

September 6, 2026

All We Need is Love

Romans 13:8-10

I've said before ... Love is a verb, it's an action. When you show someone love, it's not only about the words "I love you." It's more about how you treat a person, the kind, sincere words you speak to them, how hard you pray for them, the way you listen to them when they just need your presence, the empathy you feel, how much you appreciate them, what you do for someone without needing repayment.

It's a surprise cup of coffee; it's a card in the mail; it's a phone call to ask how you're doing; it's an invitation to take a drive for no reason; it's not being judged – just listened to; it's someone telling you that you make a difference in their lives.

This is love.

This week, a lifelong friend told me that she still remembers the specific words I had spoken to her 43 years ago – words that I didn't even remember – words she said got her through a particularly rough patch. She didn't have to remind me of those words, nor thank me again for them. That was love speaking!

Sometimes we forget what love truly is – we don't always live what we believe. Sometimes in our anger, or selfishness, or even in our own personal pain we forget to show love.

Listen to Romans 13:8-10 again:

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 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." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

John 13:34 finds Jesus telling us: *I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.*

We try to complicate things, we try to re-write what Jesus said so it's easier for ourselves. We don't really have to love strangers, do we? We don't really have to love our enemy, right? We certainly don't have to love those who don't love us back. We don't have to love the sinner, right?

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." And our neighbor ... is everyone.

I always taught my kids, you have to love the person, but don't love the sin. Love the person – but you don't have to invite your enemy to dinner or spend time with them.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

If we live and love like Jesus, we will never be done loving ... loving God and loving our neighbor – it's an obligation that will always exist - for this how we fulfill the law. We are to be Jesus' love.

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." Love does no wrong to a neighbor.

Paul lists four of the ten commandments, but then says *"and any other commandment."* All those commands are summed up in one word ... LOVE.

How can we love our spouse, but then be with another person? How can we love our friend, but be with their partner?

How can we love a person, but then kill them in body or in spirit or kill their reputation?

How can we steal from them – steal their possessions, steal the encouragement and compassion they need?

How can we be envious of the blessings they have and wish them for ourselves?

How can we lie or gossip about a person and still love?

How can we say we love our parents, but show them no respect, ignore them, abandon them in their old age?

How can we do any of these things if we truly try to live like Jesus and love?

Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Those who love fulfill God's law! We will be able to follow all of things that God has told us to do if we do that one thing ... Love. Love God and love one another.

All of the laws God gave us were meant to protect His creation, His people, from harm. When we act in love, we will never hurt anyone because love does no harm.

Love should be the motivating power that frees us and enables us to serve and sacrifice with a full heart and with the spirit of generosity. We move from loving because we're told to love, because we want approval, toward loving because true compassion grows in us and the Holy Spirit moves within us, so we are able to love others as Christ loves us.

We are called to love everyone. Anyone who has a need, no matter how different they might be, anyone God brings into our lives. Love is not an added duty. It's the root of how we should live our lives.

Our faith creates a desire to represent Jesus for others. To love, to serve, to encourage, to uplift, to provide. Our faith encourages us to be a people of works – to remember that “love” is a verb. Our faith is a living thing that moves us to love all those around us.

Love does no harm. If we ignore the needs of others – we do harm. If we speak down to others – we do harm. If we belittle others – we do harm. If we don't give of ourselves – we do harm. If we close our eyes to injustice – we do harm. If we turn our backs on the lost – we do harm. If we refuse to welcome strangers into our midst – we do harm. Love does no harm.

Paul is telling us to exemplify the character of Jesus that He showed while walking this earth – love, humility, truth and service. Each day, as we follow Jesus, we are faced with choices that will affect the lives of others. When we make a choice, we should ask ourselves, “Does what I'm about to do harm anyone's heart, their self-esteem, their reputation, their pride?” and “Does this reflect Christ's concern for others, or am I only concerned for myself?”

If everyone could always act in love – there would be no war.

If everyone could always act in love – there would be no one hungry.

If everyone could act in love – there would be no one homeless.

If everyone could act in love – there would be no loneliness.

If everyone could act in love – we would know true peace.

Call on the Holy Spirit, ask for His grace, ask for the ability love all of God's creation. Let's start living what we believe ... God's Word – Love one another, pass it on and watch our world change.