousness, Faith, and Love

In lecture 8, titled “Presentation of the Problem-2,” Uchimura comments on Romans 1:16–17. In this section, Uchimura clearly states, “Righteousness is the foundation of the gospel.”¹¹ He then explains the connection of righteousness and love. “That love is based on righteousness and again in love there is righteousness is a requirement of human nature that can’t be left out. Love without righteousness is something we should not wish for.”¹²

Next, I would like to look at Romans 3:21–26. Lectures 17 through 20 of “Lectures on Romans” are respectively titled “The Righteousness of God” I, II, III, and IV. Again in lecture 18, Uchimura discusses righteousness and love. “So love is included in the righteousness of God, thus those who receive the righteousness of God also, at the same time, receive love from God and this allows them to love their brethren.”¹³ This statement is an important point because it defines how humans receive love and how the reception of that love makes them capable of loving other humans.

Contrast this with Uchimura’s lecture 49, titled “The Second Christian Moral-Love.” Uchimura brings up the problems of contemporary society and love between humans. First he talks about the problems between Christians and quotes Paul’s words in “Letter to the Romans” chapter 12:10, “love one another with mutual affection.” Uchimura’s ideal church is one in which the members are held together with only love, just like the original church, the “ecclesia.”¹⁴ However, Uchimura criticizes the contemporary church, where he says that this kind of love is rarely found¹⁵ and then gives the reasons for this situation. The decline in faith is one reason, but the other reason he gives is a lack of manners, respect, and trust among the believers.¹⁶

Since faith is necessary to receive God’s righteousness, and love is included in that righteousness, Uchimura’s first reason is consistent with his previous comments. However, that the lack of manners, respect, and trust, all of which are generally considered morals, affects the love between believers contradicts the first reason. If all love comes from God through faith and righteousness, then it can *only* be the lack of faith that is responsible for the lack of love between believers. Strangely though, Uchimura puts part of the blame on lack of manners, respect and trust, all elements that deal with human relationships on a horizontal plane. In other words, moralistic elements.

The moralistic tone of this statement should come as no surprise, since the title of this lecture is “The Second Christian Moral-Love.” The surprising part came in the previous lecture, number 48 titled “The First Christian Moral-Modesty.” Here Uchimura writes that Paul valued “modesty” most among all of the Christian morals. This, of course, is not such an unusual statement, but his statement after that is. “When you say Christian morals, people will immediately say ‘love.’”¹⁷ I was caught off guard by this statement, because I didn’t have the concept of love as a moral. The fact that Uchimura assumes that most people would call love a Christian moral was also surprising.

The above comments from lectures 48 and 49, both of which are discussions of the last eight chapters of *Romans*, in this case chapter 12, support two points in this paper. The first point is that love is received from God through faith and righteousness in a vertical manner. The second point is that Uchimura groups this transcendental love, with morals, such as modesty, respect, and trust, and since for him morals are human-made, earthly things, love is restricted to a horizontal plane between humans.¹⁸ Taken collectively, these statements reinforce the lack of a transcendental element in Uchimura’s concept of love as was discovered in my previous paper on this subject.¹⁹

VI Conclusion: Love as Seen in *A Study of Romans* Compared to Previous Research

Uchimura’s view of love as stated above fits with the concept of love that I discussed in my first and second papers on this subject. Uchimura highly regarded people who upheld the morals which came from the Confucian background of his life. Uchimura translated Ninomiya Kinjiro’s phrase “jinjutsu” to “arts of love.” It is obvious from Uchimura’s other statements in this chapter of *Representative Men of Japan* that Ninomiya’s “arts of love” were moralistic deeds, for example, helping widows and orphans. This corresponds to Uchimura’s idea that love concerns acts carried out between humans; a horizontal, non-transcendent view. It is also consistent with Uchimura’s idea that the lack of other morals, such as respect and trust, might hinder carrying out the duty of love.

Uchimura did not discount Christian love, but seen in the light of the above discussion, it is difficult to unequivocally say that it was the primary part of his interpretation of “Letter to the Romans.” I limited my investigation in this paper to *A Study of Romans*, however, a further investigation of Uchimura’s comments on Paul’s writings would be the next logical step. The most interesting verse to explore would be 1 Corinthians 13:13 where Paul states that love is greater than faith. By looking at Uchimura’s thoughts on love throughout his works, a different view might develop. However, looking at just one short work titled “Love and Righteousness” leads me to think that his emphasis on righteousness is solid. In this short work, Uchimura states, “Nine-tenths of love is righteousness.”²⁰ If love is ninety percent righteousness, then regardless of how or where Uchimura uses the word “love,” his intended meaning is “righteousness.” For Uchimura, “Letter to the Romans” is a book of faith, as he clearly stated. Consequently, *A Study of Romans* is first and foremost a book of faith and righteousness with love as an appendage.

Notes

- 1 Please see Michelle La Fay, “Uchimura Kanzo’s Use of Japanese Thoughts and Ideas in his Faith,” *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, Hokkaido University, March 31, 2008, vol. 3, 77–86. <http://hdl.handle.net/2115/32413>; “Uchimura Kanzo’s Love-Hate Relationship with the Word ‘Love,’” *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, Hokkaido University, March 31, 2009, vol. 4, 77–85. <http://hdl.handle.net/2115/37068>
- 2 Kanzo Uchimura, *Japan and the Japanese, Uchimura Kanzo Zenshuu* [*Uchimura Kanzo Complete Works*] (Hereafter referred to as *Complete Works*), (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982), 3:169. *Japan and the Japanese* was published again in 1908 with the title *Representative Men of Japan*.

- 3 Norihisa Suzuki, *Uchimura Kanzo Daily Record 11 1920-1924 The Groaning Universe* 『内村鑑三日録 11 1920~1924 うめく宇宙』(*Uchimura Kanzo Nichiroku 11 1920-1924 Umeku Uchuu*), Tokyo: Kyoubunkan, 1997, 100, 226.
- 4 K. Uchimura, *A Study of Romans* 「羅馬書の研究」(*Roumasho no Kenkyuu*), *Complete Works*, 26:28. All English translations are by La Fay.
- 5 There are various problems with analyzing the key words. For this analysis, I only intended to get a general trend for the use of the key words in “Letter to the Romans” (Japanese translation) and *A Study of Romans*.
- 6 These numbers are only the number of times that Uchimura used the key words in his own writing. I have not included the times that the key words were used in quotations from the Bible or other sources. However, even if these numbers are included, the trend remains constant.
- 7 K. Uchimura, “Romans Lecture Supplement,” *Complete Works*, 27:108.
- 8 Michael D. Coogan, Ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Third Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- 9 This phrase “the one who is righteous” corresponds to 「義人」 “gijin,” which translated directly means “righteous person” in Japanese.
- 10 K. Uchimura, *A Study of Romans*, *Complete Works*, 26:22-23.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 26:91.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 26:92.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 26:176-177.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 26:377.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 26:378.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 26:379-380.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 26:367.
- 18 M. La Fay, “Uchimura Kanzo’s Method of Biblical Commentary,” 「内村鑑三の聖書『註解』の方法」(*Uchimura Kanzo no Seisho ‘Chukukai’ no Houhou*), unpublished doctoral dissertation, Hokkaido University, Faculty of Letters, 2003, 95.
- 19 M. La Fay, “Uchimura Kanzo’s Love-Hate Relationship with the Word ‘Love,’” *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, Hokkaido University, vol. 4, March 31, 2009, 77-85. <http://hdl.handle.net/2115/37068>
- 20 K. Uchimura, “Love and Righteousness,” *Complete Works*, 30:22.

Bibliography

- Coogan, Michael D. Ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Third Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Iwano, Yusuke. “The Problems of Love and Righteousness in Uchimura Kanzo,” 「内村鑑三における愛と義の問題」 (*Uchimura Kanzo ni okeru Ai to Gi no Mondai*) *Ajia • Kirisuto-kyou • Tagensei*, Gendai Kirisutokyou Shisou Kenkyukai, March 2007, vol. 5, 37-48. <http://hdl.handle.net/2433/57705>
- La Fay, Michelle. “Uchimura Kanzo’s Use of Japanese Thoughts and Ideas in his Faith,” *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, Hokkaido University, March 31, 2008, vol. 3, 77-86. <http://hdl.handle.net/2115/32413>
- . “Uchimura Kanzo’s Love-Hate Relationship with the Word ‘Love,’” *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, Hokkaido University, March 31, 2009, vol. 4, 77-85. <http://hdl.handle.net/2115/37068>
- . “Uchimura Kanzo’s Method of Biblical Commentary,” 「内村鑑三の聖書『註解』の方法」(*Uchimura Kanzo no Seisho no Chukukai no Houhou*), unpublished doctoral dissertation, Hokkaido University, Faculty of Letters, 2003.
- Lee, Kyoungae. *Uchimura Kanzo’s Christian Thoughts: Centering on Atonement and Eschatology*, 『内村鑑三のキリスト教思想 — 贖罪論と終末論を中心として —』(*Uchimura Kanzo no Kirisutokyou Shisou: Shokuzairon to Shuumatsuron wo Chuushin toshite*), Kyuushuu: Kyuushuu Daigaku Shuppankai, 2003.
- Suzuki, Norihisa. *Uchimura Kanzo Daily Record 11 1920-1924 The Groaning Universe* 『内村鑑三日録 11 1920~1924 うめく宇宙』(*Uchimura Kanzo Nichiroku 11 1920-1924 Umeku Uchuu*), Tokyo: Kyoubunkan, 1997.
- Uchimura, Kanzo. *A Study of Romans* 「羅馬書の研究」(*Roumasho no Kenkyuu*), *Uchimura Kanzo Zenshuu*

[*Complete Works*], Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, vol. 26, 1982.

—. “Love and Righteousness,” *Uchimura Kanzo Zenshuu* [*Complete Works*], Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, vol. 30, 1982.