

Romans – Gospel of God Exalted

Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver

Zoom Meeting ID:

 **828 7580 6094 ►**

Thursday September 18, 2025

Women of Excellence

Bible Study 7pm

Memory Verse

Romans 13:8 (NASB95) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law.

Love Fulfills the Law (continued)

Romans 13:8–10 (NLT)

⁸ Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God’s law. ⁹ For the commandments say, “You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.” These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

¹⁰ Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.

Romans 13:8–10 (NASB95)

8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law.

9 For this, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”

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- 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of *the law*.

POINT 2 - THE DISCHARGE OF LOVE

Romans 13:9–10 (NASB95)

- 9 For this, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”
- 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of *the law*.

After declaring that love fulfills the law (v. 8b), the apostle illustrates his point by quoting five specific Old Testament laws. The first four are from the Ten Commandments, although they are not in the exact order found in Exodus 20:13–17 and Deuteronomy 5:17–21. The fifth law is from Leviticus 19:18.

Godly love does **not commit adultery**, because such sinful defilement of a person shows disregard for another’s purity. Love highly values the virtue of others and will do nothing that is morally defiling. Like every other form of sexual immorality, **adultery** comes from impure, sinful lust, never from pure love.

The same principle applies just as obviously to the person who would commit **murder** or who would **steal**. Love does not rob others of their lives or their property.

Because it does not always have an outward manifestation, when we **covet**, the Lord may be the only one, besides ourselves, who is aware of that sin. But again, if we are loving, we will not **covet**, because love has no part in any unrighteousness (1 Cor. 13:6).

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Jesus made clear that *all* sin originates in the *heart* and in the *will*, whether or not it is expressed outwardly: “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (**Matt. 15:19**). In the Sermon on the Mount He warned, “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court” (**Matt. 5:21–22**), and “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart” (**vv. 27–28**).

The Christian who loves with God’s love does not need to be concerned about breaking those or **any other commandment**, including the other two of the Ten Commandments that pertain to our relationship to other people, namely, honoring father and mother and not bearing false witness (Ex. 20:12, 16). *All* laws of God that concern human relationships are **summed up in this saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**

If we truly love others as ourselves, we will not want to do them any harm. This law that Paul quotes is taken from Leviticus 19:18, and Jesus declared it to be second only to the supreme commandment to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (**Matt. 22:37–39**), which is taken from Deuteronomy 6:5.

The apostle does not mention the first and greatest commandment, or any other commandment relating directly to God, because he is here focusing on our relationships to other human beings, to whom he refers three times, once in each

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verse, as our **neighbor**. And, as noted above, Jesus made clear that a **neighbor** is anyone with whom we have contact, especially if he is in need (Luke 10:25–37).

The command to **love your neighbor as yourself** is not, as some interpreters today insist, a defense of the popular but totally unbiblical idea that we are to have a high psychological self-image. It rather assumes that, as fallen human beings, we already have a high view of ourselves and that we should, by God's grace, have the same affection for others. Elsewhere Paul admonishes that we are to care for others more than for ourselves. "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit," he says, "but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as *more important than himself*; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (**Phil. 2:3–4**).

If believers have such selfless concern for the welfare of others, it clearly follows that genuine, godly **love does no wrong to a neighbor**, meaning it does no wrong to *anyone*.

Paul's point is that a Christian who allows God's love to rule his life is divinely protected from sin and inclined to righteousness. The loving Christian does not obey God's law because he fears the consequences of disobedience but because He loves God and seeks to please Him by loving others.

Fear is a legitimate reason for not sinning, as the Bible's countless warnings about sin and its consequences testify. It is always better not to sin than to sin, whatever the motive. But fear is not the noblest motive for not sinning, especially not for a Christian. Even unbelievers abstain from many visible vices because they are afraid of being caught and punished.

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Many nominal Christians lead outwardly moral lives in the hope of pleasing God and making themselves acceptable to Him by their good behavior. But, as the Lord said of ancient Israel during the time of Isaiah, they “draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, and their *reverence* for Me consists of tradition learned by rote” **(Isa. 29:13)**.

God’s Word is replete with promises of blessing and reward for His faithful children, although they are not always fulfilled in a way we would prefer or that is pleasing to the flesh. But even the gracious and marvelous prospect of His heavenly blessings is not the believer’s highest and purest motive for obeying the Lord. Godly Christians reject evil and do good because those are the only things the indwelling love of their indwelling Lord will lead them to do. What God wants will be what we want. As someone has said, if we love God with all our heart and other people with all our heart, we can do as we please, because we will only want to do that which pleases God and benefits others.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. What are things Godly Christians would not do and why?**

- 2. What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself? Who is your neighbor? Explain**

- 3. Who are nominal Christians ?**

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4. What stood out to you in this section of the lesson?

POINT – 3 THE DISCHARGE OF LOVE

love therefore is the fulfillment of the law. (13:10b) NASB

Contrary to what many people think, living by **love** and living by **the law** are not mutually exclusive. They are, in fact, inseparably related. God's **law** cannot be truly obeyed apart from **love**, because love, and only love, as Paul has already explained (v. 8b), **is the fulfillment of the law.**

Early in His ministry, Jesus declared, “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but *to fulfill*. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (**Matt. 5:17–19**).

Later in the Sermon of the Mount, in what is commonly called *the golden rule*, He said, “Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (**Matt. 7:12**). James refers to loving our neighbors as ourselves as “fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture” (**James 2:8**). **Love** fulfills the Lord's *golden rule* and the Lord's *royal law*.

I have heard a beautiful analogy from the field of music that helps understand the greatness and completeness of love. The musical scale has only seven basic notes, which many children can learn in an hour or less. Yet great composers,

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such as Handel and Beethoven, could not exhaust those notes and their variations in an entire lifetime. Godly love is like that. It uses the basic, and sometimes seemingly insignificant, things in life to produce the greatest. Love controls temper and guides' reason. It seeks to overcome the worst qualities and develop the best. Under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit, it transforms redeemed men and women more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ. There is no greatness of character to which love cannot elevate a person. In fact, no greatness of character is possible without it, because love is great character.

Some years ago, the following paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13 appeared:

If I [know] the language perfectly and speak like a native, and have not [God's] love for them, I am nothing. If I have diplomas and degrees and know all the up-to-date methods, and have not His touch of understanding love, I am nothing. If I am able to argue successfully against the religions of the people and make fools of them, and have not His wooing note, I am nothing. If I have all faith and great ideals and magnificent plans, and not His love that sweats and bleeds and weeps and prays and pleads, I am nothing. If I give my clothes and money to them, and have not His love for them, I am nothing.

If I surrender all prospects, leave home and friends, make the sacrifices of a missionary career, and turn sour and selfish amid the daily annoyances and slights of a missionary life, and have not the love that yields its rights, its leisure's, its pet plans, I am nothing. Virtue has ceased to go out of me. If I can heal all manner of sickness and disease, but wound hearts and hurt feelings for want of His love that is kind, I am nothing. If I can write articles or publish books that win applause, but fail to transcribe the Word of the Cross into the language of His love, I am nothing.

(Source unknown)

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Discussion Questions:

- 1. What does this lesson teach us about the role of love in fulfilling the Law?**
- 2. What is one thing in this lesson that you can apply to your life?**

CLOSING PRAYER