

Romans 13:8-14

Love – restraining the impulse to abuse.

- Paul begins his letter to the Romans with the gospel of grace whereby we are justified (declared righteous) by faith. But Paul does not stop at chapter 11. In chapters 12-16 he teaches us to walk in the power of the Spirit according to the law of love and thus fulfill our calling as those who reflect God's image.
- In Rom.8 Paul indicates that God (by His Spirit) did that, which the law and our own efforts could not do.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God {did;} sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and {as an offering} for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

- We often think of love in terms of assertive action. In these verses we see attention given to how love restrains our selfishness. Even Christians can be abusive through their natural impulse to be self-serving.

Love fulfills the Law, which restrains my abusive impulse.

“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." 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of {the} law.”

- **Verse 8 could be read** “You do not owe anyone a thing except love.” **This verse is not about financial debt** (Matt.5:42 “Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.”) **but rather about the perpetual obligation of love. We are to love because God has loved us.**
- **Love is both arresting and assertive. It stops the abuse of self-serving behavior and starts the care of souls. We love ourselves properly by caring for our own soul's wellbeing. We are to extend that care to our relationship with others.**
- **The command to love “one another” suggests that Paul has the Christian community in mind. This is not to say that Christians are not to love those outside the faith but rather to focus on the community of the church.**
- **Love is a verb - it has to do with our conduct not just our feelings.**
- **Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The proscriptions within the commandments point out ways we can “do wrong to a neighbor.”**
- **Again, Paul's teaching mirrors the teaching of Jesus.**

Mark 12 “28 And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" 29 Jesus answered,

"The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; 30 and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

- **The great commandment.**

1st

Love God with all heart, soul, and mind.

2nd

Love neighbor as self.

- **The Law of Moses (Ex.20:1-21) can be divided into two sections. The first deals with the love of God, the last deals with the love of our neighbor.**
 1. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* **Acknowledging God's presence without marginalizing Him.**
 2. *Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image.* **Being involved with God's creation without worshipping it.**
 3. *Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.* **Bearing God's name without abusing it.**
 4. *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* **Respecting the hope of rest.**
 5. *Honor thy father and thy mother.* **Respecting the integrity of family.**
 6. *Thou shalt not kill.* **Respecting the sanctity of human life.**
 7. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* **Respecting the sanctity of marriage.**
 8. *Thou shalt not steal.* **Respecting the sanctity of private property.**
 9. *Thou shalt not bear false witness.* **Respecting the sanctity of human character.**
 10. *Thou shalt not covet.* **Respecting the sanctity of contentment.**
- **We must not conclude that that Law is of no value. It reflects the nature of a holy God and therefore is a guide for conduct.**
- **The eternal ethic of God's Character and Kingdom are revealed progressively through His law.**

Natural law	Mosaic Law	Law of Christ
Subtle ethic	Superficial ethic	Supreme ethic
Eternal	Eternal (as an ethic) Temporary (as a covenant)	Eternal
Creation & Conscience	The Ten Commandments	The life of Jesus (love)
to know that God is there	to know that I need salvation	to know the heart of God

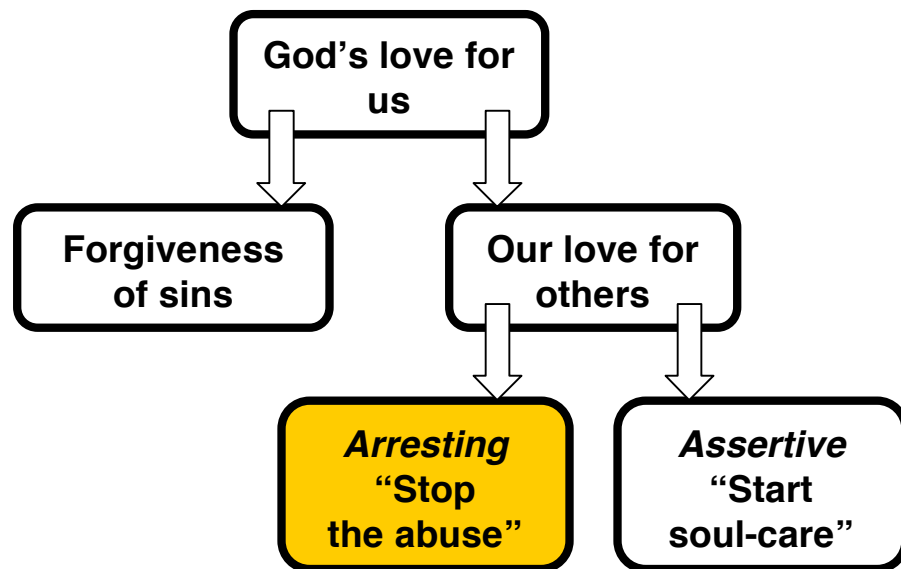
- **John Calvin identified three uses of the Law.**

<i>It is a Constraint to sin</i>	<i>It is a Tutor</i>	<i>It is a Guide to living</i>
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It is to bring order to society.	It is to lead mankind to faith in Christ.	It is to order the Christian's life.
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- **Three mistakes we can make with the Law**

<i>Live Above the Law</i>	<i>Live Under the Law</i>	<i>Live Outside the Law</i>
I have no respect for God or myself as His image bearer.	I seek to gain and keep God's love and favor through disciplined obedience to the Law.	I use my freedom to feed the lusts of the flesh.
A seared conscience is the result.	Guilt or pride is the result.	Divine discipline is the result.
I need to be broken by the Law.	I need to be liberated from the Law.	I need to be guided by the Law.



Love walks in the light, which restrains my abusive impulse.

“¹¹ And this {do,} knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. ¹² The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to {its} lusts.”

- **Some of the characteristics of spiritual darkness are: The things that take place in a party spirit at night - unbridled self-serving at the expense of others.**

“carousing and drunkenness,” - **gluttonous behavior**

“sexual promiscuity and sensuality,” - **sexual immorality**

“strife and jealousy” - **social conflict**

- **Salvation” has three tenses.**

<i>I have been saved</i> when I first believed Rom.1-11 Justification “for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation .” Rom.10:10	<i>I am being saved</i> as I trust and obey Rom.12-16 Sanctification “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” Phil.2:12	<i>I will be saved</i> at the end of time Glorification “who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” I Pet.1:5
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- **“Knowing the time” We live at the dawn of the new “age to come” where Christ’s Spirit is present and increasing.**



- **Parallel passages**

Ephesians 5

“¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. ³ But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; ⁴ and {there must be no} filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸ for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light {consists} in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰ trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹² for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴ For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.””

Colossians 3

“¹ If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. ⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. ⁶ For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, ⁷ and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, {and} abusive speech from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices, ¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him ¹¹-- {a renewal} in which there is no {distinction between} Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.”

- **Lessons from Romans 13:8-14.**

1. Love is a debt.

2. Love is a verb.

3. Love is a choice.

4. Love is a sign.

5. Love is a restraint.

6. Love is a discipline.

7. Love is a process.