

ROMANS 13:8-14

Introduction:

1. Paul has been discussing the laws which govern the various relationships of a Christian's life in the first 7 verses of Chapter 13. He now turns his attention to the highest law or commandment of all - "the law of love".
2. Paul shows how love rules supreme in the believer's heart for every situation of life. Love makes the conscience far more tender than law could ever do.
3. The greatest show of love in the Bible is found in the book of John when Jesus Christ said to the people in John 15:9, 12-13 - *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*
4. Paul will now show us how you are to relate to society and not necessarily the government. It is about your relationship with people around you, your neighbor, and having a love attitude like Christ had shown.

Romans 13:8 - Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

1. Some will interpret this to mean that you are never to borrow money, never to use credit cards, but always pay cash. Today especially, this is not what Paul is saying here.

*We are not to borrow money beyond our ability to repay it back. It is dishonest to buy more than can be paid back and to keep the creditor waiting for his money.
2. Nothing will ruin a Christian's testimony faster than having chronic indebtedness and not fulfilling their obligations. Embrace every obligation, or promise, as being sacred to your character and who you are.
3. There are certain principles which should guide us to not go overboard in debt.
 - a. We should not contract debts for non-essentials.
 - b. We are not to go into debt when there is no hope of repaying it back.
 - c. We need to be vigilant in not buying on the installment plan if it has exorbitant interest charges.
 - d. We need to practice financial responsibility by living within our means and not be a slave to the lender as mentioned in Proverbs 22:7 - *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*
4. Though the Bible warns of some of the dangers of borrowing, it does not condemn the practice. There are dangers in borrowing, so one has to be careful. When we abuse credit, God says this in Psalms 37:21 - *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.*

*We owe man our debt of love. One of the ways we can demonstrate Christ's love that was given to us is to pay our debts and obligations.

Romans 13:9 - For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

1. These statements come from the Ten Commandments and the Law. While believers today are not under the covenant of the Law, the believer under "grace" can fulfill the statutes regarding our behavior to our community by letting the love of God motivate us.

Galatians 5:14 - For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

2. Grace teaches us not to commit adultery, not to kill or steal, not to bear false witness or covet, or any other commandment. We obey God's truth from the love of Christ helping us to love one another.

*Love doesn't entertain wrong desires for another's possessions, where coveting does. We are to love thy neighbor as thyself.

3. Love's duty is to obey the commandments, not under law, but under grace - because they are love's lasting obligation to God and to others. This verse 9 reminds us of God's commandments.

Romans 13:10 - Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

1. Here we have love's desire for the well-being of men and to please God. Paul's great description of "love" comes from his epistle in I Corinthians 13:4-8 - *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 1Cor. 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 1Cor. 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 1Cor. 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 1Cor. 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

2. Love only works for good and thus fulfilling the Law's holiness and goodness.

*It is in this present Age of Grace that the Holy Spirit in us produces the "fruits of the Spirit", in which love is mentioned first.

3. The underlying principle of the Jewish economy was the Law. The reason Israel could not love and do the Law's goodness was because of what Romans 8:3 said.

Romans 8:3 - For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

- a. The law was weak (had no power), because its strength was dependent upon the flesh for its fulfillment.
- b. God condemned sin in the flesh, so He sent His Son to take all our sins upon His shoulders.

II Corinthians 5:21 - For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- c. What the law could not do, in that man was weak - Christ did for us.

Romans 13:11 - And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

1. We are to come out of our spiritual absence. Paul is telling the Roman believers to come alive from their spiritual sleep and slumber - quit being lukewarm and lazy in your Christian life!

2. The rest of this chapter encourages a life of spiritual alertness. The time is short - because this Dispensation of Grace period is about to come to an end.
3. Paul is saying that when we were saved, we began to look forward to the day of our final destination - where we will live in the heavenlies. Until then, we are to be observant of the coming of the Lord - the Rapture - or when God takes us home.

Romans 13:12 - The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

1. Here, Paul is talking about two completely different views about what is happening before us: to decide if you are part of the night (Satan's spiritual darkness) of this evil world system, or of the day (God's light) and put on the armor of light.
2. Paul explains this quite nicely in I Thessalonians 5:4-6 - *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 1Thess. 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 1Thess. 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*

*Paul is saying, let's not live like unsaved people. Let's put on the armor of light because "the day is at hand" - which we believe is referring to the Rapture, our day of redemption being completed.

3. Paul then says that, in view of the fact that night is almost gone and the day is near, "let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light".

*Paul is pleading with them to not walk as the lost people and the evil world system, but walk as redeemed and enlightened people.

Galatians 1:4 - Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

4. We are to put off the works of darkness (our sinful behavior) and put on godly living - to wake up to who we are in Christ.

Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

*It is the responsibility of the believer to not allow the world, the devil, or the weak flesh to put us into a spiritual slumber.

I Corinthians 15:33-34 - Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. 1Cor. 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame.

Romans 13:13 - Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

1. Paul tells us the right way and the wrong way to walk.
 - a. The right way - the outward life of a Christian which men see. To walk honestly, which means who you are - your character living beyond reproach. We live in accordance with our position in Christ.
 - b. The wrong way - Paul mentions some of these common sins that want to creep into our daily living:

*rioting and drunkenness - becoming intoxicated and causing the loss of mental capacities, resulting in uncontrolled behavior.

*chambering - This is improper sexuality done in an evil context.

*wantonness - This is uncontrolled sexual lusts. This is a shameless and excessive behavior.

*strife - This is being contentious, arguing or quarreling, and usually at odds with others.

*envying - This is blatant jealousy of others.

2. Paul knew only too well what dark strongholds are in the old nature, that is even within every believer's heart - the weakness of the flesh waiting to convict you.

<p><u>Romans 13:14</u> - But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to <i>fulfil</i> the lusts thereof.</p>

1. The best policy we can follow is to live Christ-like and try to adopt His whole lifestyle. When a Christian puts on the Lord Jesus Christ, one clothes himself in all Christ is in your life.
2. The only way to have victory is to apply God's truths to our living. We are to replace those old sinful habits with new biblical behavior.

I Corinthians 6:19-20 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 1Cor. 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

3. We should make no provision for the flesh. Do not trust your relationship with your flesh, because it will fail you.
 - a. Not only are we not to put ourselves in positions, or places, that will tempt us. But, the believer must not allow their minds to reflect and decide to do the satisfying lusts of the flesh from the world, the devil, and people of the world.
 - b. We should give no chances to the flesh to have its fling. We give a higher priority to the spiritual things than to the physical things.
 - c. Remember where our strength is found to win the battle.

Galatians 5:16-17 - *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Gal. 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

****Walk the walk and talk the talk - do the will of God in your life. Allow the Holy Spirit to bring His Word to bear upon your life.**