

## **ROMANS 13:8-14—FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW**

There are some verses in the Bible that remind us of certain heroes of the faith. Rom 1:17 reminds us of Martin Luther and his conversion. John Newton, who wrote "Amazing Grace", had a favorite text. It was Deut 15:15 "Thou shalt remember that thou was a bondsman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee."

At the end of Romans 13 in verses 12-14, we find yet another famous verse that God used to convert a sinner. That sinner was Augustine.

Augustine was born in 354 A.D. in North Africa of mixed pagan and Christian parentage. His parents had high plans for him, but they were totally different. His mother was a Christian and her driving passion was that her son would become a Christian. His father wanted him to have a great education and be a great and wealthy man. He was trained as a rhetorician, who argued cases of law or making speeches. He was brilliant and later moved from Carthage to Rome and then to Milan. There, he had a high social standing and came in contact with very influential people of Italy.

As anyone else, his pre-Christian days were full of lustful passions. The way he lived then was no different than the way most unbelievers live today in our time. So many live in sexual liberation. He lived for fleshly pleasures and was restless.

Another thing that Augustine had wrong before he was a Christian was his endless pursuit of philosophy. He had a restless mind. He went from one philosophy to another. He was led into the philosophy of the Manichaeans who were rationalists. They had reverence for Jesus but they didn't believe in the supernatural and were critics of the Bible. This was appealing to him and it strengthened his intellectual pride. He was still free to live any way he wanted to live. He then became a skeptic and then was introduced to Platonism which sought for immaterial reality. They believed in many things about God. But they didn't believe in the incarnation, the atonement, and forgiveness of sins was not taught. Augustine remained restless.

Augustine was well known by the elite and was a professor at the University at Milan. He was famous but still was unsatisfied.

At Milan he came under the influence of Ambrose who was extremely intelligent and very godly. He was the bishop of the city and was the preacher. Augustine, who knew much of public speaking, went to listen to him. He was impressed by his homiletics. Actually, Ambrose was an expositor and a teacher of Christian doctrines. Because of this Augustine was led deeper into the gospel of salvation through Christ. He started to read the Bible. He understood much about Christianity but was still restless. In fact, he was miserable.

That brings us to the garden scene. He was so distressed he went to a garden to get away from everyone for he was shedding tears. "How long Lord? How long Lord? Wilt Thou be angry forever?...Why not now?"

He then heard a chanting, Take up and read, take up and read. This was from kids playing a game. His countenance immediately changed. He knew that

this must be the way God was speaking to him, so he opened the book and read the first thing he turned to. It was Rom 13:12-14 "No further would I read, nor did I need, for instantly as the sentence ended—by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart—all the gloom of doubt vanished away.

He later became presbyter and then bishop of Hippo for 40 years. His influence may be more than any other non-biblical figure of the Christian church. He wrote the Confessions, On Christian Doctrine, On the Holy Trinity, and The City of God. Luther and Calvin borrowed from him heavily, as well as many of the reformers.

He argued against the Manichaeans, Donatists, and Pelagius.

Romans 13:13-14 was a summary of his life. Verse 13 described what he was.

Verse 14 described what he became.

We will get to that text.

## **1. THE DEBT OF LOVE**

### **13:8-10**

#### **A. THE PERMANENT OBLIGATION-- 13:8**

Verse 7 was a transitional passage that helped introduce us to this new passage. It was talking about paying taxes. Now verse 8 says owe nothing to anyone. Love is something though, we will always owe. We will never satisfy our obligations in this area.

Leon Morris said: "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."

##### **1. Does not mean one can't borrow**

There are many passages that show that lending and borrowing are justified.

Ex 22:25, Ps 15:5, Lev 25:35-36, Neh 5:7, Ps 37:21

It does mean all Christians have a perpetual indebtedness. This debt of loving everyone, we will forever owe.

##### **2. It does mean love for all persons—Luke 10:27, Mt 5:44**

This means believers and unbelievers are the ones we owe love to.

#### **B. FULFILLING THE LAW—PUTTING IT INTO ACTION**

Love is much more than emotion or feeling. We are to do good to all, whether they deserve it or not. We are to demonstrate this in practical ways by ministering in physical ways.

##### **1. Doing good to our neighbor**

##### **2. Teaching God's truth and living it- Eph 4:15**

The gospel truth to unbelievers is the most important truth to offer. We are to teach believers.

##### **3. Forgiving**

We are to forgive as Christ has forgiven us.

##### **4. Humility, gentleness, patience (Eph 4:2)**

Godly love is characterized by these.

##### **5. Willing to sacrifice**

Sacrificial love is the best way to demonstrate love. John 15:13

#### **C. HOW IT IS POSSIBLE AND CAN BE DONE**

##### **1. God provides the resource**

Rom 5:5, Eph 3:17-19

##### **2. Submission to the Holy Spirit**

1 Thess 4:9, 1 Jn 4:16, Gal 5:22

#### **D. THE ILLUSTRATION OF LOVE 13:9-10**

1. THE COMMANDMENTS

Godly love doesn't commit adultery because this shows disregard for another's purity. This sin never comes from love.  
Love doesn't rob others of their lives and property.

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2. THE SUMMARY- Love your neighbor as yourself

All laws of God that concern human relationships are summed up in this.

E. THE ROYAL LAW---James 2:8

Love fulfills the golden rule and the Lord's royal law.

**2. PUTTING ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST—13:11-14**

A. THE WAKE UP-CALL -- 13:11

1. Understanding *the times*

Time(Kairos)—era, epoch, age

If we understand the present time, we will know what to do with our time. What about this present time? What kind of time is it?

1 Chron 12:32, Matt 16:1-3, Gal 1:4, 2 Cor 6:2, 1 Cor 7:29

If we understand the present time, we will seek to lead others to Christ. It is not time for us to just make money, or a name for ourselves, or to just have good times. God has given us life and has given us time. We do not have it forever.

Jonathan Edward's sermon on redeeming the time:Eph 5:16

1.Consider that you are accountable to God for your time

He resolved never to lose one moment of time.

2.Consider how much time you have lost already

You can never make up lost time.

3.Consider how you may improve the present time

2. The sleeping Christian

Jonah 1:6, Matthew 26:39-ff

3. The sleeping unbelievers---Matthew 25:1-13

There was the Great Awakening led by George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards in the 1700's that wakened many sleepers. They were awakened to hear the gospel and believe it.

B. SALVATION IS NEARER 13:11

Past salvation, present salvation, *future salvation*

C. NIGHT AND DAY 13:12

Night represents man's depravity as day represents dawning.

D. LAY ASIDE 13:12-13

Carousing(Komos) It was used for victory celebration. But this turned into drunken and immoral disorder. It meant wild parties, sexual orgies, brawls associated with drunkenness.

Drunkenness(Methe)—This was intentional and habitual intoxication.

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In Gal 5:21 and 1 Pet 4:3 both these words are side by side.

Sexual promiscuity(Koite) At first meant bed or bedroom. It then became known as going to bed with someone

Sensuality(Aselgeia)—No restraint, shameless excess. It was used for Lews sexual immorality, of uninhibited and unabashed lasciviousness  
Sexual debauchery and abandonment that is much like our society of today.

Strife and jealousy

E. PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST- 13:14

Phil 3:13-14

Make no provision of the flesh.—This has the basic meaning of forethought.

planning ahead. It starts in the minds. The flesh is powerful to bring to fruition, the sin that is thought of in the mind.