

Pt 45 Romans 13:8-14 Fulfilling the Law Through Love

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Romans 13:8-14

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Last time we looked at the first seven verses which dealt with a Christians obedience to civil government and laws. Here starting in verse eight, Paul directs his attention on our behavior with our fellow man.

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

The first thing he brings up is paying our debts. He says we are to “owe no man any thing.” Now, right away there will be those who want to claim this means a Christian should never borrow anything from anyone. That we are supposed to be self-sufficient and never go into debt. They will immediately run to **Psalms 37:21** The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth. They'll say, “see there, the wicked borroweth.” But they don't emphasize the most important part of the verse which is the next 4-words: “and payeth not again.”

Well, the problem with thinking that's what this means is that it would completely make the rest of the Bible untrue. God's Word has much to say about lawful borrowing and lending, here are just a few:

Exodus 22:25 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. (that means charging interest) If borrowing money was wrong, why would the Lord give rules as to how to lend money? Wouldn't that be tempting someone to sin by borrowing?

Deuteronomy 15:7-8 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: 8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Psalms 15:5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Matthew 5:42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Luke 6:34-35 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be

great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

So, in our opening text, Paul is not forbidding us to borrow from anyone, he is telling us that if we do borrow, that we pay back our debt and not owe them. When debt becomes sinful is when we borrow knowing that we cannot pay it back and have no intentions of doing so. Also, when we go into debt and live beyond our means. The Bible says in **Proverbs 22:7** The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender. Debt is the cause for a lot of problems. We do become slaves to it. Things such as house mortgages and student loans, or business loans are fine as long as you have the means to make the payments. But when we go into debt for things just to live extravagantly or indulge our lusts, then it become sinful.

By owing no man anything, we are showing that we love our fellow man, it says when we love others that we have fulfilled the law. And, that is actually the emphasis of this portion of the Scripture, not the “debt” part which most people get hung up on.

Remember what Jesus said in **Matthew 7:12** Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Also, listen to what it says in **James 2:8** If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

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

So, we fulfill the law by loving our neighbors.

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

Here Paul lists **five of the ten Commandments** which involves how we interact with other people. Then he adds another: **Love thy neighbour as thyself**. Now, where have we heard that before?

Leviticus 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Matthew 19:19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Matthew 22:34-40 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. 35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, 36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Again, we find loving our neighbor involves fulfilling the law – not the Mosaic Law, but God's holy divine moral law and commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves.

I must be honest with you; this is a hard one for me to obey. If you are honest with me, then you will probably say the same thing. I mean, after all, who did we make sure had breakfast this morning? Who did we make sure had clothes to wear and all our needs met? Chances are it was you and not your neighbor. It is obvious that we

love ourselves an awful lot. What if we had the same kind of love for our neighbors as we did for ourselves? This world would be a vastly different place. I'm afraid we will never see this world with that kind of love until the Lord Jesus returns.

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.

We get another glimpse of the urgency in Paul's letters. As we discussed a couple of messages back, everything Paul preached and taught was always urgent. Paul knew his time was short and he tried to make every minute count. He says, "**now it is high time to awake out of sleep.**" I'm afraid the world we live in is asleep. There is no sense of urgency, no worries, or cares of the lost and dying that are dropping off into hell all around us.

This time that Paul is speaking of is talking about the time in which we live. The time of Grace. The time of the Church. The time when whosoever will can come and be saved. The time of Noah was a similar time but when the door of the Ark shut and the storm clouds opened, and rain came forth, the time was over. Those outside the Ark had missed the time. They never woke up from their slumber.

Listen to what Jesus said about them:

Matthew 24:37-39

**37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

Jesus said when he returns that the inhabitants of this earth will be just like they were in the days of Noah; **eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage**. In other words, carrying about with life like there is no tomorrow. Not a care in the world. Just the way we are living in this world now.

Paul says **now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed** Look, we don't know when the Lord is going to put an end to all this. It could be any day.

Paul gave a similar warning to the Church at Thessalonica:

1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

**4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.
6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.
7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.
8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.
11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.**

All through the Bible darkness is described as the time when evil and wickedness occur. We are cautioned to not be participators of the wickedness that goes on under the cover of darkness and we are not to sleep as if nothing is going on around us. We are always to be alert and aware or sober and watching.

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.

"The day is at hand" is referring to the day the Lord Jesus returns to rule and reign.

Now he goes into what is needed to awake from sleep. **Cast off the works of darkness:** This means to repent of your sins. To drop whatever, it is you are doing that is causing you to engage in sinful behavior.

The Apostle Peter says: **2 Peter 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.**

The Apostle John says: **1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.**

and let us put on the armour of light – when you awake from your sleep and cast off the works of darkness, then put on the **armour of light**.

Paul often speaks of our spiritual state in terms of clothing or items a soldier would wear, such as he writes in **Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil**. Then he lists off those six pieces of spiritual armour that we are to put on:

1. Loins girt with truth
2. Breastplate of righteousness
3. Feet shod with preparation of the gospel of peace
4. Shield of faith
5. Helmet of salvation
6. Sword of the Spirit

These are all spiritual pieces of armor and not physical. You must purpose in your mind and heart that you are going to put these on to help guard yourself from wickedness. Notice Paul always says "**Put on**" or "**Take off**" these are things you must make a conscience effort to do.

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

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

All these things listed should be obvious to a born-again believer. The Holy Spirit should be alerting us to sinful and wicked behavior and our desire should be to NOT engage in it.

Sadly, a lot of people who proclaim to be Christian live no differently than the lost and wicked world. These days it is difficult to discern who is a Christian and who is not. A lot of that is because we have let the world dictate to us what is right and wrong. Have you noticed how the world has reversed everything from what it once was?

- Right is Wrong and Wrong is Right
- Good is Bad and Bad is Good
- Truth is False and False is Truth

Christians have bought into the lie that living a holy and clean life is pharisaical. We have listened to the rock star preachers of today and believed them when they said we should look, act, and sound more like the world to identify with them. It's obvious this mentality has not made the Church better but has made the world worse. Without the influencing factor of a holy and righteous church, the world has nothing to look at as an example of good – so instead they look toward woke Hollywood to be their example.