**Romans 13:8-10**

I. Introduction: Jesus’ teaching on love

A. The greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and strength (Deut. 6)

B. The second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18)

C. Jesus bound these two commandments together under one principle: LOVE

1. Our love for God is to be measured by the standard of our whole being

2. Our love of neighbor is to be measured by the standard of our love for ourselves

II. Paul’s teaching on love in Romans 13

A. The debt of love is never fulfilled (v. 8)

1. “Owe nothing” (v. 8)

Paul is not necessarily saying we can never take on debt; rather, he is saying we should always fulfill our financial obligations

2. “Except the continuing debt to love one another” (v. 8)

We never use up our love for one another. The more you love, the more you realize how much more love there is to give. We are to love with an ongoing, unending love. With love, the more you pay, the more you realize you owe.

B. What this love looks like (v. 9)

1. This is not a relativistic, subjective kind of love that is defined however someone wants to define it

a. Joseph Fletcher’s “situational ethics”: Love was divorced from any explicit commandments and guidelines, so that the end can justify the means if one perceives that the end is “loving” according to their definition of loving

2. Rather, this is a love that has objective boundaries and priorities

a. Paul gives concrete commandments in v. 9 that help us define what love is

b. Jesus says, “If you love me, you will obey my commandments . . . If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.” (John 15)

C. We fulfill the law’s requirements through active love (v. 10)

1. The law’s intent is to keep us from harming each other

2. Love does no harm; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law

3. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 gives a wonderful description of active love

**Discussion Questions**

1. Regarding v. 8, the following statement was made on Sunday: “With love, the more you pay, the more you realize you owe.” How does that idea sit with you?

2. In v. 10, Paul says that “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Consider the idea that the sum total of all of God’s commandments and requirements is simply to live a life of love. Do you agree with that? How does that idea challenge you or encourage you in the way you live your life?

3. If love adequately sums up and fulfills the law, do we need all the other myriad of commandments in Scripture? Why or why not?

4. Slowly read through 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. At this time in your life, which description of love would you most like to pursue in your own life? Why?