

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Romans // The Law of Love

Pastor Chris

August 21, 2022

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What is your go-to way to get motivated for difficult tasks?

Reading: Romans 13:8-14

Outline:

- I. The Law No Longer Defines You
 - A. Paul tells us to cast off works of darkness, despite our propensity to sin and our hearts' constant state of darkness. However, we know that in order to do so, we need something from *outside* ourselves to address our sin, rebellion, and death.
 - B. As Pastor Chris reminded us, we are no longer living under the law but instead we are living under grace. Thus, when we fall into thinking we need to "get right" with God, we are confusing the law with the love God demonstrated through the grace we gain from Jesus's sacrifice.
Q: *Where in your life do you most often find yourself confusing the law with love?*
- II. Love Defines You
 - A. God's law of love comes from his position in His covenant to humanity. When we fail to keep our end of the covenant, God does it for us. The grace and love of God tells us that when we believe in Christ's sacrifice for us, everything else is already done for us.
 - B. This love of God that tells us "everything is already done" also defines us. When love defines us, we begin to believe that the resurrection of Christ and the salvation it provides is a gift given freely to us and everyone. Thus, we begin to see our neighbors as people not only Jesus lives for, but whom we should live for as well.
Q: *How do you, or can you, "live for" your neighbors?*
- III. Love Frees You to Live for your neighbor
 - A. Oftentimes, we confuse the love of God as law that we can twist to our own desires and turn it into simply a good example of how to live, rather than also something powerful that can transform hearts.
 - B. The law of love is not about being or doing something, it's about proclaiming something: to yourself, to those you live with and near to. That proclamation is our need for Christ's salvation and the freedom it gives us. In that freedom, we now have the freedom to lay down our lives for our neighbor.
Q: *In what ways can we lay down our lives for our neighbor in our everyday lives?*

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) In what ways have you struggled with casting off works of darkness?
- 2) How can we remind each other to not confuse the law with love?
- 3) When in your life has God provided for you in an unexpected way? How does this relate to God's covenant with humanity?
- 4) How does being defined by God's love change how we interact with the world?

Suggestions for further study:

- Galatians 5:14 Q: How does this verse relate to God's love telling us "everything is already done"?
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Q: How do these verses relate to Pastor Chris's point about not weaponizing God's love?

Closing Prayer:

God, thank you for sending your Son as not only an example for how to live, but also as a way to transform sinful and darkened hearts. Help us to avoid weaponizing your love. Instead, strengthen us as we proclaim the good news that we have salvation in Christ. Amen.