

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

--ROMANS 13:8-10--

### INTRODUCTION:

Obedience has been the topic of our study of Romans 13, obedience to the Word of God. Obedience is the heart and soul of faithful, disciplined, Spirit-controlled living. It is through obedience to the Lord Jesus that Christians receive blessing, joy and spiritual power. To obey requires an exercise of the will under the encouragement and power of the Holy Spirit, this is the only way we can be faithfully obedient to the Lord. Beginning in Romans 13:8, Paul again focuses on the Christian's relationship to others, a relationship that is motivated by love, we will learn that love for God and love for others is the key to faithful obedience and that love fulfills God's law.

#### I. THE UNPAYABLE DEBT (Romans 13:8)

- a. Paul begins this section on the Christian's right relationship to others by writing, "*Owe nothing to anyone except to \_\_\_\_\_ one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.*" (Romans 13:8, NASB95)
- b. Paul's point in this verse is not so much about money as it is about another form of \_\_\_\_\_ that we each have that can never be repaid.
- c. Our obligation to \_\_\_\_\_ one another applies first other believers. (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Corinthians 13)
- d. This debt of love that Paul says that each of us owes to love one another is not just speaking of believers, but we are also to love \_\_\_\_\_. (Matthew 5:43-44; Romans 12:14; Galatians 6:10)
- e. Paul puts a high priority on this love that we are to have for believers and non-believers alike, this love is so immeasurably important because as Paul writes, "*...for he who loves his neighbor has \_\_\_\_\_ the law.*" (Romans 13:8b, NASB95) (1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Galatians 6:10)

- f. There are many practical ways in which we can demonstrate *agapē* \_\_\_\_\_ to those around us, both believers and non-believers. (John 15:13; Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16)
- g. Is it possible to love others with this same selfless love that Christ \_\_\_\_\_ us with as shown in His sacrificial death on our behalf? (Philippians 2:1-2)
- h. Paul has declared that we have an unpayable \_\_\_\_\_, that debt is to love one another, to love our neighbor.

#### I. LOVE FULFILLS THE LAW (Romans 13:9)

- a. Paul having just written that loving you neighbor fulfills the law now illustrates this point by giving us \_\_\_ Old Testament quotes from the Law of Moses. (Exodus 20:3-17; Deuteronomy 5:7-21; Leviticus 19:18)
- b. The point that Paul is making by quoting these commands found in the Law of Moses is that the godly love that he has been writing about does not \_\_\_\_\_ these laws.
- c. Jesus taught in Matthew 15:19, "*For out of the \_\_\_\_\_ come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.*" (Matthew 15:19, NASB95) (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 10:25-37)
- d. To love your neighbor as yourself is to show the same concern for their \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as you would for your own. (Philippians 2:3-4)

#### II. LOVE IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW (Romans 13:10)

- a. Paul sums up these verses on loving others by writing, "*Love does no \_\_\_\_\_ to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*" (Romans 13:10, NASB95)
- b. Paul writes that this kind of love for others is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law.
- c. But wasn't the \_\_\_\_\_ done away with at the cross? (Romans 8:1-4; Matthew 5:17-19; Matthew 7:12; James 2:8)

## CONCLUSION:

Paul said in the end of 1 Corinthians 13, “*But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.*” (1 Corinthians 13:13, NASB95) Think about it, love can control a temper and can guide our reason. Love like God’s love seeks to overcome the worst qualities and develop the best. When we surrender to the Holy Spirit, He by guiding us and empowering us transforms redeemed men and women to become more and more like Jesus Christ. When we become more and more like Jesus, we will love more and more like Jesus. What is in your life today that is getting between you and loving your neighbor? As I have said over and over as we have talked about obedience these last several months, obedient to God’s Word, which commands us to love our neighbor, even if that neighbor is hostile or unfriendly, if we are to be obedient to the Lord and love that person, it will require some humility on our part, we must swallow our pride, our self-righteousness, and surrender our all to the Lord Jesus. Only when we do this can the Holy Spirit use us to love the unlovely, only then can He guide us to regard one another as more important than yourself and to not concern yourself with your own interests only, but also the interests of others. Surrender is hard, but obedience without it is even harder. What are you willing to sacrifice to be completely pleasing to the Lord in all you do? I know that I need to grow in this area of loving my neighbor, this message has convicted me and shown me areas of my life where I need to surrender my pride and love others the way God loves me. I want to be found faithful, disciplined, obedient and Spirit-controlled when the Lord Jesus calls me home, my prayer is that you want that to be true of you also.