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## GOD'S VISION FOR A NEW HUMANITY | A CHANGED RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAW (35)

May 24, 2026

Romans 13:8-10

### PURPOSE

To discover and experience Jesus Christ in our midst  
To cultivate mutually encouraging relationships  
To participate in God's mission to the world

### GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

#### Discussion Question

- Have you ever had a bad neighbor? How did they behave?

### WORSHIP 10 MIN

#### PLEASE OPEN IN PRAYER

#### RESPONSIVE PRAYER — Acts 2:1-8, 11

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

**And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind,**

And it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

**And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.**

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.**

And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

**And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"**

And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

**—We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."**

### SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 13:8-10

*<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>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." <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

### BIBLE STUDY 40 MIN

#### Summary

We are continuing our sermon series entitled *God's Vision for a New Humanity* throughout which we are studying the latter part of the book of Romans. When we are moved by the mercies of God, and when our minds have been renewed to grasp his will, all our relationships become transformed. This week we will focus on how the gospel transforms

our relationship with the law. Paul spends much of Romans describing how our once hostile relationship with the law has reached a place of fulfillment thanks to Christ's death on the cross. Here he describes what it looks like to live out that fulfillment through a familiar command: that we love our neighbors as ourselves.

Last week's passage concluded with a note about paying that which is owed, and Paul continues that theme here. While Christians are meant to repay their debts expediently, there is one debt that they will never be able to repay, and that is the love they owe their neighbor. John Stott writes, "we can never stop loving somebody and say 'I have loved enough.'" The fact that our debt to love can never be satisfied is not meant to discourage us; instead it offers us perspective. Through the gospel, we receive a love from God so great that it surpasses knowledge (Ephesians 3:19), and as a people loved in such a way, we should always strive to love our neighbor regardless of circumstance.

This leads to the focus of this week's sermon: The idea that by loving each other, we fulfill the law. At first glance, this idea may seem like a bit of a head-scratcher, as much of Romans is focused on man's inability to fulfill the law. This adds great importance to the passage's first point, as our inability to "pay our love debt" also reminds us of our inability to fulfill the law on our own. Paul addresses this in Romans 8 by pointing to Christ's death in our place, as he "fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). Having fulfilled the law by satisfying its need to condemn our sin, Jesus has now enabled us to live out its true purpose — loving communion with our neighbor.

Throughout the New Testament, both Jesus and Paul affirm the point made here, that the law can be summed up simply by the phrase "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39, Galatians 5:14). He illustrates the point here by citing the second half of the Ten Commandments, all of which serve to prove that love does no harm to a neighbor. While the law and love are often presented as being at odds with each other, nothing could be further from the truth. In doing our best to keep the law (despite our inability to do so), we step into the type of transformed relationships that Christ longs to see in his church.

## **1. Looking at the Bible**

- Share with the group some key phrases or ideas that stood out to you from the passage.

## **2. Looking at Jesus**

At Central we believe that all of Scripture points to Jesus. In other words, Jesus is the theological center of the Bible. Every passage not only points to Jesus, but the grand narrative of the Bible also finds its fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

- Read Ephesians 3:14-21. How should the knowledge that we are so loved by Jesus inspire us to love each other in a radical way?

### 3. Looking at our Hearts

- We sometimes think of law as being harsh and unyielding, while we see love as soft and flexible. Yet here, Paul speaks of both law and love in the same paragraph. What connections do you see between love and the commandments?

### 4. Looking at our World

- Some theologians have noted that we never needed a commandment to love ourselves because we already do it so naturally. Where do you see that playing out in the culture around you?
- Think back to the difficult neighbor question from earlier. What are some specific ways you could have loved them as you love yourself?
- How can this reflection impact the way you respond to the “difficult people” in your life today?

#### **PRAYER** **15 MIN**

**Pray for each other:** Share any prayer requests you have.

Pray for yourself and the members of your group to live out the law by faithfully loving your neighbors (both good and bad) well.