

• LESSON 21 (September 7) •

Romans 13:8-14

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ

We emphasized in the last lesson that few things are more fundamental to the Christian life than genuine respect for authority. As disciples of Christ, we know the ultimate Authority. Paul emphasizes in Romans 13:8-14 that this knowledge must shape our relationships with each other and our Lord. The way we “walk” through life will either positively or negatively impact those relationships, and our “walk” will be determined by the affections of our hearts. Whom do we love? Whose desires will we gratify?

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Rom 13:8-10)

“The commandments” Paul is referencing stem from Exodus 20, that section of the Old Testament frequently referenced as “the Ten Commandments.” Here’s a quick recap of Exodus 20:1-17:

- You shall have no other gods before me.
- You shall not make for yourself a carved image or likeness of anything that you bow down to or serve.
- You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.



In Romans 13:7 emphasized that we must pay what we owe, whether that debt be in the form of taxes, revenue, respect, or honor. What, then, does he mean in Romans 13:8 by writing, “Owe no one anything”?

If we owe anything to each other, it is love (Rom 13:8). The question is, why?

- You shall not bear false witness.
- You shall not covet.

In Matthew 22, a lawyer tested Jesus by asking him a question. “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus responded by saying,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt 22:37-40)

Think about what we are being told by Jesus and Paul.

- Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 and emphasizes that all the Law and the Prophets “depend” on these two commandments.
- Paul also quotes Leviticus 19:18 and asserts the fact that the most basic commandments in the Law “are summed up in this word.”

Let’s make sure that we connect the practical, personal dots:

- ❖ *In what way* do the Law and the Prophets “depend” on my love for God and my love for my neighbor?
- ❖ *How* does “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” sum up commandments like “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal,” etc.?
- ❖ *Why* would the Spirit of God lead Paul to write, “Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” in Romans 13:10?
- ❖ When it comes right down to it, *why* does God care so much about the love that I have (or *should* have) in my heart?

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. (Rom 13:11-14)

Here are more God-breathed connections to practically and personally make so that we might be shaped for our good and his glory:

- ❖ What does Paul mean by, “Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep”? (13:11a)
- ❖ In what way is salvation “nearer to us now than when we first believed”? (13:11b)
- ❖ “The night is far gone; the day is at hand.” What does this even mean? (13:12a)
- ❖ What are “the works of darkness”? And what is this “armor of light” we are expected by God to “put on”? (13:12b)
- ❖ Why would the Spirit of God describe these as improper works of darkness (13:13):
 - Orgies?
 - Drunkenness?
 - Sexual immorality?
 - Sensuality?
 - Quarreling?
 - Jealousy?
- ❖ In everyday terms, what does it mean to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ”? (13:14a)
- ❖ When I make provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires, I... what? Why is making this provision not only deadly to my spirit, but dishonoring to my heavenly Father? (13:14b)