

The Supremeness of Love **Romans 13:8-10 (NKJV)**

8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Back in October or last year we dealt with Romans 12:9–13 (NKJV) 9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

There are some similarities and difference in these two passages.

First 12:9-13 is primarily speaking of the relations between believers while 13:8-10 is dealing with our relationships with our fellow men, our neighbor.

In John's gospel Jesus tells us to love one another as He has loved us and that by seeing our love for one another the world would know that we belonged to God.

In this passage Paul harks back to another teaching of Jesus.

Matthew 7:12 (NKJV) 12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 22:39-40 (NKJV) 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Here Jesus summarizes the law of God as given to the Israelites.

And although we are not under law but under grace we are still under the law of love.

I. Owe no one anything

A. He has been talking about our obligations in this world.

1. Romans 13:7 (NKJV) 7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.
2. These we are called upon to fulfil and not to neglect or try to avoid.
3. As Christians we are to be the best of citizens of our country.
4. Because God is the true Governor in any case.
5. So as much as within our power we are to peaceable lives with those around us.

- B. Some have said that we are not to ever be in debt.
 - 1. But that is not what this is saying.
 - 2. It is saying that we should never be behind in our debts.
 - 3. We are not to try to avoid our debts.

- II. Except to love one another
 - A. This is the one debt that we can never fully pay off.
 - 1. We are to always show love for others.
 - 2. In everything and in every way.
 - 3. What this means, in very simple terms, is that we can never say that we have satisfied our obligations in this area. Leon Morris puts it like this: “We can never say, ‘I have done all the loving I need to.’ [This is because] love is a permanent obligation, a debt impossible to discharge.” *James Montgomery Boice, Romans: The New Humanity, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991–), 1690.*
 - B. The apostle insists, however, that love is an obligation as real as taxation and personal debt repayment. *D. Stuart Briscoe and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Romans, vol. 29, The Preacher’s Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 238.*

- III. For he who loves another has fulfilled the law.
 - A. James 2:8 (NKJV) 8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

- IV. For the commandments,
 - A. "You shall not commit adultery,"
 - B. "You shall not murder,"
 - C. "You shall not steal,"
 - D. "You shall not bear false witness,"
 - E. "You shall not covet,"
 - F. And if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- V. Love does no harm to a **neighbor**; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.
 - A. 1 Peter 4:8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”
 - 1. Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

2. Leviticus 19:18, 34 (NKJV) 18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. 34 'The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself;
- B. Luke 10:25-37 (NKJV) 25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 27 So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' 36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" 37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."
- C. In our day most people talk about loving one's self as the most important thing.
1. But love of self seems evident in these commandments.
 2. Stott observes that Jesus spoke of a first and second commandment but never of a third. He also argues that agape is selfless love, which cannot be turned in on itself, and that self-love is the essence of sin. *Robert H. Mounce, Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 246.*
- D. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (NKJV) 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not

provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but **the greatest of these is love.**