

“THE PULLING POWER OF LOVE” Romans 13:8-10

INTRODUCTION

One of the primary reasons God calls His followers to be extraordinarily caring people is because acts of mercy open up people's hearts like nothing else can. Put another way, there's tremendous pulling power in the expression of even a single act of kindness. And God wants that power to draw people toward the reality of His Son.

Jesus spelled this out in John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." How simple, yet how powerful!

As we express compassion to each other, people will recognize it as an earmark of authentic Christianity. It helps them better understand what God is like, who His children are, and why they should personally trust Him too.

How often lately have you felt compassion for people in need? Have you followed up those feelings and actually helped someone by serving them, encouraging them, visiting them, or by expressing love in some other tangible way?

-Taken from Becoming a Contagious Christian by Bill Hybels

SCRIPTURE

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

(ROMANS 13:8-10)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the context of Romans 13, Paul instructs us to not allow any debt to remain outstanding. Why is this an important principle for the Christian?
2. Paul refers to love as a "continuing debt". Why does he term love that way? How does it contradict with what the world teaches?
3. We are called to love our "fellowman". What makes this teaching difficult to follow? What kind of effect would this have? (Note: The word translated as "fellow man" is the Greek word heteros, which basically means, "Love people who are different from you.")
4. How do the latter four of the Ten Commandments fit into this understanding of love? How does the call to love fulfill the law?
5. Read Romans 12:9-21. Examine Paul's description of love. What are some areas of love that you struggle with? What are some areas of love that your family group struggles with?
6. What are some things that challenged you today?

