

A Debt That Can Never Be Repaid

Romans 13:8-10

After clearly stating that Christians are to pay that which they owe (vs. 6-7), Paul shows that there is one debt that we can't repay. It's the debt to love those God sends our way. The state is to punish evildoers, but the Christian is called upon by God to love evildoers.

I. Your debt to love others stated – “Owe no man anything, but to love one another” (v.8).

There are three Greek words that are translated “love” in English. There's the word “*phileo*” which means “*brotherly affection.*” There is “*eros*” which means “*sensual feelings.*” Then there is the word “*agape*” which means “*to seek and do what is best for the one being loved.*” “*Agape*” is an action verb more than a feeling verb.

Throughout the N.T. we are reminded that the qualifying mark of a true Christian is love for other people. Without this love in your heart there is no assurance of faith. “*By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another*” (John 13:35). “*He that loveth his brother abideth in the light*” (I Jn. 2:10).

II. Your debt to love others illustrated . . . “Love your neighbor as yourself” (v.9).

Paul illustrated what it means to love others by using the second tablet of the law. “*Thou shalt not commit adultery,*” “*Thou shalt not kill,*” “*Thou shalt not steal,*” “*Thou shalt not bear false witness,*” “*Thou shalt not covet,*” and anything else. To sum up “*agape*” love you might say, “*Love your neighbor as yourself*” (v.9).

“*Love can wait to give, lust can't wait to get*” **Josh McDowell.**

(A). **Who is my neighbor?** Anyone God brings into your life (the Good Samaritan).

(B). **But I don't love myself.** Nonsense. The Bible assumes great self-love.

Modern psychology teaches us that our problem is we don't love ourselves. The Bible teaches just the opposite. Only God can empower you to love others.

(C). **What if I am rejected?** You do what you *believe is best for others and trust God.*

This debt to love people is never repaid. A payment is made every day you live.

III. Your debt to love others restated . . . “Love fulfills the law” (v.10).

An amazing thing happened on the day of Pentecost. God came down and inhabited His people. This is the beginning of the New Covenant way of life (**Jer. 31:31-33**). When God gave the external law at Sinai (Old Testament Pentecost), 3000 people died. Why? Because no matter how hard a sinner tries, he can't meet the law of God. But Christ fulfilled the law in our stead. Therefore, those who place their faith in Christ find themselves compelled from within to love the people God calls to them. When the Spirit of God fell down and wrote the law on hearts, 3000 people lived!

“*Love seeks one thing only: the good of the one loved. It leaves all the other secondary effects to take care of themselves*” **Thomas Merton**